

THE RELIGIOUS CONSTRUCTION OF KIAI ON PLURALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

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Abstract

The reality of plurality in the context of humanity is something that Allah Almighty has desired, and the human task is to nurture and develop mutual respect and appreciation among people (tolerant). In this regard, the purpose of this study is to explore and explain exactly what kind of religious construction of kiai pesantren about pluralism and multiculturalism, the basis of references used, because it is related to the kiai's point of view in resolving social conflicts that sometimes occur in the community. The data research was collected through survey and depth interview with some kiai pesantren in East Java. Data analysis was conducted with qualitative narrative and through Forum Group Discussion (FGD). The result shows that the mapping of religious construction of kiai pesantren in East Java consists of (1) religious construction with inclusive and exclusive categories and (2) religious construction with exclusive categories.

Realitas pluralitas dalam konteks kemanusiaan merupakan kehendak Allah SWT, tugas manusia adalah memelihara dan mengembangkan rasa saling menghormati dan menghargai sesama (toleran). Dalam hal ini, tujuan penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dan menjelaskan dengan tepat konstruksi religius kiai pesantren tentang pluralisme dan multikulturalisme, dasar referensi yang digunakan, karena ini terkait dengan sudut pandang Kiai dalam menyelesaikan konflik sosial yang kadang-kadang terjadi di masyarakat. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui survei dan wawancara mendalam dengan beberapa kiai pesantren di Jawa Timur. Analisis data dilakukan dengan narasi kualitatif dan melalui Forum Group Discussion (FGD). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembangunan

agama Pesantren Kiai di Jawa Timur pada pluralisme dan multikulturalisme dapat dipetakan menjadi dua, yaitu (1) konstruksi keagamaan dengan kategori inklusif dan eksklusif dan (2) konstruksi keagamaan dengan kategori eksklusif.

Keywords: *kiai; pluralism; multiculturalism; religious construction; social conflict*

Introduction

Awareness of the reality of differences in ethnicity, religion, culture, understanding, and others are expected to grow and develop from the *kiai pesantren*, because *Kiai* becomes a central figure for the people in various ways, including in the process of transformation of knowledge. The awareness that human differences and diversity in various aspects are significant or *sunnatullah* (natural) that should be owned by all humanity so that that life can take place peacefully and without social conflict.

The arising of several cases of inter-religious tension, even religious-labeled violence that occurs today is caused by the religious construction of some religious leaders (*kiai*) who tend to be textual and simplistic in constructing the problems of the people. Some people are also affected by the existence of religious construction, which ultimately leads to attitudes and behaviors facing each other with tensions.

While cases of interreligious tensions are caused by symptoms of hardening of religious attitudes not balanced by critical-rational-objective attitudes and respect for the diversity of religious understanding by other adherents. (Muqawim, 2004). This hardening of religious attitudes is more interpreted in the pattern of religious behavior which considers the results of their understanding to be the most correct and considers the understanding of others to be incorrect. This symptom is not only found in the attitude of followers of different religions. However, it also happens to adherents of religion in one religion.

The description of the controversy in the religious construction of the *kiai* can be seen, among others, the response to the *fatwa* of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) on pluralism and multiculturalism which are claimed to be *haram* and considered contrary to Islamic teachings. Some of the *kiai* (religious elite) who supported this decision included the *Kiai Idris Marzuki* from *pesantren Lirboyo-Kediri* and *Kiai Abdulloh Faqih* from the *pesantren Langitan-Tuban*. Those who opposed it were *Gus Dur* and *Gus Mus* (K. H.

Mustofa Bisri). Gus Mus, for example, commenting on the MUI's decision by explaining the MUI defines itself as a concept that they do not understand.

The response of some *kiai pesantren* to the global issues that occurred later gave rise to radical groups that made religion as a political ideology to rally together strengths. *Pesantren* is inseparable from this global current. Therefore a number of *pesantren* emerged, developing exclusive, intolerant and radical religious visions, and rejecting the reality of pluralist societies.

Such reality becomes its own challenge, especially for *kiai pesantren* in developing an inclusive or moderate religious vision, because this vision can provide serenity and peace for all creatures, which in Islamic terminology often refers to as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*. However, there are some Muslims take their moral construction position exclusively, and partly inclusive, even in the *pesantren* too, including among *pesantren* leaders (*kiai*). From the context of *pesantren*, different religious constructions are not separated from the book that is used as a reference, and with whom someone is studying.

Literature Review

In the context of this research, the theoretical perspective developed refers to the Islamic concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*. *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* universally means that it can provide peace to all creatures and groups of different human beings, both regarding religion, culture, race, language, and differences in other aspects. This perspective illustrates how Islam is very concerned about the diversity of God's creation and awareness to recognize and respect existing differences.

Indeed, religion is revealed by God and has brought a mission of peace and is a capital to live in harmony. The teachings of religion teach the people about the principles of multiculturalism and pluralism, namely the teaching to know each other (*ta'aruf*) because of differences in cultural, ethnic, linguistic and gender backgrounds (Abdullah, 2000). However, empirically-historical-factual, occasionally, not to say often, violence is committed by some members of society under the pretext of religion.

Muslim scholars whose categories of religious construction are inclusive such as Nurcholish Madjid view that pluralism must be understood as an actual meeting of diversity in politeness/civilization ties (*bonds of civility*) (Madjid, 1997). This inclusive religious construction, in reality, has a positive impact in realizing a harmonious and tolerant social life order.

To illustrate the attitude of recognition and respect for various differences of opinion or *madzhab* in the midst of social life in the present study, there are accompanying terms, including inclusive Islam, moderate Islam and Islam *wasathiyah*. However, all are actually based on the concept Islam of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, a universal concept that shows flexibility of Islamic teachings which is very important as a paradigm in various social life, including among *pesantren*.

The pluralist *pesantren* can be seen from several aspects: (1) the *pesantren* has become the center of the study of religions; (2) *pesantren* curriculum (both the word curriculum or hidden curriculum) have given a portion and considerable attention in the development of interfaith relations; (3) the *kiai* is familiar with other religions as well as the characters; (4) there are students from outside the religion who have studied at the *pesantren*, although it may only live in *pesantren*; (5) many guests from various other religions who often visit *pesantren*; (6) *pesantren* members are familiar and understand well the terms related to interfaith relations such as pluralism, inclusivism, tolerance and so on; (7) the character of *santri* and *pesantren* have often dialogue and socialized with non-Muslims, with the meaning of the word giving a behavior that show religious tolerance; and (8) the emergence of works that intersect with tolerance and inter-religious relations (Nafis 2014).

In *pesantren*, this inclusive Islamic discourse needs to be developed by the *kiai* by reviewing or reinterpreting the *Kitab Kuning* (KK). In KK literature, fiqh construction is organized into four parts, namely worship (ritual teachings), *munākahat* (family law), *muamalah* (public and social relations), and *jinayah* or *hudud* (criminal). However, in the modern era, fiqh undergoes deconstruction and expansion of study that reaches out to issues (politics), *iqtishadiyah* (macro and microeconomics), *ijtima'iyah* (social), *dawli* (between nations), *qadha* (judicial), and so on.

Historically, the treasures of Islamic intellectuals have bequeathed many books written by scholars who tried to interpret scriptures from various aspects including interpretation, hadith, fiqh, philosophy, and sufism. When Islam entered the *nusantara*, which intensified in the XII and XIII centuries, there was a gradual process of adaptation or even taking over social institutions such as *pesantren* into the Islamic tradition (Azra 1994).

From a variety of religious texts sourced from the scriptures gave birth to various scientific specifications among *pesantren*, there are some *pesantren* known for deepening of their science in the field of interpretation, some in the field of hadith, some in the field of fiqh, and some in the field of *tasawuf* (sufism).

This shows that a variety of scientific traditions developed by emphasizing on specific scientific fields is a reflection of the diversity of *pesantren*.

As part of scientific dynamics, this research is relevant to previous studies. Table 1 presents the previous studies which are related to the focus of this research:

Table 1. Mapping of Previous Research

No	Researcher (Year)	Research Focus	Approach	Research Findings
1.	Steenbrink (1986)	<i>Pesantren</i> Madrasah School. Subjects: Kiai and <i>Pesantren</i> from East Java	History of Politics and Education	Changes in <i>pesantren</i> society occur institutionalization of <i>kiai</i> institutions in the form of foundations of knowledge formalization and transfer of legitimacy of <i>kiai</i>
2.	Mastuhu (1994)	<i>Pesantren</i> Education System. Subject: <i>Pesantren</i> , <i>Kiai</i> , and <i>Santri</i> in East Java	History of Education with an anthropological-sociological approach (symbolic interactions).	Changes in the patterns of <i>kiai</i> leadership, the interaction of <i>kiai-santri</i> , and the teaching of <i>kiai-santri</i> .
3.	Abdullah (2000)	Empirical-Historical-Factual Phenomena of Indonesian Society	Anthropology of Religion	Culturally, religious teaching teaches people to know each other (<i>ta'aruf</i>) because of differences in cultural background, religion, language, and gender.

4.	Rizal (2000)	<i>Tamparisasi</i> Symbols of <i>Wong Jaba, Jeru,</i> and <i>Mambu-mambu</i>	Anthropology of Religion	Classification of <i>kiai</i> is based on interaction with the community.
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Referring to the presentation of relevant previous research as stated, there have been many studies on *kiai*, but in this study there is a different point with previous studies, namely on the religious construction of the *kiai pesantren* about pluralism and multiculturalism and the *Kitab Kuning* references as a capital in solving social conflicts, this is what marks the novelty in this study because it needs more exploration.

The issue of the religious construction of the *kiai*, especially the *kiai pesantren* in the context of the life of the nation and state is crucial to be discussed because it can have an impact on social order. When a *kiai pesantren* is exclusively religious (closed), the impact is recognition and respect for pluralism and multiculturalism is very low, but on the contrary, when religious construction is inclusive (open), the impact is a high recognition and respect for pluralism and multiculturalism. Therefore, the formulation in this study is what the religious construction of the *kiai pesantren* in East Java about pluralism and multiculturalism as the capital for resolving social conflicts is? The purpose of this research is to explore and describe and map the religious construction of *kiai pesantren* in East Java about pluralism and multiculturalism.

Method

This study was conducted in East Java. The choice of East Java is because it has approximately 50% of *pesantren* in Indonesia. Mahmuddin Udin quoted by Amin Haedari, Director of *Pesantren* of the Ministry of Religion, saying the data on the number of *pesantren* until 2005 were 14,361 *pesantren* throughout Indonesia. From these, there are 11,664 *pesantren* in Java, 1,381 in Sumatra, 661 in Bali and Nusa Tenggara, 294 in Kalimantan, and 25 in Papua (Udin, 2005). Meanwhile, data from the East Java Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion mentions the number of *Pesantren* in East Java is 5,220 (*Departemen Agama Jawa Timur*, 2005).

Considering the large number and variants of *pesantren*, culturally, this study classifies *pesantren* based on region, namely the Madura region with the characteristics of Madura culture, the northern coastal region of West East Java, starting from Bojonegoro Regency to Gresik Regency, Jombang Regency and surrounding areas, the Kediri region, Madiun region (Jawa Mataraman), and

the coastal area of the North Coast of East Java in East Part (*Pondok Pesantren* in Probolinggo and Situbondo, and Jember). As in the *pesantren* community, each region has a *kiai* and a *pesantren* that becomes a “reference.” Meanwhile, the *kiai* and other *pesantren* become their “filial” or branch. This research took informants from *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) or *Rabithah Ma’ahid Indonesia* (RMI) or known as the Indonesian *Pesantren* Association, the subject of the research was the *kiai* who became the “central figure” in the “referral” *pesantren*. The *kiai* intended was KH. Abdul Haq (Paiton-Probolinggo), KH. Djazuli Noer (Bangkalan Madura), KH. Islahudin Sarwan Gunawan (Ngawi), KH. M. Abdul Azis Mansoer (PP Pacul Gowang Jombang), KH. Abdul Matin (Tuban), and Gus Zaky (Trenggalek).

The data collection of this study used surveys and in-depth interviews with several *kiai pesantren* who were the subject of research. The survey was conducted to map *pesantren* based on their region and characteristics. While in-depth interviews were conducted to identify and explore the religious construction of the *kiai pesantren* about pluralism and multiculturalism, and also the KK reference sources used. Data analysis in this study was carried out with qualitative narratives and through Forum Group Discussion (FGD) which began with the identification of the religious construction of the *kiai* from the results of surveys and interviews, then mapping the religious construction (categorical/domain analysis).

Research Result

In providing views on pluralism and multiculturalism, *kiai pesantren* have a variety of different views. At least, this variety of views can be observed from six *pesantren* caregivers in East Java, namely five *kiai* and one person holding the title *Gus* (son of a *kiai*). The variety of views can be broadly mapped into two, namely (1) religious construction with categories between inclusive and exclusive (not to say inclusive in total), and (2) religious construction with exclusive categories.

For multiculturalism, the *kiai pesantren* consider it not to be a problem if it is interpreted as diversity other than religion, for example, diversity of ethnic, language, and so on. Indeed, God created various types of people, ranging from skin color, language, tribe, and others. Because it is only related to diversity other than religion, and it does not relate to the doctrine of the creed, it is considered a *sunnatullah* (something that God wants) and even must be recognized. However, when discussing the problem of pluralism (religious

plurality), there are various religious constructions that vary between one *kiai* and another. It is not separated from their understanding of the verses of the Qur'an, the hadith of the Prophet, and the *kitab kuning* (yellow books) which are used as references in addition to also referring to the ulema, both classical and modern.

When researchers try to confirm the verses of the Qur'an, one side seems to recognize the existence of other religions besides Islam (pluralism). Examples of verses that recognize the diversity of other religions, such as sura Ali Imran verse 84, Sura al-Maidah verse 48, and sura al-Baqarah verse 62. On the other hand, there are also verses that seem not to recognize the existence of other religions as in the sura Ali Imran verse 85, and sura Ali Imran verse 19, the *kiai* and Muslim scholars differ in their views.

Some *kiai pesantren* whose religious construction is said to be not inclusive and not exclusive, based their understanding on the hadith of the Prophet which reads: *Man adza dzimmiyan fa ana khosmuhu, wa man kuntu khasmahu, khosomtuhu yaumul qiyamah*. That is, whoever hostile towards the *dhimmi* infidels (infidels who does not hostile to Muslims), then I (the Messenger of Allah) becomes his enemy, and whoever I against, I will fight tomorrow on the Day of Judgment. According to Kiai Abdul Matin, the way in which pluralism implemented is like that. That was the statement of Kiai Matin from Tuban (Interview July 1, 2007). This category of religious construction is more appropriate in the "between inclusive and exclusive" position.

A similar view was also expressed by KH. Abdul Haq (Paiton-Probolinggo) who said we should not feel right by ourselves (Interview July 13, 2007). Likewise the *kiai* Islahudin Sarwan Gunawan from Ngawi said, the same believers must find common ground that does not conflict with the teachings believed (Interview, 11 July 2007), and also Gus Zaky, the son of KH Zainal Fanani Trenggalek said, it should be noted that religions other than Islam are equally entitled to be respected, in terms of their humanitarian framework, and if about the faith of each religion has faith (Interview, 11 July 2007).

Meanwhile for the *kiai pesantren* whose religious construction is from an inclusive and exclusive category such as Kiai Azis Mansoer from Jombang who said; indeed each religious community together claimed that the religion he believed is the best religion. For Islam, the true religion is indeed Islam, while the others are not, but we must respect the adherents of other religions in a tolerant way of life (Interview, 12 July 2007). The same thing was also expressed by Kiai Djazuli Noer from Bangkalan who said that tolerance and nationality

needed to be developed but not by mixing the teachings of several religions (Interview, July 13, 2007). For more details on the religious construction map of *kiai pesantren* in East Java and the *Kitab Kuning* (KK) which is usually used as a reference can be seen in the table 2:

Table 2: Religious Construction Map of *kiai pesantren* in East Java concerning Pluralism and Multiculturalism along with KK as the Reference

No.	Research Subject (<i>Kiai</i>)	Religious Construction Classification	<i>Kitab Kuning</i> Focus (KK)	Overview of the <i>Kiai</i> Paradigm
1.	KH. Abdul Haq (Paiton- Probolinggo)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	Referring to the writings of Sayyid Qutub and the interpretation of the <i>Fi Dhalil Qur'an</i>	We must respect each other, share with each other, and give understanding to the followers of each religion, to understand that there are differences in the religions, there will be no expressions of attack to each other, we must not blaspheme, and we cannot feel right by ourselves. Perhaps in this way, we will not experience conflict.
2.	KH. Djazuli Noer (Bangkalan Madura)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	The <i>Kitab Kuning</i> discusses the pluralism of madzhab in Islam	In a nation and a state tolerance needs to be developed but not by mixing up religious teachings. Tolerance towards adherents of other religions according to Islam is in the form of respect to <i>dzimmi infidile</i> , which protects non-Muslims who do not disturb us.
3.	KH. Islahudin Sarwan Gunawan (Ngawi)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	Not yet found apparently in the KK (only based on the understanding of the Al-Quran verse only)	We must do <i>Ahlakul Karimah</i> (Praised Acts) with them (Non-Muslims) as exemplified by the Prophet in associating with adherents of other religions, and vice versa, seeking common ground that does not conflict with the teachings he believes

4.	K H . M . Abdul Azis Mansoer (PP Pacul Gowang Jombang)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	The <i>Kitab Kuning</i> discusses Pluralism, but the Pluralism of <i>madzhab</i> in Islam	Indeed, each religious community claims that the religion they believe is the best religion. For Islam, the best religion is Islam, while others are not, but we must respect the adherents of other religions with a tolerant way of life.
5.	KH. Abdul Matin (Tuban)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	All <i>Kitab Kuning</i> is exist	According to the Prophet, Islam recognizes the existence of pluralism, even though it is acknowledged as exist, he must embrace the truth, namely Islam. Even though the right hand is held, it still must not be hostile to other religions, even in the hadith of the prophet is stated: <i>Man adza dzimmiyan fa ana khosmuhu, khosomtuhu yaumal qiyamah.</i> That is, even though pluralism should not be hostile, anyone who is hostile to the <i>dhimmi</i> infidels, then I (the Messenger of Allah) becomes his enemy tomorrow on the Day of Judgment. This is the way to implement pluralism.
6.	Gus Zaky (Trenggalek)	Between Inclusive and Exclusive	Fathul Wahab, the Book of <i>Bijairomi</i> in the final chapters, and the Sahih Bukhari book	Pluralism is addressed in substance only. We do not agree that religion is confused. We agree that not all religions are considered accurate except Islam, but it should be noted that religion besides Islam is equally entitled to be respected.

Discussion

Kitab Kuning (KK) studies which used as a reference for the *pesantren* religious elite can recognize and find the seeds of understanding of pluralism and multiculturalism that already exist. Epistemology of fiqh itself recognizes differences in madzhab and Muslims are permitted to follow one of the madzhab. However, the tradition of KK teaching at the *pesantren* emphasizes only certain books. A *kiai* is continually possible to be a determinant factor in the emergence of exclusivity that does not value differences and in turn gives birth to extremity and absolutism which views only a single truth.

Extreme religious construction type as it was not able to contribute nation-state discourse towards peace and tolerance livelihood, even it can realize intolerant attitude which became one of the triggers and sources of social conflicts ethnicity, religion, race, Intergroup (SARA). Therefore, in the context of the findings of this study, the type of moderate diversity construction that appreciates diversity has been apparent from most *kiai pesantren*. Accordingly, it can contribute to the plural and multicultural life of Indonesian society, which is far from prejudice and jealousy. This type of religious construction of the *kiai* can be an essential capital in resolving social conflicts.

Religious thinkers try to formulate the right formula how to reduce the conflict based on religion, not only Islam but also Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and other religions (Amar, 2010). Therefore, the right formula raises the idea of tolerance, harmony, pluralism, and the like as an effort to prevent/reduce religious conflicts that are sometimes so powerful, brutal and bloody. Efforts to create a pluralistic life, but remain harmonious, peaceful and tolerant are essential.

Related to the results of the research above, the figures who were the reference of *kiai pesantren* whose religious construction was “between inclusive and exclusive” were the ulemas who became pluralist reformists such as Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Ridha, Fazlur Rahman, and at-Thabathabai. At-Thabathabai said Allah does not look at a particular religion, but the most important thing is the substance and essence contained in that religion (Shihab, 1999).

The Indonesian Muslim scholars who are in line with such views include Abdurahman Wahid, Nurcholis Madjid, and Amin Abdullah. Meanwhile the *kiai* whose exclusive religious construction refers to the famous interpreters of the 10th century AD, namely al-Tabari, Fakhrudin al-Razi (12th century),

and Ibn Katsir (14th century). For Indonesian figures who are referred to in relation to this issue is the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI).

Meanwhile, the issue of pluralism and multiculturalism is the primary challenge faced by religions in the world today, given that every religion emerges from a pluralistic religious and cultural environment (Jaenuri 2005). At the same time, adherents of religions have formed exclusive insights and contradict the spirit of pluralism and multiculturalism.

Diversity or multiculturalism is a significant reality experienced by society and culture in the past, present and future (Azra, 2005). Multiculturalism can be understood merely as an acknowledgment that a country or society is diverse and plural (both ethnics, religious, cultural and other). On the contrary, no single country contains only a single national culture. Multiculturalism is a commitment to recognize diversity as one of the main characteristics and characteristics of society and ethnics groups and races. At the same time, there are also various symbols, values, structures and institutions in an ordinary life that binds a variety of diversity.

In reality, various religions and beliefs develop in the community (Yasin, 2014). The plurality of religion, beliefs, and guidelines for human life is a social fact that cannot be denied. All parties must be aware that on this earth there is a diversity of identities, both multiethnics, multilingual, multi religion, multiracial and multicultural, which has different styles and will not be equal. In a multi-life, including multi religion, every religious belief has the right to have a different view of each other, and they have the right to continue to live and to be respected with the views of life they have chosen. Therefore, every person and every religious group must be willing to acknowledge the existence of another party and want to respect the differences. The awareness of willing to recognize and respect the existence of other groups is an inclusive, multicultural attitude developed in this multi-life.

Normatively and empirically the recognition of diversity in the Qur'an has been affirmed as said by Allah: "Indeed I have created you men and women and I made you nations and tribes, so you know each other" (QS al-Hujurat, verse 13). Thus, God makes plural and multicultural, and human duty is to maintain diversity by promoting tolerance, so that life can take place peacefully. Such religious construction can overcome the occurrence of social conflicts when they occur in the midst of people's lives.

The religious construction of *kiai pesantren*, in general, is a reference for Indonesian society in community life. What is conveyed by the *kiai*, especially

the *kiai pesantren*, the community or people will follow it. Therefore, to realize a peaceful order of life and away from conflict, religious construction that emphasizes tolerance is very important, and it is ideal reflected in the religious construction of a *kiai* who is known as a role model for the people because the people will follow in his footsteps.

The attitude of *pesantren* in dealing with pluralism is: (1) explaining the position of Islam in the midst of religious and cultural diversity, so that religious tolerance only revolves around morals and *muamalah*, and does not enter into the realm of the *aqeedah* and *shari'a*. (2) Establishing a center of study and discussion as well as discussion groups among *pesantren* residents on topics of discussion related to the notions of liberalism and religious pluralism, so that students are accustomed to answering these problems with strong arguments (Ismail, 2013).

The *Kitab Kuning* (KK) which is often used as a reference by *kiai pesantren* has illustrated the existence of religious construction that reflects pluralism and multiculturalism. The existence of religious construction is marked by recognition of differences in *madzhab* and differences in teaching. These differences, if traced, are also influenced by differences in culture in which the situation and conditions of the ulema or *imam* of the *madzhab* are in different cultural and social environments.

The description of the religious construction of the *kiai pesantren* about pluralism and multiculturalism as reflected in the recognition of the differences of *madzhab* and differences in teaching has become an essential capital in addressing the diverse problems of the people. This is where the *kiai pesantren* have been tested in solving the problems of the people, including social conflicts.

Tolerance values have mainly been laid by *ulema pesantren* in various sciences, for example, *saka tasawuf* and *fiqh* (Nafis, 2014). It takes comprehension and meaning comprehensively and integratively to be able to explore and then manifest in everyday life. As an example of the concept of *rahmatan lil al-'alamin* which has not so much touched human diversity. The concept has long been understood by *santri*, but in the meantime, it has not received the right portion related to religious differences. *Santri* is only presented with the concept of mutual respect between fellow believers, without any effort on how to appreciate it in real life. Appreciation for others will be stronger when indeed confronted with different contexts and conditions. *Santri* should often be introduced in real terms with the existence of "different" (Nafis, 2014).

Classification of *kiai pesantren* religious construction in East Java as the findings presented in this study have provided an overview of the typology and mapping of the construction of the *kiai pesantren*, the *Kitab Kuning* which is used as a reference, and the affiliations of figures and *madzhab* adopted. Although there are different classifications of religious construction among *kiai pesantren*, the spirit of tolerance remains visible in the attitudes and behaviors shown, and this is an excellent example in the life of society, nation and state.

Among the *pesantren* whose the *kiai* is making the *Kitab Kuning* as one of the essential references in transforming scholarship to their students, they tend to have a moderate attitude and higher tolerance. Moreover, it is obvious when compared to the *pesantren* whose books of reference are from books written by figures who are known as fundamentalists, even if their understanding is textual. Differences in references or reference books in *pesantren* and affiliated figures also color the differences in religious construction among *kiai pesantren*.

In today's context, *pesantren* are required to be proactive, responding to the culture of the community by first, appearing creatively in dialogue with local culture and outside culture, as well as modifying it into a new culture that can be accepted by the local community and following religious values. Second, developing a culture of tolerance, so that in the *pesantren* community an inclusive understanding will grow to harmonize religions in the midst of people's lives (Mahfudhoh & Azhari 2015). The *pesantren* must be a vanguard in combating the *madzhab* fanaticism because the *Imam of madzhab* himself forbids his followers from following him. Without a strategy like this, *pesantren* will only function as a counter-culture that is counter-productive and often has values and norms that are different from other cultures.

In the context of plural and multicultural societies such as the Indonesian nation, religious construction that emphasizes tolerance is a priority to be disseminated and developed because this is the primary parameter in realizing a harmonious social life. The religious construction of the *kiai pesantren* as a role model for Indonesian people or society in the religious field will be a reference in addressing various problems of social life, including in resolving social conflicts.

Conclusion

The different religious constructions among *kiai pesantren* in East Java are broadly grouped into two forms, namely (1) "between inclusive and exclusive," and (2) exclusive. An inclusive form of totality is not apparent among *kiai*

pesantren in East Java, only arriving in the middle position. The existence of differences in religious construction between one *kiai* and other *kiai* illustrates that *pesantren* has shown a miniature of pluralism and multiculturalism in the life of the nation and state. Each of these religious constructions has implications for ways of resolving social conflicts in the midst of national and state life.

Some *kiai pesantren* in East Java who were the subjects in this study had different religious constructions on the issue of pluralism. These differences cannot be separated from their understanding of the verses of the Qur'an, the hadith of the prophet, and the *Kitab Kuning* which are used as references in addition to referring to the ulema where they studied, even though the *Kitab Kuning* used as references is more or less the same. In the historical reality, there has never been any *kiai pesantren* with other *kiai pesantren* whose relations are not harmonious because of different opinions. They can still manage differences of opinion well so that people see it as something mediocre.

Suggestion

Considering the results of the research, the resolutions offered to overcome differences in religious construction among *kiai* are as follows: (1) comprehensive religious understanding should be developed, so that religious insight is more open. (2) It needs to learn from each other the positive side of a difference, instead of looking for the negative side instead. (3) It is necessary to strengthen the attitude of tolerance in all aspects of life, including tolerance because it is different in the practice of religious teachings because even though the *kiai* differ in religious construction, they can establish relationships that respect each other's opinions. In history, there is an example of a harmonious relationship between Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari and Kiai Ahmad Dahlan, who are said to be good friends even though there are some differences in the practice of Islamic teachings.

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