

The Islamic Organizations in Indonesia 'Muhammadiyah and NU': Social Perspective Explanation

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Abstract

Objectives: Islamic Organizations in Indonesia have created remarkable social change for almost a century. Since their establishment, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) are the main pillars in enhancing Islamic thoughts and representatives of the majority Muslim in the country. The aim of this research is to analyze the social impact and approaches of these two organizations on the Indonesian society.

Methods: By adopting qualitative method and using social definition approach, seven leaders and scholars of both organizations were selected purposively and interviewed. Narrative approach was used to extract this research based on Giorgi module.

Results: The results of the research reveal that Muhammadiyah and NU are leading social change through conducting social Islamic occasions, education, religious and cultural events and economic empowerment of the society. Every social aspect was analyzed in details in both organizations separately to illustrate their engagement and interaction in Indonesian society.

Conclusions: Muhammadiyah and NU have significant impact in social life of Indonesian people and represent the Islamic culture of the country. Islamic organizations around the world are recommended to follow the same path of Muhammadiyah and NU to enhance society and support the country leadership based on the Islamic thoughts.

Keywords: Social change, Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah, NU.

المنظمات الإسلامية في إندونيسيا "المحمدية ونهضة العلماء": شرح المنظور الاجتماعي

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ملخص

الأهداف: خلقت المنظمات الإسلامية في إندونيسيا تغييرًا اجتماعيًا ملحوظًا لما يقرب من قرن من الزمان. منذ تأسيسها، تعدُّ المحمدية ونهضة العلماء (NU) الركائز الأساسية في تعزيز الأفكار الإسلامية وتمثيل الأغلبية المسلمة في البلاد: حيث إنَّ هذا البحث يهدف إلى تحليل الأثر الاجتماعي ومقاربات هاتين المنظمين على المجتمع الإندونيسي. **المنهجية:** من خلال اعتماد المنهج النوعي واستخدام منهج التعريف الاجتماعي جرى اختيار سبعة قادة وباحثين من كلتا المؤسستين عن قصد وإجراء مقابلات معهم. استُخدم النهج السردى لكتابة هذا البحث بناءً على منهجية (Giorgi). **النتائج:** كشفت نتائج البحث أن منظمي المحمدية ونهضة العلماء يقودان التغيير الاجتماعي من خلال إقامة المناسبات الاجتماعية الإسلامية والتعليم والفعاليات الدينية والثقافية والتمكين الاقتصادي للمجتمع. كما جرى تحليل كل جانب اجتماعي بالتفصيل في كلتا المنظمين على نحو منفصل لتوضيح مشاركتها وتفاعلها في المجتمع الإندونيسي. **الخلاصة:** المحمدية ونهضة العلماء لهما تأثير كبير في الحياة الاجتماعية للشعب الإندونيسي ويمثلان الثقافة الإسلامية للبلاد. تنصح المنظمات الإسلامية في جميع أنحاء العالم أتباع نفس مسار منظمي المحمدية ونهضة العلماء لتعزيز المجتمع ودعم قيادة البلاد على أساس الأفكار الإسلامية. **الكلمات الدالة:** التغيير الاجتماعي، المنظمات الإسلامية، مؤسسة المحمدية، مؤسسة نهضة العلماء.

Introduction

As Islamic social organizations, Muhammadiyah (In Arabic; *المحمدية*) and Nahdlatul Ulama (In Arabic; *نهضة العلماء*) were established in 1912 and 1926 respectively (Rudin & Darmawan, 2020). Every organization has been found based on different principles. Muhammadiyah was found based on Ahmad Dahlan thoughts of modernism and Ijtihad while Nahdlatul Ulama started at the beginning to keep traditions and Indonesian culture in addition to merging of the Islamic thoughts with local culture. Muhammadiyah and NU are famous as social organizations (Hamami, 2021). Being social organization is the main reason behind their survival for a long period, more than a century, without any dispersions.

Majority of Indonesian people are Muslims. According to Central Bureau of Statistics, in the 2020 Indonesian census, 87.18% of Indonesians identified themselves as Muslim with Sunni more than 99%, Shia 0.5%, Ahmadis 0.2% (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2010). 207 million of population are Muslims while 70 million of them are adherents of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). Following of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama is a social and political phenomena. Adherents of these social Islamic organizations have many religious, social and political benefits. Their rational choice of following these organizations is based on some benefits and goals. This research illustrates the social change through two organizations based on the leaders' perspective of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama are an ideal example of Islamic social organizations around the world (Fakhrurroji, 2019). Merging local culture, social and political activities with Islam and keeping them at the same row without conflicts is an advantage and a role model for any Islamic country (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). This study also describes Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama as Islamic social organizations due to different perceptions and perspectives of Islam and traditions. This study aims to give more understanding of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama based on the social perspectives of Islamic thoughts. These two organizations play a significant role in shaping Indonesian Islamic thoughts. There is persistent need to study and clarify the role of these two organizations and their unique characteristics. Conflicts of some Islamic sects in many Islamic countries led to serious problems for these countries while the opposite is in Indonesian Islamic organizations and that was the reason of conducting this research.

Social impact of these two organizations are represented in education, social occasions, cultural activities, economy and charity (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). These impact is different between Muhammadiyah and NU (Pringle, 2010) and will be explained main objective of the study for every organization separately. It is important to mention that, these social differences are not far away between two organizations (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). The differences are based on the basic thoughts and understanding of Islamic religion.

This study investigates and explains the social role of both organizations "Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in the Indonesian society. The main focus is on four perspectives namely: socio-religious views, socio-cultural perspectives, education developments and economical activities where these perspectives highly affected by thoughts of two organizations. These four perspectives are called the real motives of impact on the Indonesian society.

Literature Review

Social Change Theory

Various theoretical schools have emphasized different aspects of change. This research adopted social change theory according to the phenomena of Islamic social organizations in Indonesia. Sociologists define social change as changes in human interactions and relationships that transform cultural and social institutions (Coser, 1957; Smith, 2010 & Siregar, 2022). Today's sociologists readily acknowledge the vital role that social movements play in inspiring discontented members of a society to bring about social change. Social change often occurs when individuals decide to work towards a common goal (Smith, 2010). Major sources of social change include population growth and composition, culture and technology, the natural environment, and social conflict (Azharhany, 2022). In Islamic context, social change is compound with transformative approach of Islamic thoughts and traditions to new generations. This change happens through several elements including religious activities, social occasion, education and economic trisections (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). This research depends on social change aspects to illustrate the role of Islamic organizations in Indonesia: Muhammadiyah

and Nahdlatul Ulama in impacting societies toward Islamic culture and traditions.

Related studies

Many of previous studies included acts and structure of these organizations or their interaction with other elements. Pervious literature of social change in Islamic context in Indonesia have been summarized in Table 1. This research is distinguished by concentrating on social aspects to illustrate the impact of two Islamic organizations on Indonesian society.

Table 1. Social change in Previous Works

Author/Year	Subject	Method	Contribution	Similarity
Ishomuddin (2014)	Construction of sociocultural and political orientation of Muhammadiyah and NU	Describing the cultural, social changes and social significance of these changes in Muhammadiyah and NU.	In terms of socio-cultural of the two community, both Muhammadiyah and NU is located at the same position, related to development and progress religious thought, economic, social, cultural, and education.	Social change impact of Muhammadiyah and NU in Indonesian Society.
Al-Ansi et al. (2019)	Rational choice of Muhammadiyah and NU and social and political impact on Indonesian society.	Social definition approach. Phenomen-ological type	Muhammadiyah and NU are similar in social service, religious orientation and Islamic education. Both organizations share the same Islamic values regardless some differences in doctrines.	Social impact of both organizations on Indonesian Society.
Boerman (2019)	Religion and Social Change: A Phenomenological Study of Muhammadiyah Movement towards Social Change in Bengkulu	Descriptive analysis is applied in this phenomenological design for picturing phenomena	Social change level of puritan towards religious pragmatism is symbolized by religious organization movement in line with the religious personalization.	Social change in Muhammadiyah
Rohman & Lessy (2017)	Practicing Multicultural Education through Religiously Affiliated Schools and Its Implications for Social Change	Qualitative method by means of comparative study	Findings show similarities of teachers' attitudes and characteristics as a facilitator, whereas the differences include their leadership role in intrareligious dialog as social change.	Social change in Islamic organization, Educational institutions including Muhammadiyah and NU

Author/Year	Subject	Method	Contribution	Similarity
Hamami (2021)	Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama Education: Two Main Pillars of National Education in Indonesia	Historical approach through source search (heuristics), assessment (criticism), and construction	Muhammadiyah opened the minds of the Indonesian people about the importance of religion and science to realize a progressive Islamic society while NU prioritizes the education system of traditional (pesantren) School and madrasas and Islamic teachings in shaping the morals of Muslims.	Role of both Organization in shaping Islamic thoughts and education.
Ritchey & Muchtar (2014)	Indonesian Pesantren and Community Social Change: Moderate Islam's Use of Media and Technology as Tools for Community Engagement	Interviews with ten pesantren leaders	Leaders are conscious of the image linking pesantren with radical Islamic teachings where they have responded to these critiques through the adoption of technology as a tool for educating the broader local community.	Social change in Nadhatul Ulama (NU)
Azharghany (2022)	Framing the Islamic Traditionalism Community in Challenging the Social Changes of Modern Society	social action interpretive-reflexive approach	the community frame of Islamic traditionalism is dominated by community leaders; there is a similarity in responding to social change, namely religious communication strategies	Social change through leaders in NU

Previous studies included social changes of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia based on different aspects and research environments. This study included social aspects from the leaders and scholars perspectives. These two organizations established before a century and implemented many important ideas in education, economy, culture and social life of Indonesian people. There is need to understand a phenomena of these Islamic social organization as the biggest local Islamic organizations in the world, to understand the differentiations between them and to show their role of building social movements of the Indonesian society.

Socio-Islamic Organizations in Indonesian Society

Basically, Indonesia is a republic state with secular government (Ropi, 2017) system, however, majority of citizens are Muslims (Gross, 2016). Indonesia has the biggest Islamic local organizations namely: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). These social organizations are distinguished of other Islamic organization around world by their social, cultural and Indonesian approaches of thinking. Although there are many of religions, cultures and multi-ethnicities in the country, Muhammadiyah and NU as Islamic organization plays significant role in implementing and maintaining Islamic identity and reshaping the Islamic ideology (Fakhrurroji, 2019).

Social interaction and change occur through conducting socio-cultural occasions 'Social change' (Saddhono & Sulaksono, 2018), education (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021) and religious teaching (Abdullah, et al., 2019) or economic benefits (Pratama & Disemadi, 2019) gained by individuals pursuing distinct organization. In Islamic world, people consider serving Islam as a religion is an honor and deserve taking challenges and facing problems hoping of God mercy. To understand more how the impact of these Islamic social organizations on the community, there is need to study and analysis these factors of social change.

Socio-cultural Occasions: in Islam, there are many Islamic holidays and celebrations where Muslim people hold on

their daily activities and celebrate those days. For instance, there are some social occasions such as family gathering, visiting relatives, marriages, parties, birth and death of family members that should be conducted under the Islamic roles and follow the prophet's path. Furthermore, the role of Islamic organizations in implementing Islamic ethics such as anti-dating movements (Sari & Husein, 2020).

Education: although many of governmental schools are receiving secular education, teaching religion is important part of these schools. Islamic organizations have their own schools and universities where they have significant impact on society (Jamilah, 2021). Furthermore, many of families would prefer to send their children to study in these Islamic schools and having extra curriculum about Islamic thoughts which help them to find job in one of these Islamic organizations (Al-Ansi, 2021).

Religious occasions: There are two major festivals in Islam ('Id Al-Fitr and 'Id Al-Adha) in addition to fasting one month every year (Ramadan). Based on different thoughts of Muhammadiyah and NU, there are some additional fasting days and Islamic occasions (Jaziri & Abdelhedi, 2018). Some of these occasions are Maulid Nabawi, Ashura, Muhaarm, Hijira and so on.

Economical Activities: As both organizations own thousands of schools, hundreds of schools and many of economic institutions such as trade centers, hospitals, hotels and many other investments, they are able to attract people and impact them and their families and societies (Garad, Budiyanto, & Al-Ansi, 2021). Furthermore, every organization hold and support many economic projects and initiatives to support community financially. Donations and charity (Zakat, Infaq, Sedekah) are the most witness examples of support by Muhammadiyah and NU (Kailani & Slama, 2020).

Research Methods

Based on the social definition approach and under qualitative method, this study was conducted to test the social interaction of Islamic organizations in Indonesian society namely: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Social effect of both organizations have created distinct characteristics in the society which is built of mixing Islamic thoughts and keeping historical traditions. The type of methodology is a phenomenological approach. Methodological approach adopted by any research depends upon the central research objective and questions (Crabtree, 1999). Sample of this research includes seven leaders of both organizations in East Java, Indonesia and scholars who have experiences and conducted some researches of the two organizations. The selection of the sample was purposive including people who lead these organizations and have comprehensive understanding of every aspect.

Themes and Procedures: The main objective to understand the role of both Islamic organizations in social change in Indonesian society is to analyze the impact of them in different aspects of socio-cultural aspects, education, economy, religious activities. Therefore, these are the main themes that role the social change by Islamic organization in Indonesian society:

- a. **Socio-religious occasions:** including Prayers (Mosques), Visiting Tombs (Makam), Maulid Nabawi, Preference, Funeral Gathering, Ramadhan and Adha (Islamic Occasions).
- b. **Education:** throughout universities, Islamic institutions, Islamic high, intermediate and primary schools and religious education in mosques.
- c. **Socio-cultural Activities:** Marriage, (Halal Bihalal) Visiting Relatives, Tahlilah, social services to the community, cultural and traditional events.
- d. **Economic Activities:** by investing in different economical business such as hospitals, trade centers, hotels, banks, properties and land.

Data Collection and Interviews

According to the purpose and objective of this study, researchers had formed interview's questions (See Appendix). Interviews were conducted with head of both organization in East Java Province in addition to academic leaders and scholars in selected universities. Data were collected by interviews and observations. Questions of interviews were end-

opened questions to allow leaders and scholars explain their thoughts appropriately. Every meeting was between 45 to 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted in Malang City, East Java, Indonesia on (March- May) 2022.

Interview Design: The interview were a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. The interview were designed as it is open questions to provide more flexibility to the researchers to ask additional questions when needed and the method of design of questions helps participants to provide more information to the researchers. Although the interview's questions were derived from the study questions in general, researchers also asked more questions depending on the answers and observations by the researchers.

As qualitative research is considering the characteristics of interviewees which play important role to understand what and why they say that, characteristics of Muhammadiyah and NU interviewees are as in Table 2.

Table 2. Social Demographics of Sample

No.	Interviewees	Position	Organization
1.	Interviewee 1	Head of Muhammadiyah office in Malang City	Muhammadiyah
2.	Interviewee 2	Head of Nahdlatul Ulama office in Malang City	NU
3.	Interviewee 3	Head of Aisyiyah Branch in Malang City	Aisyiyah
4.	Interviewee 4	Vice chairman of NU office in Malang City	NU
5.	Interviewee 5	Member of Tabliq Organization	Scholar
6.	Interviewee 6	Lecturer in UIN-Malang	Scholar
7.	Interviewee 7	Vice head of Human resource development UIN	Scholar

Data Analysis Approach

It was important that researchers took important notes and considered sensitivity and competition among both organizations. The analysis procedure follow the description of every organization separately and giving a social definition of every theme at every organization. The researchers follow the narrative method for writing and reporting the social phenomena. Narrative approach includes several steps namely: coding narrative blocks, paragraphing similar data, creating nested stories and structural codes, delving into the story, comparing across story structure and reporting the core narratively (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Interviews were recorded and transcript based on the main themes of the study. Finally, the researchers follows the Giorgi approach of stating phenomena in social studies to explicate personal experiences and doing justice (Giorgi, 1975).

Voice recordings were collected during depth-interview and transcribed one-by-one by the researchers. Researchers carried out data analysis systematically. In general, the model of Giorgi, (1975) where he stated that phenomenologists seeking to explicate 'lived experience', must do justice to the phenomenon studied; research method needs to be responsive to the phenomenon, to be true to its integrity towards capturing something of its 'is-ness (Giorgi, 1975). Application of Giorgi's phenomenological method includes Reading through the whole protocol to get the sense of the whole, Determine the natural 'meaning units' as expressed by the participant', Interrogating in terms of the specific purpose of the study', Tying together into a descriptive statement the essential, non-redundant themes'.

Results

Unlike many of Islamic organizations, where they have some international agenda, Islamic social organizations in Indonesia have unique characteristics allow them to play an important role in Indonesian society. Although, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama have some differences in basic thoughts and mechanism of actions but they are in the same competition to serve the Indonesian society. This specific case made these two organizations more long lasting and trustworthy. This study included explaining of values, characteristics and feature of these two Islamic organizations in addition to the role of both of them in the social aspects in Indonesia.

Social Role of Muhammadiyah in Indonesian Society

Muhammadiyah has a unique model for social and religious occasions in Indonesian society such as marriage, prayers, celebrations, religious activities, education and cultural activities. One of the important occasion that impact on social life of the people is the religious occasions. These religious occasions are vary such as marriage, visiting tombs, celebration of birth of Prophet Day, Tarawih prayers, Idul Fitri and Eidul Adha (Kurban), funeral gathering and other social and religious activities.

a. Socio-religious occasions: in case of Muhammadiyah, religious occasions are implemented by keeping simplicity and out of old traditions. Followers prefer to follow pure religion and the path of Shariah in the pure Islamic path out of traditions.

1. Mosques: Mosques play an important role in impacting of people life. As Muslim communities, everyone has to go mosque everyday five times. Leaders and head of communities must have good Islamic attitudes and good education as well. Most work is in mosques and they do prayers and leading people in worships. Most of these Muhammadiyah's followers are lecturers and scholars who teach in universities and schools. "There are 300 religious teacher (Mubaliq) in Malang who are supposed to do prayers in every mosque in Malang that follows Muhammadiyah" interviewee Five Said.

2. Marriage: Implementing Islamic thoughts and practices could be shown by conducting some occasions. One of these occasion is marriage. Some of marriage between followers of Muhammadiyah are mixed man and woman. "Muhammadiyah follows the Islamic path which is not included the Indonesian traditions before or after Islam entered to the country" interviewee one said. Simplicity in marriage, less invited people to ceremony, less prayers and empty of traditions is the main factors in Muhammadiyah marriage. "I think the different is in term of traditions, in my view, Muhammadiyah tries to keep simplicity in marriage, it means that, once they have the wedding ceremony they make it in one practical system without following all traditions" interviewee Three said. There is something different in Muhammadiyah marriage in terms of traditions, in my point of view, Muhammadiyah keep the simplicity, means that, once they have the ceremony in practical system. "Muhammadiyah hold the essential practices in marriage away of traditional Javanese culture" Interviewee Three said.

3. Visiting Tombs (Makam): Despite NU followers where they visit Tombs (Mukam) when they have some problems because they think this visits will help them in solving these problems, Muhammadiyah followers don't visit Tombs for asking help or benefits of death people, they visit these tombs to remember them and asking forgiveness of God for them. There are many famous places for old good people (Wali) in Indonesia, many people keep visit these Makam continuously. "Followers of Muhammadiyah don't visiting tombs (Makam) because in our beliefs, we follow Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jammah, where we visit tombs to remind ourselves with life after death (Akhirat) and making prayers for dead people" Interviewee One said. Although Muhammadiyah is reformist and modern organization, but there are some followers of Muhammadiyah still have the same tradition such as visiting Makams and believing in preferences. These habits were owned by some followers who were grown up as NU or local tradition habits. "It's tradition in my family that we have to visit Tombs of Wali or Ulama in some occasions such as Eidul Fitri and Adha or before fasting month (Ramadhan)" Interviewee Three said.

4. Maulid Nabawi: There is no especial activities for celebration Maulid Nabwai based on Muhammadiyah thoughts. People sometimes gather in mosques or homes and study story of the prophet Muhammad and his life. In Muhammadiyah, celebrating this Maulid is simple and not allow to be more than prayers because they think that maybe kind of unbelieving (Shirk). "We have prayers called (Najian), we try to internalize into the stems of prophet life" Interviewee Three said. Interviewee One also stated that about Maulid Nawabi: "Maulid Nabawi (Prophet Muhammad's Birth) is a day for sermon and lesson of the prophet life to educate and learn ourselves about His life. There is no special event or we get anything of it (Barokah)".

5. Prayers and Preference: there are important practices and prayers distinguish Muhammadiyah and NU. Every organization has different practices. Some of these prayers are Tarawih. Muhammadiyah followers usually pray 11 Rakat while NU followers pray more than 20 Rakat. "Tarawih is Sunnah in Muhammadiyah like others, but we pray 11 Rakat"

Interviewee One said. In case of preference of persons, Muhammadiyah believe that all Muslims are the same and there is no one could be better than anyone only by Taqwa (good deed). "There is no preferences of persons in Muhammadiyah which is means all are the same even Ulama or followers" Interviewee One said. In another hand, some of followers believe in trustworthy and honesty of their leaders so they ask for teaching them Islam and its instructions. "The idea is common to ask good people for prayers (Doa), but we don't believe in preferences of people, only we believe in their capacity to teach us Islam" Interviewee Three said. There are three kinds of prayers in Muhammadiyah. First is doing prayer alone especially during prayers in mosques. Second is asking prayers from parents and relatives. Third is prayers for other people where anyone can do prayers for all Muslims. But there is no preferences in praying from some people like in NU where they believe that prayers of some people is better even they are dead.

6. Ramadhan and Adha: in some religious occasions such as beginning of fasting month (Ramadhan) and determine Idul Fitri and Idul Adha, Muhammadiyah determines date based on scientific account while another Islamic groups determine this date by watching moon. "Muhammadiyah follows accounting (Hesab) in determining religious occasion such as Idul fitri and Fasting (Puasa), while other organizations use Looking Moon or Crescent of Moon (Hilal)" Interviewee One said. Another religious issue is the official date of fasting month and Idul Fitri where government has to determine this date. Government by ministry of religion determine this date based on the background of the minister of religious affairs. "Government follows the ministry of religion in determine these dates which means (If the minister of religion is from Muhammadiyah so government follows Muhammadiyah as well" Interviewee One said.

7. Funeral Gathering: some social and religious practices differ Islamic organization of others. Muhammadiyah has pure Islamic path in following some practices such as funeral gathering. The simple Islamic way is to pray for the dead people without any more practices. Tombs also have to be simple without any building or stones up them. "Muhammadiyah follows the basic Islamic path for funeral gathering. There is no special events which means there is prayers (Doa) after 10 days or 40 days after death" Interviewee One said. "Tombs usually is simple without stones and have to be covered in easy way and we make prayers for our death people" Interviewee Three said.

b. Education: education is one of important components in learning system that have to be given to young generation in Muhammadiyah schools and universities. Muhammadiyah has 176 universities around Indonesia and thousands of elementary and high schools around the country. Many of Muhammadiyah scholars think that education is the best tool to emphasize the Muhammadiyah thoughts in the society. "*Education is the important factor in changing society thoughts*" Interviewee One said.

Education was the reason of many of Muhammadiyah's followers to be part of this organization. Muhammadiyah has full education system starting of kindergarten and ending in higher education institutions. Living and studying in Muhammadiyah schools in any period of time impact in many students and their family to be part of Muhammadiyah. Working in any of Muhammadiyah institutions encouraged many of staffs to be part of the organization as well. "*We don't force anyone to follow or join Muhammadiyah, but we introduce our thoughts and give information for anyone interested to be Muhammadiyah Follower. We have special courses that must be taught in all Muhammadiyah Schools and Universities. These courses or books are Islam, Arabic and Muhammadiyah*" Interviewee One said.

c. Socio-cultural Activities: Muhammadiyah conducts many or local and international conferences. Scholars and leaders of Muhammadiyah introduce pure and peaceful of modern and moderate Islam. This organization is not like political Islamic organizations such as Muslim brotherhood or Tabliq organization where they operate internationally and have some international agenda such as establishing Islamic Caliphate once again. All the activities are considered for local operations.

"*Muhammadiyah hold many conferences in local and international levels based in the Islamic thoughts of Muhammadiyah*" Interviewee One said.

Muhammadiyah followed what is called "stripping" (Tanzih or Tajrid) in their religious teaching of Islam which may not be accepted by Nadhlatul Ulama and other Islamic organizations. In addition, Muhammadiyah follows two different

ideologies in creating and implementing national laws and policies through constitutional (Konstitusi) and diversification (Kebhinekaan) ideologies. Muhammadiyah activists adopt nationalism, moderation and collaboration with other activists and scholars of Islamic organization to solve problems arising of misunderstanding of Islam or interactions with other entities.

"We have some cultural events where our organization contribute some lecturers for society, food and financial support as well" Interviewee Three said.

Besides reforming culture, Muhammadiyah also conduct many cultural events through their institutions and universities. Many of economic activities were implementing in rural areas and nearby societies to Muhammadiyah organizations. This act is famous in Muhammadiyah as social service to the community. Furthermore, Muhammadiyah by following Ahlu-sunah Wal-jama'ah (Followers of Prophet' approach) thoughts, they apply all social and religious way of Islam in their social activities such as birth, marriage, death and celebrations.

"Because we follow Islamic path, we colored local tradition by Islamic thought. We have to follow Sunnah and leave (Bedaah). For instance, in birth, we have tradition like there are bad and good days for birth but we try to add Islamic values to remove such tradition. We have to distinguish between myth, mysterious and reality" Interviewee Five said.

d. Economy: Muhammadiyah is an independent organization. Economy in Muhammadiyah is depending on many businesses such as education, health care, hotels, business centers and many other investments. In addition to these businesses, Muhammadiyah has denotation of the members, government and some Arabic countries. "Muhammadiyah since a long time ago is independent so, all the support for any activity is internal support (denotation of the members of Muhammadiyah). In some cases, there are some support from government or some Arabic countries. Interviewee One said.

Muhammadiyah since the establishment started as charity and independent organization to teach Islamic religion. Founder KH. Ahmed Dahlan had recommended all Muhammadiyah followers to support the organization rather than taking benefits of the organization. *"We have learnt of the founder that 'Jangan Hidup di Muhammadiyah, Hidup Hidupilah Muhammadiyah' which means – 'Don't Live in Muhammadiyah, Live Life Muhammadiyah'"* Interviewee Six said.

Muhammadiyah has charity program called LAZISMU or the Muhammadiyah Infaq and Sadaqah Institution. It is a national-level zakat organization created to help community through effective usage of zakat, Infaq and Sadaqah. In addition to this program, there is support from the government for holding some activities especially in educational schools. External support of Arabic countries goes to mosque building in the most cases. *"There is small support of government for some activities and schools of Muhammadiyah. The biggest part of external support goes to build mosques"* Interviewee One said.

Aisyiyah as women organization for Muhammadiyah has donation and support for some Aisyiyah's schools in addition to the government support. *"We collect charity and monthly donation from members to help some schools for Aisyiyah. There is also support from government called PBOS (support of School operational office). So these schools get support from government"* Interviewee Three said. Many of students, family and followers of Muhammadiyah have benefits from all these programs.

Social Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesian Society

Nahdlatul Ulama has the most numbers of the Indonesian Muslims based on some unofficial statistics. NU attracted this high number because since its establishment, leaders were nearer to people and they adopted local culture. Respecting culture of the societies reflect the high respect of people to the leaders of organization. High numbers of followers of NU emotionally support Social and political leaders of the organization. In addition, high numbers of followers make the organization more effective in the social aspects of the Indonesian community.

"Nahdlatul Ulama has an effective influence in Indonesian society because NU followers are the most of Indonesian Muslim community" Interviewee Seven said.

Recently, The NU path is following new and modern path that systematically keep changing, so they are following

Muhammadiyah in the path of modernization thoughts but culturally they are still strict. In the social occasions, there is no different between Islamic organizations and non-social organizations as long as they are Muslim. It is not because they are Muhammadiyah and NU so they have differences in some occasions, there are some of every organization have the same social activities based on the area and culture of the people while some follow the Arabic way in socio-religious occasions.

a. **Socio-religious occasions:** Before Islam, Indonesian people have their own socio-cultural traditions such as marriage celebrating, prayers, cloths and funeral gathering. After Islam, NU has changed this events to follow the Islamic path.

“There is an important occasion such as (Tahleel), Halal Bihalal and Mulid Nabwai where people are gathering in some places one time every year. This occasions are not accepted by Muhammadiyah followers because they don’t distinguish between goals and tools” Interviewee Two Said.

1. **Halal Bihala (Visiting Relatives):** Halal bihalal is a special gathering day for NU followers and public as well. The event starts with speech, followed by praying together. Then all participants have lunch with traditional Indonesian Eid al Fitr meals. The event usually ended with happy faces, full stomachs. This social event is done by NU but it changes to be national event as well. Halal Bihalal tradition only exists in Indonesia. The tradition of forgiving each other on Eid is not found in other countries, even countries that call themselves Islamic countries. Who would have thought if this tradition originated from the intention to unite the nation from division? Halalbihalal was first spoken by KH Abdul Wahab Hasabullah, one of the founders of the Nahdlatul Ulama.

“Hala Bihala started by founder Hasbullah where this gathering interest about politics and discussing with other parties, organizations and even government” Interviewee Seven said.

2. **Tahlil: Tahlilan** is a salvation ritual / ceremony carried out by NU followers and some Muhammadiyah followers to commemorate deceased which is usually conducted during the first day after death till one year or more. Usually, on the first day of death until the seventh day, and subsequently conducted on the 40th day and 100, then after one year first, second, third and so on. Some other of NU followers conduct this till the 1000th day. Even this habit was a tradition for the people before Islam, but NU change the content of such occasions to include Islamic pray (doa) together and give support for these families.

“In Tahleelan, actually, we want to pray together for our families and relatives with our neighbors for these dead people” Interviewee Six said.

3. **Mosques:** Islamic social organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU use mosques and schools to teach Islamic thoughts and impact the society. There are more than 300 mosques in Malang city are run by NU religious leaders (Kiai). In addition to regular education, NU holds many additional curriculums for children to teach them Quran and Hadith. Some of these courses are held in mosques or homes.

“There is many programs hold by NU to teach children and society such as Ngaji (Memorizing Quran), Majlis Ta’leem (Educational Forums) and other Islamic courses” Interviewee Seven said.

4. **Maulid Nabawi:** Maulid Nabawi is a special occasion for NU members where they celebrate this day. This day is an official holiday in Indonesia respecting the Muslims especially NU leaders and members. Muslims in this occasion are collected in mosques or homes where they pray and remember the life of the prophet.

“We do celebrate Maulid Nabwi every year and its famous occasion for NU followers” Interviewee Six said.

5. **Visiting Tombs:** Before Islam in Indonesia, Indonesian people had some traditions such as gathering after death where NU has changed this habits to follow Islamic way and to pray for the dead people. In NU family’s tradition, they visit Tombs of their families and relatives (Makam) especially in some occasions such as Fasting month (Ramadhan), Eidul Fitri and Fridays. These visiting is to remember death and to make prayers for their beloved.

“Visiting Tombs (Makam) is not to remember death only, but to think about these people and asking ourselves why people from around Indonesia and even more out of the country came to this Makam, so we have to be like them and we use these Tombs (Makams) as a tool to be nearer to God” Interviewee Two Said.

Some of NU followers think visiting these Tombs (Makam) is optional. But it remains as a tool to make them near to

God because they think these people who were so closer to God are good people and they may help them to be nearer to God as well. This religious tradition is famous between NU followers and it is called Wasilah.

"Visiting Tombs (Makam) is optional for me, because visting Makam remind us with death. Following NU is something good to visit Tombs and make praying" Interviewee Six said.

More than that, NU followers believe that there is a spiritual contacting between them and those dead people in Makams. In every Makam, there are teachers (Kiai) show people the way of making prayers (Doa) and help them to connect to the dead people. Usually, people who have some problems or who scare they became away of God so they got many problems who more go to visit Makam.

"There is spiritual networking about visiting Makams, so we use our spirit to connect between live and dead people. Our Muslim Teachers (Kiai) advise us to use some spiritual prayers and the way of using prayers in front Makams" Interviewee Seven said.

6. Preferences: NU members believe in preferences. They think that good religious leaders has extra dignities (Martabat). This strong believe unit all followers and members to be behind the social and political leaders of NU believing that this is part of religion. Preference is not only in the live leaders but also in the dead ones. Many of NU followers visit many Tombs (Makams) for their religious leaders.

"We also come to Ulama who we think they are very near to Allah and ask them to do prayers for us" Interviewee Six said.

7. Funeral Gathering: Although all Muslims have the same activities for funeral gathering, but for NU followers are more specific where they have many gathering after 7, 10, 40 and 100 days. This gathering organized every years as well. For many Muslims, funeral gathering is limited till 7 days but in case of NU they still have all this tradition based on the local culture of the Indonesian people before Islam.

"In funeral, we do prayers every day after someone death till the 7th day, after that we do prayers together at day 10, 40, 100 and every year. This prayers we call Yaseenan" Interviewee Six said.

b. **Education:** NU leaders consider education as the main mover for followers to contribute to the society. Education has been considered as agency strategy to enable organization to impact society and spread the thoughts and spirit of "al-muhāfazah al-Qadim al-Salih wa al-akhzu bi al-Jadid al-aslah" (Keeping the past and building on it). This belief lead to consistency and sustainability of the organization and transfer the thoughts and believes from one generation to the other.

"There are many Islamic schools and universities under the name of NU and they belong to NU organization. Some other schools are following NU path even they have governmental support. Some educational institutions are owned by society or another bodies but they also follow the NU path in Islamic education" Interviewee Four Said.

Furthermore, NU has other bodies to support education such as Maarif education board that serve to support education. NU in their educational commission in 1936 establish the fundamentals and basics for Madrassa (School) and put many regulations how to follow their Islamic path. NU continued to spread educational institutions around country following the same Islamic path. Now, NU has thousands of schools and hundreds of universities and other educational institutions.

"Now, we have some universities under the NU name and we are majority in some government universities in especially in East Jawa. In NU, we have some Islamic schools from kindergarten till high schools under different names such as Pesantren, Alma'reef and Madrasah" Interviewee Four said.

Comparing number of school in both organizations Muhammadiyah and NU, NU has the majority of elementary and secondary schools while Muhammadiyah has more universities and higher education institutions. This fact shows why many of Muhammadiyah followers grew up as NU and after higher education they became Muhammadiyah. NU has more than 95% of Pesantren in Indonesia where these Pesantrens are fully equipped and students have to spend all the period of study in the Pesantren.

"Number of Elementary and secondary schools in NU is more than Muhammadiyah although Muhammadiyah has more universities and do invest in education, health and businesses more than NU" Interviewee Four said. *"The main factor to impact society in NU is by Education and giving some teaching for followers of NU"* Interviewee Two Said.

Although there are some serious problems facing NU to support Pesanterns, but they are struggling to help society

especially those who are living in countryside and rural areas. Compared to Muhammadiyah, students of NU usually live in these boarding schools and many of these schools have to support them by giving food, accommodation and other facilities.

c. **Socio-cultural events:** Cultural events in NU usually mixed of religious and social activities. Impact of NU in society is represented by merging local culture and Islam, in another words, NU could strengthen the good habits of Indonesian society and reduce the bad once based on the Islamic thought. Some of these religious cultural activities are Salawatan, tahlilan and yasinan.

"In NU, we have some different activities such as Salawatan, Tahlilan and Yasinan (prayers after someone's death) where in Muhammadiyah no such activities" Interviewee Six said.

Nature of NU as social organization have changed society culture and traditions in way of connecting to the Islamic roots. This development usually is done through education starting by primary schools until graduate levels. To implement these cultural-religious thoughts, NU uses soft positive dynamics to influence people's attitudes and consciousness.

"NU people are more traditional, NU people are more bounded in culture and NU people are more bounded in social as well" Interviewee Four said.

d. **Economic Activities:** NU has its support from the members. Most of members think that giving money and support for the NU activities is serving for God (Barokah). There are some support of government and some external Islamic bodies. In addition, there are small businesses such as schools, hospitals, hotels and business centers are owned by Nahdlatul Ulama.

"There are some donation by members in addition to the universities, hospitals and trade centers. In some cases, we ask government to help to hold some occasions" Interviewee Two said.

Some leaders of NU are supporting the organization and its activities. There is also some donations from members and government. Even though, followers of NU more than Muhammadiyah, but this doesn't mean they have more businesses than Muhammadiyah. This is related to that most of NU followers are from villages and countryside in opposite with Muhammadiyah followers where are most of them live in cities and held more businesses. Many of Islamic organizations especially in rich countries such as Saudi and UAE.

"The most of support come from the society in addition to business centers and markets hold by NU. NU also have started extend some business like hotels and hospitals. There is little external support of some Arabic countries. This support usually is done in personal by some Islamic lecturers (Kiai)" Interviewee Six said.

Discussion

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama have many achievements and some failures. During more than a century, both organizations showed flexibility and modernity. Nature of the organizations tells that both of them have power and strong basics. As social and educational movements, they contribute modernity and moderate approach for people in Indonesia especially Muslims. Staying away as possible as they could of the politics and respecting to the characteristics of the local society in addition to serving majority of population in the country keep the two organizations powerful and trustworthy by their followers.

This study illustrated the social role of Islamic organizations in Indonesia. These two socio-religious organizations have unique characteristics made them able to strengthen Islamic thoughts and keep peace in the country (Wulandari et al., 2021). These are not charity organizations neither political parties. They play a significant role in the Islamic education, social and political life of Indonesian people. During many decades, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama were working together when the situation is needed to be together like colonial era and they face each other when there is no serious problem affect the Islam and state (Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019). Members of two organization reject violence and respect each other (Arifianto, 2021). They work together in all the governmental institutions and they may change their loyalty to one of these two organization as long as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama are in the same Islamic and social path.

Based on social change theory, the interaction among Muhammadiyah and NU followers as Islamic social organizations through social activities including social occasions, education, religious activities and economical investments. The social

change is represented by adopting Islamic thoughts and traditions as the basics for daily activities. Many of previous studies have reveal the role of social change through daily activities and interactions (Azharghany, 2022; Al-Ansi & Ishomuddin, 2019 & Becker, 1976). All the social occasions including religious occasions such as Idul Adha, Idul Fitri, Fasting in Ramdhan, birth and death occasions, marriage and other social activities are conducted based on Islamic approach. Furthermore, these two organizations introduce Islam through hundreds of Islamic universities and educational institutions. Muhammadiyah and NU also own large portion of Indonesian economic including investments in education, hospitality, tourism, trading and manufacturing. These results are similar to the previous work of Brennan (2008), Brown and Lauder (1991) and Horton and Freire (1990). Millions of Indonesian are working in these sectors and follow the path of one of these two organizations. Based on recent statistics about two organizations, there are more than 90 Million of followers of NU and around 40 million follow Muhammadiyah (Menchik, 2019) which means almost half of the population in the country follow the two organizations.

Conclusion and recommendations

As 87% of population are Muslims, Indonesia is considered the biggest Islamic country in the world with more than 200 million Muslims. Social change in Indonesia mostly referred to the change and behavior of the biggest Islamic organizations in the country beside other religious organizations (Christianity, Buddhist) and non-religious bodies (government, political parties). Although government and biggest political parties in the country have adopted secular ideas, these two organizations have the most impact on the Muslim society. Briefly, there are four significant factors leading social change through Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in the country as follows:

1. Socio-religious occasions: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama conduct and lead all religious activities for Muslims including Prayers (Mosques), Visiting Tombs (Makam), Maulid Nabawi, Funeral Gathering, Islamic celebrations (Ramadhan and Adha).
2. Education: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama leading education in the country throughout hundreds of universities, Islamic institutions and thousands of Islamic high, intermediate and primary schools in addition to religious education in mosques.
3. Socio-cultural Activities: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama supervise social activities including Marriage, (Halal Bihalal) Visiting Relatives, Tahlilah, and social services to the community, cultural and traditional events. In addition, both organizations conduct annually conferences and hundreds of Islamic conference through their universities.
4. Economic Activities: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama also have their own financial resources as private organizations and they earn by investing in different economical business such as hospitals, trade centers, hotels, banks, properties and land.

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama should be an ideal example for many Islamic social organizations around the world. Many of Islamic social organization in Middle East and even in west were the reason behind many of serious problems affected their states. Social organizations in Indonesia provided a great model for peaceful coexistence with other religions and races. This study shows the dynamic and characteristics of them in different fields.

There are some suggestions for more studies about Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama as the biggest Islamic social organizations in Indonesia. These suggestions for scholars and researchers who are interested about understanding and analyzing the role of two organizations in different fields. More studies are needed to introduce both organizations to the world as moderate Islamic organizations.

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