PROMOTING PATRIOTISM AND RELIGIOUS MODERATION: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SANADMEDIA.COM

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Abstract
This study aims to investigate the role of Sanadmedia.com in promoting patriotism and religious moderation through digital media in Indonesia. Employing a critical discourse analysis framework, the research examines five selected articles from Sanadmedia.com, focusing on patriotism and religious moderation themes. Data collection involved systematic sampling of articles published between 2020 and 2022. The study utilized thematic content analysis as the primary method to explore how Sanadmedia.com integrates classical Islamic teachings. The findings reveal that Sanadmedia.com strategically employs Qur’anic verses, hadiths, and scholarly opinions to construct narratives that emphasize national values and religious teachings, fostering a discourse of balanced faith and strengthened national identity. While effectively reaching a religiously literate audience, the platform’s approach could benefit from broader inclusivity strategies to engage a wider spectrum of Indonesian society. This research underscores the potential of digital media in promoting religious harmony and countering radicalism by presenting a narrative of patriotism rooted in Islamic principles. The study concludes with recommendations for enhancing the platform’s outreach and impact, suggesting opportunities for future research into digital media’s role in shaping societal values in diverse cultural contexts.

Keywords: patriotism; religious moderation; critical discourse; website, extremism.

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Abstrak

Kata kunci: cinta tanah air, moderasi beragama, wacana kritis, website, ekstrimisme

INTRODUCTION

The concept of patriotism, or patriotism, is a fundamental value in fostering religious moderation within a nation-state context (Nugraha et al., t.t.; Parepare, t.t.; Subchi et al., 2022). Religious moderation, which entails a balanced and tolerant approach to faith, can only flourish when citizens appreciate the importance of patriotism. Enhancing this patriotic sentiment is crucial and can be achieved through various means, including increasing literacy about patriotism. In the digital age, such literacy can be disseminated through multiple media platforms, including websites, YouTube, Twitter, and other social media channels, adapting to the technological advancements and communication habits of the populace (Akmaliah et al., 2022a; Indonesia & Indonesia, 2019; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016a).

In the digital age, people are looking for religious literacy rather than direct references through scholarly books or authoritative texts to read. The persistence of communication and information technology has led to ease in the search for religious narratives in the palm. The search for spiritual knowledge is carried out with digital media that is instant, easy, and without mobilization to religious centers or places of study such as madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools, or others. People prefer listening to lectures or speeches rather than reading sources. This has led to weak religious literacy among Muslims and subsequently led to some people falling for provocative and exclusive lectures or speeches. These qualities lead to self-righteous spiritual traits and encourage radicalism and extremism. (Arifinsyah et al., 2020; Bruce, 2018; de Graaf & van den Bos, 2021) The research shows that Swedish Muslims are more affected by social media discourse than traditional media because they can cause intense polarization. (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016b)

The harmony index in Indonesia is high every year. However, it does not mean there is no threat to religious intolerance and radicalism. Therefore, the state
adopted a religious moderation policy through the Ministry of Religious Affairs to prevent extremism. (Arif, 2021; Subchi et al., 2022) Increasing religious moderation became a strategic policy and a national movement that was the state’s responsibility and supported by every citizen. So, the support is not only in religious lectures but also in the realm of social media (Anwar & Haq, 2019), through education in schools or colleges both virtually and in concrete form or the learning process (Husna & Thohir, 2020; Kamaludin et al., 2021; Nugraha et al., 2020).

Previous studies underscore the significant role of digital media in shaping religious discourse and influencing public perception. Md. Yazeed Al-Zaman’s research highlights the growing prevalence and positive reception of online religious videos, reflecting a supportive attitude from YouTube users towards such content (Al-Zaman, 2022). Similarly, research by Imam Subchi et al. examines the factors influencing religious moderation in Indonesia, including religious intellectuality, ideology, public and private practices, and religious experience, all of which contribute to preventing intolerance and radicalism (Subchi et al., 2022). Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi’s study emphasizes the roles of prominent Islamic organizations like NU and Muhammadiyah in promoting religious moderation through open-mindedness, interfaith cooperation, and critical engagement with Western values while rejecting radicalism (Zarkasyi, 2019).

Furthermore, Wahyudi Akmaliyah and colleagues have explored the contributions of moderate Islamic figures in fostering religious moderation in Indonesia (Akmaliyah et al., 2022). Ahmad Rizky Mardhatillah Umar attributed religious moderation to Indonesia’s foreign policy construction since 2004. He views the moderate Islam campaign as a picture of Islam in Indonesia that contains a political vision and discourse of hegemony in the international political arena (Bruce, 2018; De Graaf & Van Den Bos, 2021; Husna & Thohir, 2020b; Scheffold, 1998; Sugita et al., 2021). According to him, there are three discourses of Islam in Indonesian foreign policy articulated by different political regimes, namely Islam as a religious identity, moderate Islam from below, and Moderate Islam as part of the Global War on Terror project. (Umar, 2016).

Despite the extensive body of research on religious moderation, there remains a gap in understanding how digital platforms specifically contribute to the reconstruction of patriotic sentiments and the promotion of religious moderation. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how the website sanadmedia.com reconstructs the concept of patriotism to strengthen religious moderation. Unlike previous studies focusing on religious figures, organizations, or literacy within specific circles, this research uniquely examines the articles on sanadmedia.com related to patriotism and religious moderation. Doing so highlights how digital media can be a powerful tool in promoting patriotism as an integral part of religious faith, thus contributing to the broader campaign for religious moderation and countering extremism. This novel approach offers new insights into the role of
online platforms in shaping religious and national identities in contemporary Indonesia.

Theoretical Framework

Critical discourse analysis expresses power, domination, and inequality practiced, reproduced, or challenged through written texts and conversations in social and political contexts (Hirji, 2021a; Jean & Lu, 2018; Maciejewska, 2019). This analysis offers a stance against existing domination within the larger framework of combating social injustice (Possibility of Discourse Analysis Using Topic Modeling, 2023; Schoor, 2017; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Critical discourse analysis is a socio-architectural approach that treats the presentation of the world as an expressive language, meaning that history and knowledge are created through social interaction (Burhan Aykaç & Şenol Durgun, 2018; Lauri, 2021; Wagner & González-Howard, 2018).

Critical Discourse Analysis developed from the emergence of the concept of Critical Linguistic Cognition in Western education on discourse. The analysis of this discourse is comprehensive, both in scope and methodology and its significance. Critical discourse analysis has different characteristics from “non-critical” discourse analysis, which tends to describe only the structure of a discourse. This analysis further explores why an address has a specific design, ultimately leading to an analysis of the social relations between the parties included in the discourse. This analysis is also a critique of linguistics and sociology. Critical discourse analysis provides theories and methods that can be used to conduct empirical studies on the relationship between discourse and sociocultural development in different social domains (Caddick et al., 2017; González Velarde, 2018; Time Series Analysis of Discourse, 2023). Discourse analysis, one of which can be seen in the language field, namely by paying attention to the sentences in the novel text, can utilize the theory of critical discourse analysis.

Some characteristics must be considered: action, setting, history, authority, and ideology. The actions mentioned in critical discourse have several consequences when looking at discourse. First, speech is seen as something that has a purpose, such as influencing, arguing, persuading, denying, reacting, and others. Anyone who speaks or writes has a particular purpose, big or small. Secondly, speech is understood as something consciously expressed and controlled rather than out of control or communicated beyond consciousness. The second feature is the context. Some contexts are vital because they affect the production of speech (Arif, 2021; Bruce, 2018; De Graaf & Van Den Bos, 2021; Ismail, t.t.; Syakur, 2021; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). First, discourse participants are the context in which the discourse is produced, such as gender, age, education, social class, ethnicity, religion, and others relevant to the description of the discourse. Second, specific social parameters such as place, time, the position of the speaker and the listener, or the physical environment are valuable contexts for understanding a speech. In addition, there are historical, power, and ideological aspects. The most
crucial element to understanding a text is putting it in its proper place in history. The energy that controls a person or a group contains another person or group through words. Control here is not always physical and direct but also mental and psychological. The dominant group’s ideology is only effective if society considers the doctrine conveyed to be honest and reasonable. Ideology makes group members act in a similar situation, relate to their problems, and contribute to the formation of unity and cohesion in the group.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines how language and communication enact, reproduce, and resist power, dominance, and inequality. It involves analyzing critical discourses related to politics, race, gender, social class, hegemony, and other social issues (Chu & Huang, 2019; Laher et al., 2019; Reyes, 2011). Van Dijk conceptualized a text as composed of multiple interacting structures or levels. He categorized these into three primary groups. Firstly, the macrostructure encompasses the overall meaning of a text, which can be discerned by examining the main topics or themes emphasized, such as in a news article. Secondly, the superstructure pertains to the organization and arrangement of a text, involving the formation of the discourse and the way different parts are structured to tell a story or convey information. Lastly, the microstructure focuses on small text segments’ detailed, observable meanings. This includes analyzing words, sentences, propositions, paraphrases, and images to understand the finer nuances of the discourse. By examining these three levels, Van Dijk’s framework provides a comprehensive approach to understanding how different elements of a text contribute to its overall meaning and impact (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2023; Discourse and Manipulation, 2023; Hirji, 2021; Rajagopalan, 1999; Van Dijk, 1990, 2008).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted from August 2020 to December 2022 by observing, collecting data, documenting data, interpreting data, and writing the ideas into this article. The research time was divided into three categories. The first stage was theme search, collection of previous research, and pre-research discussions. The second stage is data collection, theory selection, and research results writing. The third stage is to re-check the research results, select journal publications, and follow each publication stage until publication.

The object of research in this study is a website related to patriotism on the Sanad media website. This medium was chosen because it corresponds to the object of study. We are trying to find articles related to patriotism and religious moderation. Five articles on the Sanad media website are the object of this study. The article table in question is as follows:
The data was collected by searching through the sanadmedia website, which was only related to patriotism. The data collection is also done with documentation, looking for literacy materials by the research theme. After the data is obtained, we classify it so that the data taken matches the required data. The data we collect and select follow the theme and objectives of our research so that this research can produce answers and solutions to academic problems (Abel et al., 2021; De Laguna, 1920; Gillborn, t.t.; Laher et al., 2019; Talbot, 2010).

This qualitative research uses a critical discourse theory approach to analyze several articles related to the research theme. So, data analysis is carried out on the text of a particular work by paying attention to at least five things according to the theory. The five things are action, context, history, power, and ideology. This study uses critical discourse analysis with a historical discourse approach model (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2023b; Fuchs, 2020; Housley, 2018; Kumaravadivelu, 1999). This model emphasizes that discourse is inseparable from the historical context in which a group exists (Gold & Klein, 2019; Hodges et al., 2008; Morelock, 2018; Price, 1999; Talbot, 2010; Tremain, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The evolution of media in the digital era is advancing rapidly, exemplified by platforms such as sanadmedia.com. To comprehend the context of the content on
sanadmedia.com, it is essential to examine the editorial profile underpinning this Islamic media outlet. An inspection of the editorial page reveals that Sanadmedia.com is an Islamic media institution that integrates classical literacy with contemporary literacy practices, positioning itself to address present and future discourses. This hybrid approach enables the platform to offer a nuanced blend of traditional and modern perspectives in its content. The establishment of Islamic media itself is a form of a campaign with an enlightenment movement with the slogan “read before talking.” This is a significant action to balance the existing media with Islamic nuances for better Islamic literacy. This editorial gives the impression that social media users can be more careful when referencing religious literacy. The actions taken by Sanadmedia are following the needs of today’s modern Muslim society, which uses or retrieves data from smartphones or the internet by shaking hands. The literacy that is raised does not use random references but from verses from the Quran, hadith, and opinions of scholars to take people who are experts in their fields according to the theme being discussed.

Van Dijk’s macro analysis of critical discourse includes global meanings seen from the text. Social media sites, such as sanadmedia.com, are trying to increase patriotism. Sanadmedia.com is centered on the website and has multiple other social media. The social media connected to the sanadmedia.com website are YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram. This social media platform is top-rated and is followed by social media users. On the editorial page, we can find information that YouTube Sanadmedia already has 42,000 subscribers, Facebook has 14,000 fans, Twitter has 30,000 followers, Instagram has 24,200 followers, Tiktok has 863 followers, and Telegram has 483 subscribers. The popular category on sanadmedia.com is 1005 articles, followed by news, essays, stories, and fatwas. The word in the media sanad reached 250 news and the essay 225 essays.

So, what has been done by sanadmedia.com is a concrete action to add literature to society, especially to the Muslim community in Indonesia. Efforts to disseminate articles and more were also seen on social media such as Twitter. The editors or teams from sanadmedia.com actively use several social media to spread ideas and Islamic information. If readers of sanadmedia.com want to connect with YouTube directly, then a menu button has also been provided at the top menu. Sanadmedia.com has prepared several other menus besides YouTube: home, news, questions and answers, characters, articles, stories, infographics, comics, worship, fatwas, books, and essays. The service to contact editors can also be done by clicking on the service contact.

The superstructure used as material for critical discourse is related to the framework of a text. The article related to patriotism is a sanadmedia article on August 16, 2020, titled “Cinta Tanah Air dalam Islam,” which has been accessed 827 times. The second article, “Wujud Cinta Tanah Air,” was published on August 17, 2020. Both of these writings were written by the same person, a kyai who graduated from Al Azhar doctorate, took care of a boarding school, and taught at one of the universities in Semarang. The text uses religious language. It can be seen

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from the use of the Qur’an and hadith of the Prophet, either written in the original Arabic or with translations only.

In the first article, the author on sanadmedia.com provides the context that Prophet Adam also carried out a sense of patriotism with his wife and previous people. The term also uses religious language, especially when mentioning that being a citizen anywhere is his destiny from God. More than that, patriotism is also the nature of every human being. However, in interpreting the homeland, popular language is trending to be used, although this also refers to the opinions of scholars. In the context of giving homeland, it is defined as consisting of land, a group of people, and a covenant to live together. However, in explaining its components, the author of the sanadmedia.com article again refers to the verse and provides a contextual picture of the Children of Israel who defend their homeland even though the Children of Israel were wrong in controlling Palestine, which claimed the homeland of their ancestors.

If we analyze more deeply, the first and second writings are accessible from the power hegemony. This can be seen from the language used, which follows the language of religion. However, this writing is very appropriate to emerge where the need for a sense of love for the country needs to be grown because of foreign cultures that continue to erode local culture and even eliminate love for the country. The article, published before the Indonesian Independence Day in 2020, contains original writing that has never been before. A prominent feature of this text is the central use of religious language. However, this is not in line with the current condition of Indonesia. People with a high level of spiritual awareness are ready to accept the normative writing of this concept. However, it may be difficult for some who take a more socio-historical approach.

The articles entitled “Darul Ifta: Cinta Tanah Air Tidak Bertentangan Dengan Islam,” “Teladan Rasulullah Soal Cinta Tanah Air, dan “Spirit mencintai Tanah Air dalam kitab Durusul Akhlak” the structure of the writing is no different from the previously published articles (Darul Ifta, t.t.; Spirit Mencintai Tanah Air Dalam Kitab Durusul Akhlak, t.t.; Teladan Rasulullah Soal Cinta Tanah Air, t.t.). The term religion is very clearly used. The concepts found in Egyptian fatwas, book studies, and textual approaches are still widely used. The message from sanadmedia.com is the growth of patriotism with the language of religion. There are efforts to contextualize both based on historical facts and Indonesian sociocultural conditions.

Microstructure in critical discourse can be seen in articles with the theme of homeland that try to adjust the conditions of Indonesian society (Haryanto, 2022; Kosasih, 2021; Naldo, 2022; Zuhrah & Yumasdaleni, 2021). The ideology of writing on sanadmedia.com is based on the values of Pancasila and religious moderation. The writings we analyzed did not have an element of violence and even gave a simple example of realizing patriotism. The context of patriotism in the article sanadmedia.com must be based on religious values, not vice versa. The manifestation of attachment to the land should not exceed the love of a person or the observance of a person to his religion. So, the context of a Muslim who tweets
his homeland in sanadmedia.com by praying for the country, doing good to his fellow human beings. However, in the context of patriotism, do well to others by prioritizing the person closest to the person, for example, from neighbors, and prioritizing people living in the same homeland.

Based on the preceding, the two articles published by sanadmedia.com were written by the same person who is quite authoritative in their field. The religious language gives the impression that the paper is original even though it does seem only to quote verses or hadiths of the Prophet and take the opinions of scholars. The researchers argue that the meaning conveyed has no provocative impression or leads to extremism. The writing presented is easy to understand, concise, and straightforward. We do not find the nuances of politics and power either. However, the direction of the conversation is indeed to cultivate a sense of patriotism, which is undoubtedly related to the context of religious moderation. In addition, this paper is writing about the eve of the anniversary of Indonesian independence. In addition, in that year, religious moderation campaigned to be accepted as the color road of the Indonesian state for un extreme religions.

The concept of patriotism on media websites is a world affair based on Islamic teachings. The correlation of religion and state is mutually reinforcing. Love of the land is part of the spiritual form of faith and a function of human nature. Meanwhile, the state has the power to protect citizens so that the implementation of religious rituals can run smoothly. The logical consequence of patriotism is that it is part of the sacred act, so it must be proportional and not excessive. The consequence of patriotism as a religious spirituality is to act based on religion and the state. Religion sets an example of a religious person who should pray for the good of his country and have a sense of nationalism.

The views of scholars regarding the support of love for the motherland are clear. The Egyptian Darul Ifta very clearly states that the love of one’s homeland is part of one’s perfection. Religion and nationalism must go together. The homeland is seen as a fortress for a person to take refuge to be safe in carrying out religious and spiritual duties. So, one of the messages from the mufti of Egypt gave a message to the family to instill a sense of love for the motherland.

The article on sanadmedia.com shows that the Prophet Muhammad has been regarded as an exemplary queen in Islam in terms of patriotism. Quotes from the Apostle: “You are the best land that I love dearly. Had it not been for my people to expel me from you, I would not have stayed anywhere else besides you” when the Hijra became a famous statement among Muslims. That spirit today needs to be exemplified. Patriotism must be realized by filling the freedom to repair, prosper, and maintain all state-owned facilities from threats that can endanger the country’s integrity. In addition, patriotism must be followed by being willing to sacrifice even though life is at stake for the sake of the country’s establishment and to suffer for the nation’s good.

Based on the results obtained, sanadmedia.com has successfully utilized digital media to disseminate the values of patriotism and religious moderation.
This effort is highly relevant in the modern context, where social media significantly shapes public perceptions and attitudes. The use of religious language in the articles on sanadmedia.com demonstrates a solid approach to integrating religious values with nationalism, which can strengthen the sense of patriotism among Muslim readers (Mihelj & Jiménez-Martínez, 2021; Fedtke, Shin, El Kadoussi, & Ibahrine, 2022).

However, several challenges need to be addressed. First, while the textual and normative approach effectively reaches an audience with high spiritual awareness, this approach may be less effective for those who approach issues from a socio-historical perspective. This indicates the need for a more diverse approach to reach different segments of society. Second, although the messages conveyed are free from elements of violence and extremism, there must be efforts to ensure that these messages are accessible and understandable to a broader and more diverse audience, including those who are less familiar with the religious language used (Zamzami, 2020).

Sanadmedia.com has demonstrated that digital platforms can be crucial in campaigns promoting patriotism and religious moderation. However, to enhance the effectiveness of this campaign, more inclusive and adaptive strategies need to be developed. The broader use of social media and more contextual and relevant approaches to Indonesia’s sociocultural conditions can increase the impact of the messages conveyed (Van Dick et al., 2018).

Overall, this study shows that digital platforms like sanadmedia.com have great potential to contribute to developing a more tolerant and moderate society. It is essential to consider this when developing religious communication policies and strategies in the digital era to create an environment that supports patriotism and religious moderation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that sanadmedia.com effectively leverages digital media to disseminate the values of patriotism and religious moderation. The platform combines classical literacy with modern technology to meet the needs of contemporary Muslim society, providing religious content that is both authoritative and accessible. Using references from the Qur’an, hadith, and scholarly opinions, sanadmedia.com ensures its messages resonate with a religiously literate audience. Integrating social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram amplifies its reach and impact. The substantial follower base on these platforms indicates digital media’s significant role in shaping public perceptions and fostering a sense of national and religious identity.

Sanadmedia.com’s thematic focus on patriotism and religious moderation is delivered through a textual and normative approach, effectively engaging an...
audience with high spiritual awareness. However, the study highlights the need for more diverse strategies to reach broader segments of society, including those who may not be as familiar with religious language or who approach these issues from a socio-historical perspective. The articles on sanadmedia.com successfully avoid elements of violence and extremism, promoting a balanced view of patriotism as an integral part of religious faith. This is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, where fostering religious moderation is crucial for maintaining national harmony and countering radicalism. The research identifies several challenges, including making the messages more accessible and relatable to a broader audience. To enhance the effectiveness of its campaign, sanadmedia.com should consider adopting more inclusive and contextually relevant approaches that address the diverse sociocultural landscape of Indonesia.

Recommendations

Religious leaders and government agencies should explain the urgency of loving the homeland. Delivering messages about patriotism using religious language is essential for the Indonesian people, who hold religious values in high regard. The use of social media as a platform for promoting patriotism must be continuously enhanced. The government should ensure easy access to valid information and data, fostering a growing patriotism among the populace. Patriotism is crucial for the sustainable development and prosperity of Indonesia. Additionally, promoting patriotism is part of a broader effort to counteract extremist currents within religion.

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