



THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NORMS IN PRACTICING AMR MA'RUF NAHI MUNKAR: A CASE STUDY AT SABILURRASYAD PESANTREN

Triana Handayani ^{1*}, Maskuri Bakri ², Dian Mohammad Hakim³
^{1,2,3} Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

Abstract

This study explores the application of the concept of "khairu ummah" through non-formal education at the Sabilurrosyad Islamic Boarding School, Malang, with a focus on the role of religious traditions in shaping individual character. The background of this study is driven by the decline in morals and erroneous understanding of religion in Indonesia, which is evident in social events such as violence and religious conflict. This study uses a qualitative approach with case studies, involving observation, interviews, and documentation to analyze how religious traditions, such as congregational prayer and tadarus Al-Qur'an, contribute to the formation of khairu ummah character. The results of the study indicate that the application of religious traditions consistently and structured is effective in shaping individuals who meet the criteria of khairu ummah, which includes the integration of the values of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar and iman billah in everyday life. This study emphasizes the importance of expanding socialization and implementing the principle of khairu ummah to overcome the decline in morals and understanding of religion in society.

Keywords: Implementation, Khairu ummah, Personal character, Student

* Correspondence Address:	tfalistakinandani@gmail.com
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INTRODUCTION

مقدمة

Khairu ummah is an expression of divine power that is very broad in meaning, deep in content, and eternal in its purpose. For this reason, if khairu ummah has become a reality in the attitude of life, a nation will become vibrant, especially Muslims who occupy a high position, as a people whose generation is proud, respected, and taken into account by all levels throughout the ages (Raharjo et al., 2024). Khairu ummah is very important and interesting to research, because in the last few decades, Indonesia has experienced various conflicts, namely, social violence, the decline in individual Muslim morals and morals, religious tensions are quite prominent in several ways, triggering conflicts that are so widespread and last for quite a long time.

Evidence of irregularities and disgraceful acts has been widely reported. Now, Indonesia is truly experiencing a serious moral decline. More than that, understanding of Islamic creeds gradually leads to errors in meaning. For this reason, the concept of khairu ummah is important to be developed, socialized and implemented as a manifestation of efforts to improve individual moral, moral and character issues which are then expected to have implications for national and state life, especially in the era of globalization where the boundaries of civilization are no longer

clear, so every individual needs an understanding that can be used as a filter (Majdi, 2019). The public's understanding that *khairu ummah* is the highest title that only the Prophet has is a problem, they think that ordinary people cannot have that title. However, as humans, God gives us reason to make us think, body and soul so that we can try. Although the title of *khairu ummah* was only given to the Prophet, as ordinary humans, we should try our best to achieve that high ideal, whether or not it is achieved is up to Allah to decide. In line with the words of K.H Irfan Hielmy, *Insan kamil* as the embodiment of "*khairu ummah* is the highest quality of humanity, every human being should try their best to achieve that highest degree of humanity. Whether or not ordinary humans can achieve the degree of "*insan kamil*" is determined by Allah SWT" (Syukur & Subroto, 2021).

Seeing the reality of the problems of morals that continue to decline, the interpretation of the wrong understanding of Islamic faith, and deviant behaviors that often occur and the lack of quality in each Muslim, this can be improved and renewed through "Religious Tradition". Religious traditions are Islamic-nuanced habits that are often carried out to form the quality of a Muslim individual. Tradition and the manifestation of religion cannot be separated, both have a strong connection. Because tradition interacts directly with society/institutions, and society has a reciprocal relationship with tradition, even influencing religion, according to Mukhtar Ali's opinion, "religion influences the course of society and the growth of society influences thinking about religion". Thus, the essence of religious tradition in the world of education is the realization of religious teaching values as a tradition in behavior (Sahlan, 2011).

Based on this, researchers take non-formal education in applying religious traditions, considering that religious traditions are good habits with Islamic nuances that are more suitable and more widely applied in the world of Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are indeed non-formal institutions, but the graduates produced meet the good category. Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school is one of the boarding schools that applies more religious traditions in its daily life. Some of these religious traditions can form quality Muslims (*khairu ummah*). Studies of religion and religious activities are built on the principle of forming humans who have noble morals and are useful to other humans. K.H Marzuki Mustakmar, the caretaker of the Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school, always emphasized to his students to utilize knowledge, which is applied through teaching, preaching, etc. (Kholiduzen, 2019). This vision is included in one of the categories of *khairu ummah*. *Khairu ummah* is indeed very broad in meaning, which knows no end to the beginning of the discussion. However, in this case, the researcher limits the categories of *khairu ummah*. Who is worthy of being called *khairu ummah* based on the categories that will be discussed in the next chapter. After the researcher understood several categories of *khairu ummah*, they were correlated with several existing Islamic boarding schools, and it was decided to conduct research at the Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school after conducting pre-research. More or less, the religious tradition in Islamic boarding schools aims to form superior, quality humans or *khairu ummah*.

METHOD | منهج

This study uses a qualitative approach, which aims to investigate social phenomena that exist in society or human problems. The theme raised by the researcher is a phenomenon that exists in society, so there is a relationship between the theme and the research method used. Qualitative research is conducted using direct observation in the field to understand the customs and culture of the local community, which is then strengthened by the support of interviews and documentation (Arifin, 2011). This study uses a case study research type. A case study is a study

conducted on individuals, groups, one organization, or one activity program in depth within a certain period. Qualitative research using the case study type aims to obtain a complete and in-depth description of a study conducted.

The subjects in this study were located at the Sabilurrasyad Islamic boarding school in Malang using data collection in the form of observations carried out by observing the research subjects, namely the behavior of female students, then interviews with the caretakers of the boarding school, ustaz/ustazah, and female students of the Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school, as well as documentation regarding several pictures of boarding school activities and things related to the researcher's findings by the research theme.

Sabilurrasyad Islamic boarding school was chosen as the research location because it has unique characteristics that represent an education system based on Islamic values, tradition, and strong independence, so it is relevant to explore in depth the phenomena that are the focus of the study. The informants in this study were selected purposively because they have experience, deep understanding, and direct involvement in the daily activities of the Islamic boarding school, so they are able to provide rich and relevant information to answer research questions comprehensively.

RESULT | نتائج

Based on the interviews conducted, the concept of khoiru ummah manifests through several key indicators: (1) Moderate Muslims are characterized by tolerance, flexibility, humility, ethical solidarity, and a deep respect for others, embodying traits that distance them from arrogance and self-righteousness. This aligns with social theories emphasizing the importance of social cohesion, moral capital, and collective identity in sustaining harmonious communities. (2) Democratic believers are portrayed as individuals rooted in their community, yet aspirational in their leadership. Their ability to remain grounded during and after holding power reflects the Islamic ethical principle of khilafah (stewardship), and resonates with participatory ideals in democratic theory, where leadership is exercised with accountability and a strong sense of belonging. (3) Diplomatic Muslims are defined by their commitment to honesty, justice, truth, courage, politeness, and noble conduct. These virtues are foundational in both Islamic moral philosophy and classical sociological thought, especially in the context of symbolic interactionism, where interpersonal behavior reinforces shared values. At the Sabilur Rosyad Islamic boarding school, religious traditions such as congregational prayer, tadarus of the Qur'an, murojaah nadzom, muhadloroh/khitobah, istighosah, diba', manaqib, and burdah, alongside social practices like pilgrimage to saints, sharing sandals, smiling, exchanging greetings, mutual respect, and halal bihalal, are not merely rituals, but serve as mechanisms of social integration. These practices cultivate a sense of belonging, nurture intersubjective bonds among students, and reflect the synthesis of Islamic values with the social fabric of everyday communal life.

DISCUSSION | مناقشة

Religious Traditions

The general definition of tradition is values, norms, and customs that have existed for a long time but are still accepted, followed, and even maintained by a group of people (Rodin, 2013). Effendi stated that tradition or (turath) is a legacy from the past that has been passed down from generation to generation until it reaches us, which then enters the culture that

applies today. Simply put, tradition is something that is inherited from the past to the present (Effendi, 2017). Tradition theoretically occurs from the existence of a code of conduct that is very strongly integrated with social behavior patterns (Kamuri, 2021).

It has been explained above that tradition can be interpreted as norms or rules. The norms that exist in society aim to regulate good social life, Initially, the following norms occurred unintentionally, but over time, these norms were formed consciously or intentionally (Etzioni, 2000). Some norms have a high, medium, or strong level of binding in society. Tradition is not merely a custom, habit, or norm inherited from ancestors, but more than that because tradition is seen as something that is revealed (revealed tradition) whose truth comes from the divine (divine order) both open and hidden, open means that the tradition already exists in society, and still hidden means that the tradition does not yet exist in society (Wibowo, 2022).

A tradition that has been formed for a long time can survive and is still followed in society because objectively and subjectively, the tradition is considered good by its adherents, so the tradition is meaningful in the life of society. Tradition and society have a correlation or mutualistic symbiosis in giving meaning. Some traditions become a place for religious expression, a binder of a group, a group's bull, and so on (Ping, 2023). Tradition and culture are two interrelated things. Tradition is interpreted as a hereditary heritage that is still carried out in society. Culture is the result of human creativity, feeling, and will (Kusumaningtyas et al., 2023). Tradition and culture are both still maintained and carried out in society. Religious Tradition, according to substantial meaning, is the values in a community that have been tested for validity so that they are believed by the community as a source of behavior (Dzofir, 2017).

Religious tradition is one of the comprehensive value education methods because, in its manifestation, there is internalization of values, giving examples, and preparing the younger generation to become independent human beings by teaching and facilitating responsible moral decision-making actions and other life skills (Ulfah et al., 2021). From several definitions of tradition, it can be concluded that tradition is the habits carried out by society in everyday life. Tradition is not only a legacy of ancestors, but tradition also means something that is revealed, whose truth comes from God. Religious tradition contains habits that are carried out through the interpretation of several religious activities in shaping the character of a society.

There are many forms of religious traditions, including; congregational prayer, completing the Quran, being fond of giving alms, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, Istighatsah, studying the book (al-kutub al-muqarrarah), re-study among peers known as taqrar, madrasah, jam'iyah, musyawarah and so on, Wetonan or bandongan where the kyai gives a study in the mosque porch with a curriculum chosen entirely by the students (Sahlan, 2011).

The Concept of the Khairu Ummah

“Khairu ummah” is an expression of divine will that carries profound meaning, deep significance, and an enduring purpose. When this ideal is manifested in the way of life of a community, it fosters a vibrant and dynamic society—especially among Muslims—elevating them to positions of dignity, pride, and influence across generations. To embody the essence of khairu ummah in daily life, one must possess not only knowledge and experience but also unwavering perseverance and resilience (Majdi, 2017).

Etymologically, khairu ummah comes from the word khair, which means the best, the best, and the best. While ummah means group or congregation. Khairu ummah is the best group, the best group, or the best congregation (Majdi, 2017). According to Sayyid Quthb in his

interpretation, forming a group or congregation is a must in the Divine Manhaj. This group is a community formed to help each other, working together in calling for good and forbidding evil (Aji & Yusron, n.d.). Thus, it can be seen that khairu ummah is a chosen group with all the qualities that exist in humans, so that with the qualities they have, they can realize the goals of an Indonesian nation that wants the unity of a nation without any disputes from several groups throughout the ages.

Khairu Ummah Indicator

The meaning of the letter Ali-Imran: 110 in Tafsir Al-Aisar explains the indicators of the nature of humans who are said to be the best ummah, namely, if they act virtuously by adhering to the correct Islamic rules and instructions from the Prophet Muhammad. And nahi munkar, that is, they forbid other people from committing sins, such as disbelief, polytheism, those whose hearts are always tied to belief in Allah and belief in what He commands, belief in angels, books, messengers, the last day and belief in qodho' and qodar (Al-Jazairi, 2007). K.H Irfan Hielmy said that khairu ummah has three main dimensions of amaliyah, amar bil ma'ruf, nahyu 'anil munkar and iman billah. So, if a group of human beings want to become khairu ummah or chosen people, they must have complete privileges from these three characteristics and always follow the instructions of the Prophet Muhammad. These three dimensions of character are not enough just to acknowledge, even by offering prayers, fasting, paying zakat, performing the Hajj, carrying out what is halal and avoiding what is haram, but you must be able to command ma'ruf nahyul evil and ber'tisham (holding fast) with dinnullah and staying away from ikhtilaf which causes iftiraq (divisions in religion) (Majdi, 2017). Furthermore, K.H Irfan Hielmy stated that khairu ummah is a group of people who can eradicate bigotry (ta'ashub) in groups and sects and those who can carry out amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (Majdi, 2017). Moreover, those who have strong faith can overcome their reason, heart, and conscience to defeat their desires. amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, the essence of which can be concluded with the da'wah community. Because the definition of da'wah itself is calling or inviting to goodness (ma'ruf) and forbidding evil (munkar) to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter (Rizha, 2021).

K.H Irfan Hielmy further narrowed down the indicators of khairu ummah which are called cultural trilogy, namely moderate Muslims, democratic believers, and diplomatic believers (Majdi, 2017), as follows:

1. Moderate Muslims are Muslim figures who are tolerant, flexible, humble, ethical, respectful of others, and far from arrogance, conceit, and self-righteousness. The characteristics of individuals who achieve the predicate khairu ummah are people who have an open, tolerant, and inclusive attitude who remain steadfast in upholding principles (Safei, 2021). In this case, there is a correlation with the characteristics of the ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaah understanding which is built on the principle of at-Tawassuth, meaning a middle attitude, not extreme left and extreme right, at-Tawazun is interpreted as a balanced attitude in all things, al-l'tidal (fair/upright), at-Tasamuh is an attitude of tolerance, namely respecting differences and respecting people who have different principles of life, but it does not mean acknowledging or justifying different beliefs in affirming what is believed (Munawir, 2016).

2. A democratic believer is a figure of a believer who is rooted downwards and shoots upwards. This means that when he is in power, he does not forget his people, and when he steps down from his power, he returns to being a person who remains enthusiastic and does not give up. A democratic believer is the second cultural trilogy in achieving the predicate of khairu ummah; in this case, a democratic believer is categorized as a socio-political aspect (Majdi, 2017).

K.H. Marzuki Musta'mar (Caretaker of the Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school) is not against political problems; he is not only involved in theoretical issues but also contributes fully to practical politics. This is proven by his participation as chairman of PWNU and is active in carrying out the mandate.

3. Muhsin diplomat is a Muslim figure who loves honesty, justice, truth, courage, courtesy, and noble character (Majdi, 2017). This is included in the educational and moral aspects. Morals are a description of a person's inner condition, morals are the true soul and characteristics of a person, therefore if the heart and mind are clean/good then the morals will also be good, and vice versa, if a person's heart and mind are dirty, then the resulting morals will also be dirty/not good (Hawassy, 2020). Morals have a high position in Islam; Allah praised the Prophet Muhammad SAW for having good morals.

Moderate Muslims, democratic believers, and diplomat Muhsin when compared to the basics of religion, namely faith, sharia and morals. So faith will give birth to a believer, sharia will give birth to a Muslim, and morals will give birth to a muhsin. The unity between moderate Muslims, democratic believers, and diplomat muhsin is called insan kamil or muttaqin, which is realized in the khairu ummah. The following three aspects are interrelated and cannot be separated (Majdi, 2017). Ibnu Khaldun added, Akidah, Sharia and morals are religious principles which aim to complete a person's characteristics to become a perfect human being/the best human being through appreciation that produces a mahmudah nature, and trying to avoid whispers that lead to a mazmumah nature as well as limiting oneself from rational postulates that go beyond the limits of reasonableness (Busthomi, 2023). The author concludes that the category of khairu ummah is someone who harmonizes aspects of faith, sharia, and morals in everyday life. Because these three aspects cannot be separated but can be differentiated, their unity can form a khairu ummah.

Implementation of khairu ummah through religious traditions

Sabilurrosyad Islamic Boarding School is located in Gasek Hamlet, Karang Besuki Village, Sukun Sub-district, Malang City. Prior to its establishment, the local community had limited access to religious knowledge. The majority of the population at that time was non-Muslim, and Christian missionary activities were increasingly prevalent. Concerned about this development, several Islamic scholars and community leaders took the initiative to establish a boarding school with the noble aim of preserving Islamic teachings and strengthening the faith of the local Muslim population against external influences.

The boarding school is led by K.H. Marzuki Mustamar, who is supported by the late K.H. Murtadlo Amin and K.H. Abdul Aziz Husein in managing the foundation. K.H. Marzuki Mustamar, who also serves as the Chairman of the Tanfidziyah PWNU of East Java, is widely respected for his wisdom, open-mindedness, and inclusive leadership. He is a prominent Muslim figure known for his commitment to both religious values and national identity, embodying a balance between spiritual devotion and patriotism.

The vision and mission of Sabilurrosyad Islamic Boarding School are encapsulated in its goal to nurture individuals who embody the spirit of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU): faithful to the teachings of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, devout in worship, noble in character, diligent in prayer, devoted to religious contemplation (tafaqquh fiddin), and responsive to the evolving dynamics of life.

Reporting several findings of religious traditions that have been realized at the Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school in Malang, including; congregational prayer, tadarus Al-

Qur'an, murojaah Nadzom, muhadloroh/khitobah, istighosah and diba', manaqib and burdah, pilgrimage to the saint, turning sandals, smiling, greetings and greetings, mutual respect and tolerance are reflected in the attitudes of students who respect each other and halal bihalal. In maximizing religious traditions, several strategies are carried out, including:

First, the leadership policy in the form of rules and regulations of the boarding school from the results of the management's deliberation, which was then approved by the caretaker of the boarding school. The strong commitment of the caretaker of the boarding school and the head of the female boarding school and their staff can be explained through a structural approach, namely the strategy in realizing the religious culture of the school in this case the religious tradition in the boarding school has become a commitment and policy of the leadership, so that various regulations or policies are born that support the birth of various religious activities in schools as well as supporting facilities and infrastructure including from the financing side (Havid & Fahriyan, 2024). The rules and regulations in the boarding school are in the form of orders and prohibitions, which are the policies of the boarding school. This regulation aims to ensure that students can carry out the activities and rules of the boarding school in an orderly and good manner. Then the existence of these rules and regulations is strengthened by the existence of rewards and punishments so that students are deterred if they do not obey the rules.

Second, providing examples/role models given directly by the caretakers of the pondok, ustad/ustazah and the ranks of mentors. This is intended so that students can emulate the good attitudes exemplified by them. Then, adjusted to Muhaimin's opinion, the strategy in realizing a religious culture, in this case, religious traditions, can be carried out through an exemplary approach and a persuasive approach, namely subtly inviting the school community by providing reasons and good prospects that can convince them (Nasikhah, 2021).

Third, habituation is also carried out to create religious traditions in the Islamic boarding school environment. The implementation of religious activities in Islamic boarding schools is carried out continuously and consistently, this aims to make students accustomed to what is being done. Activities at the Putri Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school are carried out continuously and repeatedly. Not only habituation to activities, but also habituation of good behavior in everyday life. In learning Islamic Religious Education, several approaches need to be used, including the first experiential approach, namely providing religious experiences to students to instill religious values, and the second habituation approach, namely providing opportunities for students to always practice their religious teachings or noble morals (Brifkani, 2023).

Fourth, motivation is provided by the caretaker of the pondok and the female teacher so that the students remain enthusiastic in carrying out the activities of the pondok and improving themselves. The main function of religious education is to provide a religious foundation that can arouse awareness and encourage students to carry out actions that support the formation of a strong religious personality (Kamal, 2023).

Fifth, supervision, in maintaining the creation of a religious atmosphere, is carried out both directly and indirectly. Sabilurrosyad Islamic boarding school provides supervision to female students by having attendance from each activity. This is so that to maintain the creation of a religious culture in schools, supervision efforts are needed, both directly and indirectly (Bela & Mahmudah, 2024).

The results illustrated from this study show the positive impact of the existence of religious traditions reflected in the behavior of students. The behaviors demonstrated by students include

being tawasuth (middle-middle), tasamuh (tolerant), and tawazun (balanced). According to K.H Irfan Hielmy, the indicators of khairu ummah are moderate Muslims, democratic believers, and diplomatic believers. which contain aspects of tawasuth, tasamuh, tawazun, and l'tidal. Tawasuth (middle-middle) is manifested by students in their behavior, which is in the middle in responding to two choices (Majdi, 2017). Still choosing according to their beliefs but not fanatical and still respecting joint decisions. This is by the opinion of K.H Hasyim Asy'ari that the principle of the aqidah of ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamaah is Tawasuth, meaning a middle-of-the-road attitude, moderate, not extreme left and extreme right. The recommendation to adopt a tawasuth attitude is based on Q.S al-Baqarah verse 143 (Munawir, 2016). Furthermore, the attitude of tasamuh (tolerance) is manifested by students through their attitude of respecting differences, remaining respectful to people who have different opinions but still believing in something that is their belief. Tolerance or tasamuh, which means respecting differences and respecting people who have different life principles from us, but does not mean acknowledging or justifying the beliefs of other groups, is based on Q.S Thaha verse 44, which means appealing to Muslims to speak softly. The attitude of tawazun (balanced) is reflected in the attitude of students who can marry religious knowledge and general knowledge or balance between worldly and afterlife matters.

CONCLUSSION | خاتمة

The implementation of religious traditions at Sabilurrosyad Islamic Boarding School in Malang plays a pivotal role in shaping the character of khairu ummah—a community grounded in moral excellence and spiritual integrity. Core practices such as congregational prayers and tadarus (recitation) of the Qur'an not only deepen students' religious understanding but also cultivate strong moral and spiritual foundations aligned with the principles of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil) and iman billah (faith in God). The study reveals that integrating these traditions into non-formal education has been effective in addressing issues of moral decline and religious misinterpretation within the broader society. These findings highlight the potential of religious boarding schools as transformative agents in nurturing ethical, spiritually aware individuals. Practically, this model offers valuable insights for communities striving to build a religiously grounded yet socially harmonious society. Encouraging similar value-based educational practices in other settings could significantly contribute to the formation of a more just, tolerant, and spiritually resilient social fabric.

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