

PANDEMIC AND THE PATH TO RELIGIOUS MODERATION

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Abstract

The Covid-19 threat continues to grow the life of the human life. It is not this epidemic to be a problem for the way of the Muslim religion. The controversy of Covid-19 earnings has a variety of understanding of the influence on Muslim attitudes in the face of pandemics. It may respond with excessive fear so that it is to dismiss the power of God; others are too manifesting impressed to reject the scientific reality. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the meaning of religious moderation in handling this outbreak. This article analyzes how to actualize religious moderation during a pandemic, from understanding steps to actual steps. The research method used in this paper uses the library research approach formulated by the description method and interpretative analysis related to the issues discussed. The results of this study show there are several roads to actualize the moderate of this pandemic era, among others, balancing theology, obeying the health protocol, strengthening knowledge, taking alerting or controlling emotions, and if it has been declared positively immediately prioritized.

Keywords: *Religion; Covid-19; Moderation; Pandemic.*

Abstrak

Ancaman Covid-19 terus menggerus lini kehidupan umat manusia. Tak pelak juga wabah ini menjadi problem terhadap cara keberagamaan muslim. Kontroversi mewabahnya Covid-19 menimbulkan berbagai sudut pemahaman yang berpengaruh pada sikap muslim dalam menghadapi pandemi. Kiranya ada yang menanggapi dengan rasa takut yang berlebihan sehingga menafikan kekuasaan Tuhan, sebagian lainnya bersikap terlalu menyepelkan terkesan menolak realitas ilmiah. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan sikap dan pemahaman yang mengandung makna moderasi beragama dalam menangani wabah ini. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa bagaimana mengaktualisasikan moderasi beragama di tengah pandemi mulai dari langkah memahami sampai pada langkah nyatanya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam tulisan ini menggunakan pendekatan *library research* yang diformulasikan dengan metode deskripsi dan analisis interpretatif berkaitan dengan persoalan yang dibahas. Adapun hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan terdapat beberapa jalan mengaktualisasikan moderasi beragama era pandemi ini antara lain, menyeimbangkan teologi, menaati protokol kesehatan, penguatan pengetahuan, mengambil sikap waspada atau mengontrol emosi, dan apabila telah dinyatakan positif hendaknya segera dikarantina.

Kata Kunci: *Agama; Covid-19; Moderasi; Pandemi.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Covid - 19 seems to have become a natural thing in human life today. It's been almost two years since Covid has hit Indonesia, but it doesn't show any signs of ending soon. Reporting from *the Covid-19 Data Analysis Update as of January 9, 2022*, issued by the Covid-19 Task Force, the addition of positive cases of Covid -19 has decreased significantly. Covid-19 is like a killer who, at any time, can paralyze human defenses, especially for those who are ignorant of its presence. The fluctuation of Covid-19 cases in each region is a sign that the presence of the coronavirus still exists, so it requires hard efforts from every party to break the chain of spreading this epidemic.

Not only targeting human health, but Covid is also a problem for the religious way of Muslims. The controversy over the Covid outbreak gave birth to extreme interpretations that influenced Muslim attitudes in dealing with this issue. Some responded with excessive anxiety and fear to deny belief in the Creator; others were too dismissive and seemed to reject empirical facts. In line with the Habibie Center Study Report on Violent Extremism, the pandemic is used to spread and strengthen the extreme understanding of religious communities, especially on the conspiracy to interpret the coronavirus (Rasyid et al., 2021).

In responding to this understanding, perhaps an approach that prioritizes the values of moderation is the best choice in religion during the pandemic. Moderation implies a balanced and fair agreement that allows a person to be wise in dealing with various situations. With the pandemic, Muslims can take lessons from several different angles of understanding to pave the way for representing religious moderation in the face of a pandemic. Through religious moderation, fellow religious people can avoid clashes of understanding that slow down the handling of Covid. Therefore, a Muslim needs to make religious moderation the basis for understanding and responding to the Covid pandemic. This idea has attracted the attention of the author to be investigated further.

Indeed, many experts have carried out studies on religious moderation amid a pandemic. Such as the writings of Abdul Syatar et al. entitled "*Emergency of Religious Moderation during a Pandemic.*" This study describes the importance of maintaining religious moderation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The approach used is socio-religious by looking at the facts that occur in the community. The findings of this study reveal the importance of considering the rules of avoiding harm rather than carrying out *maslahat* as a way in Islam to maintain religious moderation (Syatar et al., 2020). In addition, research connected with this study was carried out by Astri Nugrayanti et al. about *Women and Religious Moderation Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic*. This paper describes the potential of women in realizing religious moderation during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia by using various kinds of literature as data sources. This paper concludes that a woman has the potential to spread knowledge about religious moderation when viewed from a psychological perspective. Likewise, a woman's ability to embrace the surrounding environment can make it easier to apply the notion of religious moderation (A & Alamsyah, 2021). A more specific study is also seen in Cici Armayanti's writing on *Increasing Religious Moderation in Pematang Kuala Village Communities in the Pandemic Period*. The method used in this paper is a qualitative approach descriptively with direct

observation and interviews. The results of this study will show the efforts of the village government, religious leaders and the local community to be able to increase the moderation of religious communities in the village by finding solutions to prevent conflicts and divisions in society during the current pandemic so that with mutual tolerance between religious communities (Armayani et al., 2021). It seems that some of these studies are still limited to certain aspects, such as Syatar's writings that look at moderation from the perspective of Islamic law, Alamsyah's research on the potential for religious moderation among women and Armayanti's findings on the realization of religious moderation in Pematang Kuala Village community. The difference between this research and others is in the discussion that discusses the actualization of religious moderation during a pandemic, which starts from looking at the narrative of understanding the pandemic to the concrete stage, namely carrying out various relevant moderation practices to a pandemic situation.

Paper is *library research* that utilizes documents or literature as reference materials in the form of books, magazines, or notes from previous research (Hasan, 2002). Therefore, the references used by the author are several books containing themes related to religious moderation. This paper is elaborated with the descriptive method to provide an overview of the information by this research problem. The author also uses a content interpretation method that leads to the core of the research object by explaining and getting some things that exist in the object under study (Kaelan, 2005). The way that is being done in collecting data is by conducting a survey of the literature in the library, especially regarding religious moderation. This literature is read and understood simultaneously and then grouped according to needed needs. Then it is arranged structurally and becomes a framework so that it is easy to understand, after that the analysis is carried out. This research emphasizes the study of religious studies as one of the academic sciences in higher education. The review in this article examines how to actualize or realize religious moderation and become a way out of dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak individually.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Narrative of The Covid-19 Pandemic in Various Angles of Understanding

The Covid-19 pandemic that has swept the world has also given many extreme understandings that can potentially worsen the situation. The basis for this understanding was found in some radical groups who voiced it loudly in various media. Quoted from the Siteintelligence Group note "*Global Jihadist Response to Covid-19 Pandemic*", there is an interpretation that interprets Covid-19 as God's punishment for people who do not believe in God (infidels), especially at the beginning of the pandemic (Group, 2021). According to ISIS, this disease is passed down among the people as "God's soldiers" to destroy the enemies of the "Islamic group," especially the west who killed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and punished China for mistreating the Uighur Muslim group. As a result of this view, in video recordings of mothers in shelters in Syria, they believe that Covid-19 is not a disease. Therefore, they do not feel afraid of the disease because it is not for ISIS supporters and sympathizers.

The massive spread of Covid-19 until it became a global epidemic in early 2020 triggered the emergence of interpretations from religious circles. Some

religious groups have linked this plague with a sign of the end times. Among Christians, for example, some believe that Covid-19 is a sign of the presence of the Antichrist. In the view of John Piper (2020), a Christian theologian, through Covid-19, God is moving us to welcome the 2nd presence of Christ.

In some Muslim groups, the Covid-19 outbreak is a form of conspiracy ahead of the Antichrist's arrival, which is still related to the end of time. Meanwhile, among Hindus, some translate the Covid-19 outbreak as "raging avatar," an event incarnation of the Gods to punish greedy humans. The idea of this raging avatar resembles a sermon from a cleric who said the Covid-19 outbreak was "God's Army" and was sent as punishment for His enemies (Sabara, 2020).

The interpretation of the Covid-19 outbreak as a sign of the end of time certainly does not stand alone. This plague is linked with a variety of other major and rare incidents. There are many great calamities and speculation about the increasingly chaotic world order. Lack of and empty worship of the people; for example, the Kaaba reported no congregation because there was no pilgrimage and tawaf. There have also been rumors about the asteroid's existence that are estimated to hit the earth right during Ramadan. This series of rare events have further strengthened beliefs about the connection of the Covid-19 outbreak with the end of time, which is getting closer (Yurnalis, 2020).

In addition, Covid-19 is also interpreted as a form of a biological weapons program, as reported by the Washington time, saying "*Coronavirus may have originated from a laboratory connected to China's biowarfare program*" (Gertz, 2020). There is also an issue that says Covid is a virus that leaked from Wuhan (Broderick, 2020). While the results of Christian Mbui's analysis from an economic point of view, this pandemic has ties to the vaccine marketing trade war from the impact of this virus outbreak (Mbui, 2020). Calisher et al. (2020:43) also explained that Covid-19 is a biological weapon as a military *war tool* after the trade war between America and China, which had been going on for decades, and China almost controlled the American market before.

2.2. Covid-19 Pandemic: Between Worrying or Rejecting

A person responding to problems is always divided into two different attitudes. Each group claims that the attitude option is based on their reading, knowledge, and interpretation of the religious texts they believe. Several paradoxical attitude choices often collide, ranging from the religious elite to the lay community.

The same thing happened to the understanding and attitude of Muslims in the Covid-19 outbreak that hit the world globally in 2020. Religious elite groups "race" to give their opinions, and then the people also "race" to express their attitudes. According to the author, there are two unusual approaches to dealing with Covid. Some of them respond with excessive anxiety and fear as if they throw away the value of spirituality themselves; others are too dismissive that they ignore the empirical facts of science. In line with what Caroline Riady said, two dangerous attitudes must be fought when this pandemic occurs: ignorance or indifference and knowing too much worry (Kustiani, 2020).

The first group that has excessive anxiety in responding to Covid, as stated by Brooks, is a psychological impact during the pandemic. Usually, Brooks continued, a person will experience post-traumatic stress disorder (post-traumatic stress disorder), nervousness, anxiety, frustration, fear of infection, insomnia and

feeling powerless (2020:12). Several psychiatrists listed almost all types of mild to severe psychological disorders that could occur in this epidemic situation.

In principle, feelings of anxiety are the initial part of a psychological problem, or in psychology, it is called an anxiety disorder. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), anxiety is an emotional condition that occurs when a person is under stress and is characterized by feelings of tension, thoughts that make the person feel anxious and followed by a physical response (Okazaki, 1997) (Beaudreau & R., 2009). Meanwhile, according to Sadock et al., anxiety responds to certain intimidating situations and is commonplace. Anxiety starts from the arrival of a threatening situation or condition as a dangerous stimulant (*stressor*). Anxiety can cause panic and mental disorders when it reaches an excessive level.

When connected to the Covid-19 outbreak, according to Ida Ruwaida, there are many triggers for anxiety (Firmansyah, 2020) due to limited socialization, the media and the lack of a clean living culture, environmental impacts, the rapid flow of information from print media or electronic media. Affect a person's psychosocial condition. The effect of information about Covid-19 has a positive or negative impact. In this epidemic situation, it is essential to follow the news always to be vigilant. However, if information flows non-stop, it will affect psychological health, which can trigger anxiety, stress, panic and fear (Rochmawati, 2020).

A *psychosocial study* survey of Indonesian citizens during the Covid-19 outbreak period, which included 8,031 informants from 34 provinces in Indonesia, showed that more than 50% of the informants experienced anxiety, with the group being anxious and very anxious (Putri & Septiawan, 2020). While the results of Zulva's research (2020), residents responding to the outbreak respond that they feel anxiety, worry, panic and other psychosomatic signs. Anxiety symptoms appear accompanied by excessive stress that interferes with social activities and even hampers community productivity. Therefore, a method is needed to deal with the concerns that occur to residents.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak period, excessive concern was seen in buying necessities outside of the ordinary (panic buying). This attitude seems to be one example of a personal assessment of the terror of the scarcity of primary needs. Maybe the decision to buy in excess is made because of the input of information from the media combined with past experiences when some essential ingredients are not available in critical monetary periods. However, gradually it did not last long because it was seen as ineffective.

On the other hand, some groups underestimate (apathy) the terror of Covid. In the world of psychology, this attitude is called apathy. According to the KBBI, apathy is an attitude of indifference, indifference and ignorance. Furthermore, Solmitz 2000 (in Ahmed, Ajmal, Khalid and Sarfaraz, 2012) stated that apathy is a personal indifference in which a person has no interest or may not pay attention to certain aspects such as social or social-emotional life. Extreme apathy looks as if you are not sure about the regulations issued by the government in breaking the chain of spreading Covid.

From the above understanding, it can be concluded that apathy is a psychological state in which a person loses motivation and does not care about his environmental conditions and situations. The Covid-19 outbreak has been running for more than a year, and various regulations that limit social and economic

activities have triggered people's apathy. They are indifferent, ignorant and lose hope.

Based on a view of dr. Ampera Matippanna, S.Ked. MH, many things can cause a person's apathy during this epidemic, including (Matippanna, 2021) public confusion about many government policies. For example, on the one hand, there is a ban on going home, but on the other hand, tourism activities are still allowed. Then, the circulation of hoax information absorbed by the public makes them not sure of the regulations issued by the government.

Another reason for apathy is the lack of support and exemplary attitudes from several community figures, religious figures and youth in PHBS behavior, especially in health protocols. So, residents also follow their attitude scheme, likewise with law enforcement schemes that have the impression of breathing a sense of justice for the citizens to make them respond negatively to the rules and regulations set by the government.

Apathy or perhaps not caring can be classified as a group that rejects science. According to Maliki in his article on Covid, Religion, and Science, this anti-science attitude is based on the assumption that belief in science makes a person an apostate or, in Islam, is called *shirk* (2020:65). There is an assumption from the mainstream religious people that this group does not use their minds but uses their egos so that it implies transmitting Covid.

Anti-science religious people use religion to protect themselves or for their survival needs at the existential level. In addition, they have a very excessive orientation of spiritual beliefs so that all problems are resolved at the Sahrawi stage. They seem to forget that worldly affairs, in this case, science, also play an essential role in their lives. The realm of spirituality will not be perfect unless formulated with a natural system (science). Thus, the dichotomy of an independent understanding between religion (Sahrawi) and science (worldly) is apparent.

One example of the rejection of Covid occurred in the early period of the Covid outbreak, namely the action of the Tablighi Jamaat group to continue to carry out the Ijtima Ulama World Zone Asia event in Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi. Regarding the activities of the Tablighi Jamaat, the government was barely successful in stopping these activities. The ijtima event reportedly targeted the attendance of 25 thousand participants from all representatives both at home and abroad. The committee initially refused to thwart the ijtima activity plan. The argument is quite a cliché; they only fear Allah and are not afraid of Covid-19. The event was canceled, but around 8,695 participants had already arrived at the location. Tragically, the authorities initially felt they could not disperse the activity that was not granted a permit. The officials planned only to localize the activity until their schedule was over to fear the more considerable repercussions if the event was thwarted. According to the findings (Dahlan et al., 2020) describing the vulnerability of religious activities by the Tablighi Jamaat, those who do not comply with health regulations are seen as expanding the chain of spreading Covid-19.

Health provisions and procedures require people to keep their distance, avoid crowds, and for now, stop joining activities, including congregational prayers, to which some people responded with an attitude of resistance. They loudly explained, "We can't stop praying in congregation in the mosque; we are not afraid of dying from Covid; we are more afraid of Allah." This is because

worshipping in the mosque is a valuable thing for them. Individually, they feel a religious situation with meaning when worshipping in the mosque. So that when it was banned, they felt terrific spiritual anxiety. The prohibition of congregational prayers in the mosque makes them feel as if they have lost their identity so that they have faith. Some people think that they are experiencing significant spiritual criticism, although, for some other Muslims, the prohibition of congregational prayers in mosques is not something to be concerned about. The findings of the Research and Development Center for Religious Guidance and Religious Services at the Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religion were that around 80% of Muslims. The ban was not a big problem, and they did not feel the loss of their religious situation. On the other hand, for about 20% of other Muslims, especially those who are used to praying in congregation in the mosque, it is forbidden to pray in the mosque is a significant and quite complex problem (Darmawan, 2020).

Regarding the provision for congregational prayers at home, some residents believe that closing places of worship are only an excuse to weaken the faith and brotherhood of Muslims. They asked if the mosque was closed, then what about the opened market. According to them, this regulation is seen as a form of the devil's conspiracy to separate religion from humans (Arrobi and Nadzifah 2020).

Until now, the case above illustrates that religious groups are still resistant or do not believe in science. Although this case is only a small group of religious people, the critical thing to admit is that there is always a small group that has its world in every era. There are many arguments behind the incident, both internally, personally and internally or externally (cultural and environmental mechanisms).

Responding to the two extreme attitudes that developed during the pandemic era, other ranks initiated a moderate perspective, namely by applying *mu'tadi lwa mutawasith* (balanced) (Fitriyana, 2020). This line places the fear of Allah with the fear of Covid-19 as two very different things. Fear of Allah means being afraid of being far from Him until that fear is transformed into a driving force to draw closer to Him. Fear of Covid-19 is implemented with an attitude of avoiding it because of the dangers caused by being virus attacked. In addition, moderate groups pay attention to health provisions and procedures based on science and further knowledge; they still trust Allah. He explained that the moderate Barisan was still doing business without abandoning religion as their religious basis.

2.3. The First Steps to Understanding Moderation

Before discussing religious moderation further, it is better to know the understanding of moderation in this paper. In the English-Indonesian Dictionary: An English-Indonesian Dictionary, moderation comes from the English language, namely "Moderation," which means moderate, ordinary, and not too excessive. In the book *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam*, Mohammad Hashim Kamali explains that moderate cannot be separated from 2 keywords: balance and justice (2015). In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, Reasonable means avoiding excessive disclosure (conversation); leaning towards the middle ground. In short, moderation can mean an attitude, view, and way of life without being excessive (Kemendikbud, 2008).

Moderation in the editorial of the Koran is mentioned *wasathan / wasathiyah*; this term is taken from the word *wasatha, wustha*, which has a

middle meaning, and so wasith-alwasith, which means middle (Usman, 2015). As Allah SWT says in Surah Al Baqarah verse 143 :

“And so (also) We have made you (Muslims), a just people and an option so that you are witnesses of (actions) humans and so that the Messenger (Muhammad) is a witness against (actions) you. And We do not decide the Qibla as your Qibla (at this time) but so that We may know (to make it real) who followed the Messenger and who disobeyed. And really (the change of Qibla), it feels cumbersome, except for some people whom Allah has given guidance, and Allah does not waste your faith. Allah is Most Merciful and Most Merciful to humanity.”

According to Quraish Shihab in his book entitled *Wasathiyah, Islamic Insights About Religious Moderation in the* essay, the *wasathan* described in the verse above is not only in a neutral position to the left and right, but it is equally important to make a person viewable from a different angle and at that time. He has the potential to be a role model for the whole group. This status allows him to see anyone and anywhere around him. Furthermore, in the interpretation of Al Misbah, it is explained that Muslims who are made *ummatan wasathan* (middle) are moderates and role models. Hence, the Muslim's presence is in the middle status, according to the Kaaba position in the center. (Shihab, 2002:346).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the word *wasath* has implications for religious moderation. In implementing spiritual guidance, both internally and externally, a balanced or middle attitude between religious adherents is a requirement in realizing religious moderation. Moderation does not just come right away, but it requires the construction of established knowledge and the implementation of knowledge according to spiritual guidance. In the book *Actualization of Religious Moderation in Educational Institutions* by EdySutrisno, religious moderation must be understood as a balanced religious attitude between the practice of one's religion (limited) and respect for other people's spiritual practices with different beliefs (inclusive).

Religious moderation is here to get religious people out of shackles and create justice and balance for the people. Therefore, religious moderation requires a basic concept of moderation itself. According to the author's opinion, several meanings follow religious moderation, including noble behavior. As spiritual people, all life is conditional on divine belief; this pattern of religious life forms moderation for a person

Second, accept something different. The principle of balance is the primary key to religious moderation. Balance does not imply the same thing but demands a fair share of differences. The failure of religious moderation is due to an imbalance between the parties. *They were third* oriented to human values. There shouldn't be the slightest difference if you look at someone from the human side. Humanist values become a medium of dialogue in various spaces. Thus, it is inappropriate to distinguish someone on a certain status or even demean him—fourth, agreement and loyalty as the foundation. Religious moderation will not be created just like that, so a deal is needed in carrying it out. Because of the agreement, a solid union will be made, and it is difficult to shake it. *Finally*, all parties must believe that diversity is a certainty. There is no similarity without diversity. According to the author, these concepts offer an alternative to understanding religious moderation during a pandemic.

In contrast, a religious person should not be too extreme and radical to realize religious moderation itself; the justice and balance contained in moderation will not be learned if the perpetrators do not have credit and justice in religion. As a result, some people take actions that are detrimental to society in the name of religion.

The embodiment of religious moderation requires a balance in various aspects. They start from the spiritual side, including faith, worship, and law. Religious moderation means balance or harmony in all lines of social life, including politics, economy, and social interaction. The individual side of religious moderation includes balancing sacred texts, including understanding, thoughts, and feelings. Peace and common interests are the basis of the social concept of religious moderation. The paradigmatic basis of religious moderation is the balanced practice and appreciation of religion from all sides of faith to form a healthy religious scheme, individually or socially (Sabara, 2020).

Religious moderation has become a religious community development program in Indonesia that the Indonesian Ministry of Religion specifically assigns. Religious moderation was formulated after the determination of the Jakarta Minutes at the end of 2018. It was further emphasized in the Religious Moderation White Paper, which the Ministry of Religion circulated in October 2019. When appointed as minister of religion, you said that religious moderation was a delivery program (unique mandate) from the president (Andrios, 2021). This is proof that the religious moderation program is of interest to religious people in Indonesia.

During the pandemic, religious moderation also needs to exist and be dynamic with the current situation. Not only about the issue of belief, but religious moderation can also be used as a solution in responding to the extreme understanding of the pandemic era. As the author believes, religious moderation is an alternative understanding of the pandemic era because it prevents Muslims from being too worried and ignoring scientific facts. By making religious moderation a perspective, Muslims can position their knowledge of the pandemic based on objective knowledge and a fair and balanced religious attitude.

Furthermore, if you look back at the history of the Prophet's period, religious moderation was in the guidance of the Prophet's lectures when facing the Thau pandemic. Taken from the book "Fiqh Sunnah 2" created by Sayid Sabiq, the Prophet taught Muslims not to run from a disease known as quarantine. The direction is so that the condition does not spread everywhere. In the hadith narrated by Bukhari, from Abdurahma bin Auf, the Messenger of Allah said, if you hear that a disease is spreading in an area, you should not enter it. If the condition is in a room and you are in that place, you are not allowed to leave the site because you are running away from the disease." This hadith can be one of the recommendations for Muslims to take a moderate attitude in the Covid-19 outbreak. Efforts to keep themselves from spreading illness so that they do not fall into the perspective of ignoring scientific reality.

2.4. The Path of Religious Moderation in the Pandemic (Actual Steps)

Religious moderation is not only in the realm of understanding or thought, but its concrete form can be seen in the actions and attitudes of Muslims in everyday life. According to Lukmanul Hakim, the idea of moderation emphasizes perspective, not just being embodied but must be institutionalized. Therefore, religious moderation is as broad as the problems Muslims face in carrying out

their lives. In the context of dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic, the author analyzes that there are several actual steps of religious moderation that are relevant during the pandemic, including:

First is the balance of understanding and attitude. The basic concept of religious moderation is fair and balanced, meaning a balance between two things, such as spiritual and physical, balanced interests between personal and collective, or the proportion of romantic ideas with existing realities, including understanding and action (Kemenag RI, 2019). The balance of knowledge and attitude can be implemented by combining effort and trust in God. This is a form of religious moderation in the pandemic era based on the formulation of action and prayer. So, Muslims can balance and harmonize humanity's potential, which has the awareness and endeavor to avoid danger. Submission to God's provisions can only be made after making maximum efforts.

Second, comply with health protocols. Due to its dire impact on health, the Covid -19 pandemic carries a hazardous risk and even threatens the safety of Muslim lives. Thus, complying with health protocols to contain and break the chain of the spread of Covid - 19 is a natural step toward religious moderation. The implications of understanding religious moderation during a pandemic can be in the form of cleaning hands, using masks, and maintaining distance. The delay or limitation of collective worship, such as congregational prayers, is a form of actualizing the concept of fairness and balance. Forcing the implementation of worship such as congregational prayers risks the spread of Covid-19 because ignoring the protocol for maintaining distance (physical distancing) is a form of being too excessive and against religious moderation.

Third, strengthening knowledge. The concept of fairness and balance in religious moderation builds three unique characters, namely wisdom, sincerity, and courage. For this to happen, it requires extensive knowledge (Kemenag RI, 2019). It is not enough to highlight the spirit in religion and then underestimate ability. Being moderate in faith requires strengthening knowledge about faith and an accurate understanding of objective evidence. Understanding of religious provisions (fiqh) must be continuously updated in text or context without undermining conservative religious legal requirements. In responding to the pandemic, a Muslim with extensive knowledge will not despair and be disappointed in Allah SWT. Proper knowledge will lead to the right feelings in being kind to Allah SWT because the Prophet SAW said: "It is not Allah SWT who sends down a disease unless He also sends down the antidote." (Narrated by Bukhari).

Fourth, be careful (alert) and control emotions. Armed with the knowledge possessed, either text or context will have implications for caution. An alert person checks and rechecks; who knows if his knowledge has expired or his perspective is unclear. On the other hand, unawareness will unconsciously lead a person to arrogance and even some different exaggerated attitudes. An attitude of indifference can make a person not care and allow himself to fall into the error of carelessness.

Likewise, passionate emotions make a person's spirit exceed the spirit of God. As a result, a person will force himself to do things not permitted by God (excessive). Still following the provisions of health protocols is a form of religious moderation based on knowledge, emotional regulation, and fair and balanced vigilance. Emotional regulation and prudence can be realized with a

scientific attitude in responding to various information spread about the Covid-19 outbreak to avoid getting entangled in the hoax and provocative news. Alert efforts in responding to hoax information are also modes of religious moderation in the digital age (Qustulani et al., 2019).

Fifth, quarantine or restrictions on social activities. When talking about pandemics, historically, it is not only known today but has been known since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. At that time, the general pandemic was known as Plague and Leprosy. The Prophet also forbade his people to enter areas stricken with the plague. The provisions of the Prophet came out by saying: "If you hear about the plagues in a country, then do not you enter it. But if there is an epidemic in a place where you are, do not leave that place" (Hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). Even friend Amru ibn al-Ash, in the Amawas pandemic incident in 18 H, ordered the residents of the country of Sham to leave the koto to go to the mountains (Al-Damsiqi, 1997). This, according to the author, is the most effective form of social restriction or quarantine in the history of the world.

Sixth always is patient. In a hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari, Ayesha once asked the Prophet SAW about a disease outbreak. Rasulullah SAW said:

The "epidemic disease are the people who He wants Allah has made it mercy for those who believe. If there is an epidemic disease, there are people who stay in the country; he is patient, only hoping for a reply from Allah SWT. He is sure that no event happens unless Allah has ordained it. So, he gets a recompense like a martyr."

3. CONCLUSION

The occurrence of a pandemic has given rise to various narratives from various angles of understanding. The history of Covid-19 has implications for how to deal with the pandemic. For example, Muslims have been divided into two forms of attitude that tend to be paradoxical. The first group is immersed in unnatural anxiety and worry so that they experience a level of paranoid disorder or excessive fear. This group seems to deny the spiritual value and will only believe in scientific evidence. These fears and anxieties overwhelm them and impact inhibiting social activities that must be carried out. Besides that, some groups belittle and reject scientific facts. They attribute their understanding only to the belief in the existence of God and against the reality of nature. Distrust and disregard are shown by not complying with health protocols and policies implemented by the government. Responding to the two groups requires an understanding and attitude in the middle or balanced. Perhaps an approach that breathes religious moderation must be present in this pandemic era. The way to actualize moderation in this pandemic era starts with understanding religious moderation by having noble character, accepting differences, being oriented to human values, and believing in agreement and diversity as necessary. Furthermore, the actual steps of religious moderation can be realized by balancing theology, adhering to health protocols, strengthening knowledge, taking a conservative attitude or controlling emotions, and quarantining or limiting social activities. In addition, to realize each of these steps, patience is also very much needed in dealing with the pandemic.

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