

Tuan Guru's communication strategy in resolving religious ideological conflict in Lombok, Indonesia

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Abstract

Purpose – This article attempts to explain Tuan Guru's communication strategy in conflict resolution between Islamic groups in Lombok, namely between communities affiliated with the Nahdlatul Wathan organization versus the Sunnah (Wahhabi) group.

Method – This article uses a qualitative method-case study. Data were collected through observation, documentation, and interviews and then analyzed through the stages of condensation, display, interpretation, and conclusion.

Result – The results of this study show that the source of conflict that occurs in the community is the difference in religious ideology between Aswaja Islam and Wahhabi Islam. Second, the master teacher was able to mediate the conflict by using religious and cultural communication strategies. He campaigned for peace values derived from Islamic teachings and strengthened socio-cultural capital as a tool for harmony, such as silaturahmi in the tradition of begawe (feast) of marriage, birth, and death.

Implication – This article contributes to the study of Tuan Guru employs a communication strategy that emphasizes dialogue and mutual understanding, facilitating open discussions to bridge gaps between differing religious ideologies. By fostering a respectful exchange of perspectives, he creates a platform for resolving conflicts and promoting religious harmony.

Originality/Value – This research exploration of tuan guru not only as a leader of the pesantren but also as a "peacemaker" This shows that the guru's leadership is quite strategic in terms of conflict and peace.

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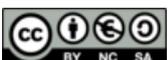


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Kata kunci:

Pesantren,
kepemimpinan,
ideologi, konflik,
dakwah.

Abstrak

Tujuan - Artikel ini bertujuan menjelaskan strategi komunikasi Tuan Guru dalam penyelesaian konflik antara kelompok-kelompok Islam di Lombok, yaitu antara komunitas yang terafiliasi dengan organisasi Nahdlatul Wathan versus kelompok Sunnah (Wahabi).

Metode - Artikel ini menggunakan metode kualitatif-studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, dokumentasi, dan wawancara kemudian dianalisis melalui tahapan kondensasi, tampilan, interpretasi, dan kesimpulan.

Hasil - Hasil dari studi ini menunjukkan bahwa sumber konflik yang terjadi dalam masyarakat adalah perbedaan ideologi agama antara Islam Aswaja dan Islam Wahabi. Kedua, guru besar mampu memediasi konflik dengan menggunakan strategi komunikasi agama dan budaya. Dia melakukan kampanye untuk nilai-nilai perdamaian yang bersumber dari ajaran Islam dan memperkuat modal sosial-budaya sebagai alat untuk keharmonisan, seperti silaturrahim dalam tradisi begawe (persilatan) pernikahan, kelahiran, dan kematian.

Implikasi - Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi pada studi tentang Tuan Guru yang menggunakan strategi komunikasi yang menekankan dialog dan pemahaman saling, memfasilitasi diskusi terbuka untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara ideologi agama yang berbeda. Dengan mendorong pertukaran pandangan yang saling menghormati, dia menciptakan platform untuk penyelesaian konflik dan mempromosikan harmoni agama.

Orisinalitas/Nilai - Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi Tuan Guru bukan hanya sebagai pemimpin pesantren tetapi juga sebagai "peacemaker." Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan guru cukup strategis dalam hal konflik dan perdamaian.

Introduction

Conflict is the result of interactive processes, reactions, and behaviors in all dimensions of human life. Both interpersonal and interpersonal and group. Thus, conflict is a necessity that must be accepted with all its consequences. In any environment, institution, business organization, or society, conflict is inevitable due to differences in individual ideas, desires, perceptions, and needs. Conflict describes a condition of antagonistic opposition, disagreement, or incompatibility between two or more parties. (Hocker & Wilmot, 2018) (Conrad, 1991). This condition can be caused by disrupted interaction processes and perceptions of unhealthy communication outcomes. (Conrad, 1991). In other words, differences between individuals or between groups in terms of perceptions of understanding, ideas, goals, competition (Siraji, 2019); (Fleetwood, n.d. 1987) or interference from others in achieving their goals (Borisoff & Victor, 1989) is always the beginning of the birth of conflict.

According to some, conflict is often asymmetrical, as only one party realizes and responds to the conflict. While the other [may] not understand it, or one party perceives that the other party has or will attack negatively. Everyone has their own identity, personality, and uniqueness that differs from others in terms of abilities, motivations, values, knowledge, needs, and experiences that require cooperation and coexistence with other members of the organization. The same is also true for community groups, with all the variants that are different from other community groups and are required to respect each other between groups to create a harmonious life. Therefore, conflict is generally conceptualized as a normal part of human interaction and not in itself destructive. Rather, how conflict is managed well will either result in constructive or destructive outcomes. (Deutsch, 2006).

In the context of Pesantren Islamic educational institutions, many studies have been conducted related to the problem of conflict, conflict resolution, and conflict management, which are generally only focused on the internal Pesantren itself. For example, studies on pesantren communities and conflict resolution through inter-purpose marriages, istighotsah, haul, and tabayyun as a process of regulating and managing conflicts, and Islah as the final process of conflict resolution. (Afandi, 2016). The role of pesantren is very strategic in transforming a culture of peace through peace-building education. The phenomenon of radicalism that leads to acts of violence is likely to continue to be a serious threat in the coming years. (Fitriani, 2015). Pesantren actively holds various programs around the issues of conflict resolution, reconciliation, peace, interfaith dialogue, conflict mediation, negotiation, and peace education that aim to increase public awareness of pluralism and multiculturalism; this program boils down to the efforts of the community's ability to manage their own problems. (Aijudin et al., 2017). Conflicts in pesantren also occur between main pesantren and branch pesantren. (Aripudin et al., 2012). Pesantren conflicts occur at the internal level of the big family of the successor of the teachings of Ahlus-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah 'ala Madhhab al-Shafi'i, causing the dichotomy of followers into two large gates of the Nahdlatul Wathan congregation. The forms of conflict in pesantren include 1) temporal conflict and 2) permanent conflict; this type of conflict is triggered by unresolved individual conflicts or caused by the roots of conflicts that exist in pesantren, namely political conflicts, family conflicts, and the struggle for charisma at the ummah level.

Meanwhile, studies on conflict or conflict resolution between the pesantren world and community groups outside the pesantren are still relatively few, especially those related to the role of pesantren leadership. The empirical reality in the context of Lombok must be recognized that pesantren is a sub-culture of the surrounding community culture, which is often not exactly the same and even tends to be different. The rejection and resistance of the surrounding community groups caused the pesantren to be isolated and difficult to develop. On the other hand, some pesantren had the ability to manage the conflict so that they could survive and develop. In general, conflicts that occur are caused by differences in religious ideology adopted, especially from within the pesantren family itself.

In this study, the contestation of religious ideology has led to conflict between religious communities in Kembang Kerang village. Kembang Kerang village is one of the loci of religious ideology conflict in East Lombok, about two kilometers from the center of the Aikmel sub-district. The village is on the main route to the tourist destinations of Sembalun and Mount Rinjani. Genealogically, the inhabitants of Kembang Kerang Daya village are a diaspora of Sumbawa people who came during the Islamic Selaparang kingdom. The Sultanate of Sumbawa sent some troops to help Selaparang against the Bali-Mataram kingdom, which wanted to invade Lombok. (van der Kraan, 1976). After the battle with Bali, the troops from Sumbawa were given a piece of land in the Kembang Kerang area by Selaparang, so they inhabited the area and multiplied. Because of this, the people of Kembang Kerang Daya have very close kinship ties with each other, as they are allied. However, in its development, they are polarised in terms of religious ideology into two Islamic communities, namely followers of the Nahdlatul Wathan Islamic mass organization and followers of As-sunnah or Wahhabi Salafi groups. Statistically, the Nahdlatul Wathan group in this village is the majority.

Therefore, this article aims to examine Tuan Guru's leadership and communication strategies in the implementation of conflict resolution caused by differences in ideology between Islamic groups in Lombok. This study tries to go beyond previous studies on Tuan Guru that focus on the role of Tuan Guru in da'wah and Islamic education. Furthermore, this article aims to show that Tuan Guru has expanded his role in the socio-cultural realm beyond his primary role as a pesantren leader.

Several relevant theoretical perspectives were used to examine Tuan Guru's leadership style. According to Hersey and Blanchard, leadership style is a pattern of behavior that a person exhibits when influencing the activities of others. (Hersey, 1995). Meanwhile, Thoah explains that leadership style is a norm of behavior used by a person when he tries to influence the behavior of others (Thoah, 2004). Both opinions above make it clear that a person's leadership style reflects the behavior, norms, and basic ideas that underlie efforts to influence others (*followers*) toward common goals.

The leadership styles of Tuan Guru or Kyai are from the perspective of relevant theories, namely charismatic leadership style, transformational leadership style, spiritual leadership, and *trust culture* leadership. Empirically, various leadership styles of Tuan Guru can be found in pesantren. The most widely applied leadership style of Tuan Guru/Kyai is charismatic leadership. (Bashori, 2019) and transformative charismatic (Fitriani, 2016).. The application of charismatic leadership is due to the Kyai's role as *mudharris mu'addib*, *mu'allim*, and *murabbi*. (Salinda Sahrin, 2019); (Fadilatul Kasmar et al., 2019).. Another study found that charismatic leadership can be transformed into effective charismatic leadership. (Ajan et al., 2018). The influence on the Santri

community and society is the existence of collective identity and trust, which confirms a strong and significant relationship between charismatic leadership and its embrace, trust, satisfaction, and collective identity are influenced by charismatic leadership. (Conger et al., 2000).

Kyai, as a charismatic leader, has power over Santri, so Santri has trust and satisfaction. The effect of charismatic leadership on organizational members is more dominant when charismatic leadership can provide empathy and empower members (Choi, 2006). Conversely, expertise recognizes strong charismatic leadership as an agent of social change. It also influences the personality and behavior of organizations and society. Lastly, the strong influence of charismatic leadership is because leadership engages followers (Fiol et al., 1999). Salafi Pesantren has democratic-charismatic leadership, Modern Pesantren has *laissez-faire leadership*, and Salafi-Modern Pesantren has democratic leadership. In leading the Pesantren, not only charismatic leadership but transformative leadership is certainly found (Supendi et al., 2019; Karim et al, 2021) in leading the Pesantren. This research found that transformative leadership is more applicable to Modern Pesantren such as Pesantren Nurul Iman. Research (Fadhilah, 2011) and (Noor, 2019) revealed that Kyai in Pesantren is not only an Islamic scholar but also a decision-maker in community issues. Charismatic leadership structures exist due to the existence of internal and external networks that include genealogical, ideological, intellectual, theological, and spiritual kyai networks. As a *top leader*, Kyai must have a strong futuristic vision to lead the development of pesantren. In accordance with the development of pesantren, Kyai, as the sole decision-maker, must have several innovations in the management of pesantren and the handling of santri, or what is called collective leadership, applied in pesantren. (Atiqullah, 2012). Collective leadership can be seen in Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang, Bahrul Ulum Tamb akberas Jombang, Lirboyo Kediri, Gontor Ponorogo, and other large pesantren.

In its implementation, the combination of the Salaf and Khalaf systems is the best system to apply (Aziz & Taja, 2016). Meanwhile, Mardiyah revealed that Kyai's intellectual background influences the thoughts, characteristics, and alumni of the pesantren. Research findings (Mardiyah, 2012) related to the model of Pesantren thinking that shows Pesantren Gontor as a Modern model, Pesantren Lirboyo as a Salaf model, and Pesantren Tebuireng as a combination of Salaf and Modern models. The leadership of the three pesantrens uses effective charismatic leadership. In addition, Kyai in the pesantren can apply individual and collective leadership. In this case, proactive mentality is positively related to charismatic leadership (Crant & Bateman, 2000). As agents of change, kyai leaders must preserve local values, interact with global values, and maintain the traditions of the pesantren. In pesantren, kyai leadership has a direct effect on pesantren culture (Suhendar et al., 2017). The kyai's leadership directly influences the culture of the pesantren, realizing the educational goals and character building of the students as the main goal. (Kurniati et al., 2019), and entrepreneurship (Hayana & Wahidmurni, 2019). Kyai leadership is an agent of community and social change because Kyai has power, especially in religious and spiritual teachings (Riyadi & Karim, 2024). Most of Kyai's behavior becomes a role model for the community, and Kyai's voice is obeyed by the community. Kyai's leadership, which is able to preserve local values and interact with global values, will give the pesantren a stronger resistance to the negative influence of globalization.

It relates to the communication strategy of Tuan Guru in conflict resolution in the Kembang Kerang Daya community. This article attempts to relate it to the spiritual leadership theory developed by Fry (Fry, 2003). At first, there appears to be considerable overlap between workplace spirituality and motivation-based leadership theory, the components and processes of intrinsic motivation, spiritual survival through the meaning of vocation of membership, and the workplace dimensions offered by Fry (Pfeffer & Fry, 2010). Any theory of spiritual leadership must incorporate the theoretical components of workplace spirituality and spiritual survival within a motivational theoretical framework. Spiritual leadership addresses the fundamental need of leaders and followers for spiritual survival so that they become more committed and productive organisationally. In this case, of course, Tuan Guru is a leader in the Pondok Pesantren organization who practices a type of spiritual leadership based on values, attitudes, and behaviors that are intrinsically necessary for motivating themselves and the community (*jama'ah*).

The spiritual leadership of the master can be observed through his vision, which includes a broad appeal to stakeholders, how he formulates collective goals, supports community expectations, and sets standards of excellence. The spiritual leadership of the guru encourages the emergence of the guru's communication strategy based on altruistic love, which includes loyalty, forgiveness, gratitude, integrity, honesty, courage, humility, kindness, and compassion. (Egel & Fry, 2017). Thus, the communication strategy of the master teacher encourages the creation of peace and love in the midst of all differences and conflicts that occur in the community. In short, the spiritual leadership of the master goes hand in hand with his communication strategy, which involves hope and altruistic love. Altruistic love encourages the master to prioritize care and respect for others. This attitude thus creates community confidence and trust in a person to achieve a collective vision towards peace.

Based on various previous research, it seems difficult to propose a mono definition of conflict that can be accepted by everyone. Everyone has a different perspective on what conflict is perceived to be. It can be argued that conflict stems from competition for external resources [e.g., power, land, or status] or can occur when there is a clash between the internal beliefs [e.g., values and interests] of two parties. (Moore, 2014). In other words, conflict stems from fundamental differences in human values and needs (Carneiro et al., 2014). Some see conflict as a description of interpersonal hostility, while others consider it an interpersonal disagreement stemming from different choices or preferences (Barki & Hartwick, 2001). Because of this, researchers have focused on developing a general definition that encompasses the entire phenomenon and its processes, such as antecedent conditions, emotions, perceptions, behaviors, and other factors. (Corwin, 1969) by conceptualizing conflict as a form of interpersonal or intergroup tension or as actions (e.g., disputes and distortions of information) that violate norms of cooperation within the organization. According to Thomas (1992), conflict is identified as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has thwarted, or is about to thwart, some of its affairs. In contrast, Robbins (2013) give conflict a more negative meaning, namely as a process in which a deliberate attempt is made by party A to counterbalance party B's efforts with some form of blockage that will result in party B's frustration in achieving its goals or advancing its interests. Similar to this definition, conflict is understood to be a process that begins when one party feels that the other party is frustrated or will frustrate his or her attention. (Thomas, 1992). In a rather straightforward manner, Mullins and Christy (1985) define conflict as behavior intended to impede the achievement of another's goals. Definitions from

a broader perspective are given on how to define the concept of conflict, which is larger and abstract in its complexity. Conflict is a word that includes serious disagreement, discord, fight, debate, contest, debate, battle, clash, war, and so forth. Thus, conflict is an interpersonal dispute or disagreement between two or more individuals due to differences of opinion, competition, negative perceptions, unclear role expectations, or lack of communication. (Ellis & Abbott, 2012).

Meanwhile, sources of conflict often have similar characteristics and tend to be interrelated, although they may be too numerous and too diverse to manage. Conflict can occur, for example, due to conflicting interests, close supervision, role ambiguity, problem-solving methods, and so on. However, many researchers (Kabanoff, 1985); (Vliert, 2013) consider that conflict tends to be rooted in tasks, values, goals, and/or norms. More specifically, the sources of conflict based on the review of relevant literature can be classified as follows: (1) problems in communication, i.e., poor encoding of messages, poor human relations among organizational members, lack of proper information processing and inappropriate timing can be some of the factors that eliminate mutual understanding among organizational members and consequently can lead to disagreement and conflict in the work environment. (Tourish & Robson, 2006)(2) role ambiguity, i.e., in any formal organization, each individual occupies a predetermined job position based on the organization chart and job analysis used to derive job descriptions and person specifications. When there is ambiguity in job roles and requirements, then the employee faces an unfamiliar work environment, and this can lead to unpredictable behavior patterns; (3) conflict of interest, i.e., the allocation of limited resources (including financial) can be a cause of conflict as each entity may need to fight for its own piece of the pie (Mullins & Christy, 1985). Finally, (4) value differences, i.e., every organization is made up of different people with different values, opinions, interests, and so on. These differences can sometimes result in clashes, e.g., attitudes, perceptions, and values that not only hinder the development of positive interactions among organizational members but also give rise to conflicts and further become major obstacles that prevent the organization from achieving its goals.

The types of conflict are as follows: (1) *conflict of interpretation*, which is a conflict that occurs when one or both parties to the conflict assume that the opposing party has beliefs that are not actually held by that party so that disagreement about a discourse issue is actually caused by inconsistencies in interpretative perspectives; (2) *conflict of argumentation* is a conflict that is born from a difference of opinion based on incompatible arguments or arguments of parties who do not consider to have the same strength. It is impossible to understand whether a person has a plausible justification for a point of view unless one has discovered the person's justification in the first place. (Dancy, 1985) Achieving this goal of understanding justification in practical conflict resolution is largely a matter of creating an atmosphere conducive to constructive and equal dialogue (Rahim & Magner, 1995); (Borisoff & Victor, 1989); (Mathis et al., 2017). Value conflict resolution is itself a value-laden activity that requires sensitivity and awareness of values; (3) *interest conflict* is a conflict that arises when conflicting parties have incompatible goals that they wish to fulfill. Such conflicts can resemble value conflicts but differ in the sense that parties involved in interest conflicts have more strategic intentions to achieve goals that favor themselves. (Clove & Goldsmith, 2011).(4) *role conflict* is a conflict that arises when conflicting parties have different views on areas of responsibility, division of tasks and the boundaries between formal and informal roles. This conflict easily arises if there are many grey zones between roles and uncertainty about routines and skill

competencies. (Roche et al., 2014) Finally, (5) *personal conflict* is a conflict that arises when a person considers another person's way unacceptable or provocative (Arnold et al., 2010). The fact that personal conflicts are rooted not so much in people's actions as in the self makes them particularly challenging to resolve. Every effort is encouraged to choose communication strategies for *leaders* and *managers* to work preventively, accentuating ideals such as respect, openness, and equality among followers.

The concepts of conflict resolution and conflict management will be discussed on the basis of differences to avoid overlapping the use of the two concepts in resolving conflicts. The concept of conflict resolution is a general *term* that can be interpreted as a wide range of methods and approaches to dealing with conflict, such as from negotiation to diplomacy, from mediation to arbitration, from facilitation to education, from conciliation to conflict prevention, from conflict management to conflict transformation, from restorative justice to peacekeeping. Conflict resolution can be considered any process that resolves or ends conflict through methods that may include violence or warfare. Alternatively, it can be seen as a non-violent process that manages conflict through compromise, or through the assistance of a third party that facilitates or imposes a settlement or resolution. Conflict resolution processes are many and varied and can be seen on a continuum ranging from collaborative, participatory, informal, and non-binding processes (such as mediation, conciliation, and third-party negotiation) to adversarial, fact-orientated, legally binding, and enforced decisions arising from institutions such as the courts (Boulle, 2005).

Resolution can be defined as a settlement, a determination, a firm decision, a statement of opinion or intent agreed upon by a legislative body, the act of settling a problem or dispute, or the process of reducing or separating something into its component parts (Lewin, 1997). Conflicting parties enter into an agreement that resolves their major disagreements, accepts each other's existence as parties and ceases all acts of violence against each other. (Deutsch, 1973). Conflict resolution refers to a set of processes aimed at reducing or eliminating the source of conflict.

The urgency of conflict resolution is as a mechanism of peace-building and peace process. Conflict resolution as a discipline of peace studies emphasizes that all conflicts in human societies should be resolved by peaceful and non-violent methods such as diplomacy, communication, negotiation, summit conciliation, arbitration, mediation, and through cooperative and confidence-building measures, among others. In the contemporary world, the role and primacy of conflict resolution cannot be ignored or justified. It is well known that violence begets violence, and humanity can be defended and protected from the onslaught of wars and holocausts only when the parties to the conflict are ready to adopt conflict resolution mechanisms for the resolution of their disputes. You should know that there is a political and peaceful way to justice (Woodhouse et al., 2005); (Ramsbotham et al., 1999).

Organizational conflict is classically considered to have a negative impact on team functioning, weakening stability, disrupting the *status quo*, inhibiting productivity (Furunes, 2020) as well as activities that are inappropriate for the organization (Tjosvold, 1998) with certain implications that can be both positive and negative, and avoiding conflict does not necessarily guarantee stronger relationships within and between organizations (Henkin et al., 2000); (Lima, 2001). Therefore, conflict becomes a very real issue where active conflict management can provide the key to obtaining all beneficial and positive conflict outcomes. While it is very important to be aware of the

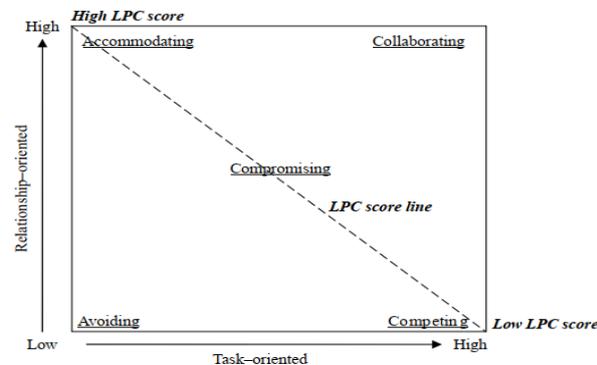
state of conflict and adopt an appropriate conflict management style, equally important is how the individual perceives the conflict, an accurate diagnosis, and understanding of the causes and sources of the conflict, and the style they adopt to respond to the conflict. (Friedman et al., 2000); (Göksoy & Argon, 2016). Rapid identification and diagnosis of the roots of conflicts that cause tension in the school work environment is crucial for principals as it helps to deal with conflicts effectively.

According to Maitra (2018) conflict management addresses the more realistic questions of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing parties together in a cooperative process, how to design a cooperative system that can be practically achieved for the constructive management of differences. Conflict management significantly resonates with the fact that conflict is inevitable in social relations, and it cannot be eliminated or ended, but must be dealt with constructively to get the best out of it. Conflict interventions are designed to reduce excessive conflict or, in some cases, to improve inadequate conflict. It also involves diagnosis and intervention as opposed to appropriate styles and strategies to achieve organizational and individual goals. (Gumuseli & Hacifazlioglu, 2009). These definitions suggest that conflict management is a process that involves applying approaches capable of reducing the volume and intensity of conflict to create a positive climate that promotes peace in society. Some researchers have also explored this notion, identifying the existence of conflict as a result of personal and environmental influences on group members (Almost et al., 2010). While Robbins and Judge (Robbins et al., 2013) state that conflict is a process that begins when one party feels that the other party has negatively affected, or will negatively affect, something that the first party cares about. In other words, conflict is a disagreement between at least two people or parties relating to an important matter of interest to both parties. According to Hasanah (2020) stated that conflict management is one of the effective ways to increase work productivity. The key to the effectiveness of conflict management in Islamic educational institutions is the ability and innovation of institutional leaders to combine or choose the most appropriate conflict management strategy.

The model involves awareness, thoughts and emotions, intentions, behavior, and outcomes. Thomas suggests conflict is a rolling issue that requires ongoing management in organizations. Pondy's framework (1969) presupposes that conflict materializes from one of five predisposing phases. The first latent phase is when there is anxiety and conflict is imminent, the second perceptual phase is where there is a conflict that is believed but minimized, and the third perceived phase relates to personalized conflict, where there is the discomfort experienced. The last two phases are real when the conflict is expressed, and afterward, and how this affects individuals and teams. Pondy views conflict as dynamic, and regardless of how or why conflict arises, it can still be examined and managed using this framework.

Five conflict management styles are common: *contending*, *yielding*, *avoiding*, *compromising*, and *problem-solving*, although the terminology varies between authors. (Holt & DeVore, 2005). The first commonly cited model is Blake and Mouton's *Grid Managerial Behaviour Model*, which includes two dimensions of concern for people and concern for production, resulting in five managerial styles. Furthermore, Rubin, Pruitt, and Kim (1994) have referred to a dual concern model in which the dimensions of concern about one's own outcomes and concern about other outcomes again lead to five conflict styles. These styles vary regarding who "wins" and whether one

"loses" the dispute. It is possible that one party wins and the other loses, both parties win, or both parties lose (or there can be a win/lose combination associated with different elements of the dispute).



Source: Based on Thomas and Kilman (1974) and authors own creation

Figure 1 conflict management styles by Thomas and Kilman (1974)

The Figure 1 above is a model of managing conflict and conflict resolution initiated by Thomas-Kilman (Thomas et al., 2008, p.148-166); (Ding, 1996, p.43-53); (Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990). Namely with the following steps: (1) *Competing*; trying to achieve goals in an assertive and uncooperative way; (2) *Collaborating*; dealing with conflicts by considering all possible solutions; An outcome that satisfies both parties to the conflict will be found. The parties concentrate on common interests, not on different opinions; (3) *Compromising*, the goal is to find a mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. Both parties are willing to sacrifice something to get at least part of what they want. (Rahim & Magner, 1995). Using this mode, win-win solutions are possible; (4) *Accommodating* the parties believe that differences in views and values are insurmountable. One party is prepared to ignore its own needs and concentrate on the interests and views of the other party. It can take the form of generosity or selfless charity; (5) *Avoiding*; the parties put the conflict aside, ignore it and do not actively seek a solution. The conflict may cease to exist or a solution may be found later. Both parties are indifferent about their own and others' problems.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach of case study research type (Creswell, 2012). Namely, to investigate the sources of conflict and conflict resolution through spiritual leadership and communication strategies of the master teachers in *their* post-conflict *social-religious* relations. Data were collected from various main and additional informants, such as data related to conflict source data, conflict resolution models, and post-resolution relations between the two, which were determined through *purposive sampling* and *snowballing sampling* techniques. The research informants are people involved in the conflict from both communities, namely Aswaja-NW and Sunnah-Wahhabi. While the data collection procedure uses the following methods: observation, used mainly to observe the daily reality of the relationship between the two groups after the resolution; an interview is used to collect data related to the factors that cause conflict, the motivation for choosing the conflict resolution model, and the daily reality of the relationship between the two both in the role of the family and the role of each community; and documentation will also be used mainly related to artifact data [part of the culture or tradition of both] related to

the issues under study. Furthermore, the data analysis process is carried out in line with data collection with three stages referring to the Miles and Huberman model (1994): data condensation, data display, interpretation, and conclusion.

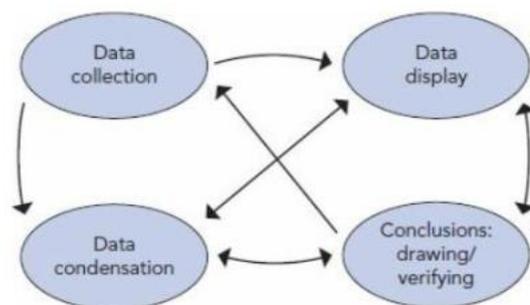


Figure 2 Interactive Data Analysis model from Miles and Huberman's

The Figure 2 above is Miles and Huberman's interactive model of data analysis theory. This model emphasizes three main activities that interact with each other during the data analysis process: *First*, data reduction. This stage is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data that emerges from field notes, interviews, and documents. Data reduction takes place continuously throughout the project. When data is collected, the first data reduction phase occurs by summarising, coding, theming and grouping the data. *Second*, Data Presentation. Data presentation involves organizing the reduced information in a form that allows for the drawing of conclusions. This can be in the form of narrative text, matrices, graphs, tables, or diagrams. Good data presentation helps the researcher understand what is going on and see the next steps. *Third*, Conclusion Drawing and Verification. Conclusions begin to emerge from the moment the data is collected by looking for patterns, themes, relationships, similarities, and differences. Initial conclusions may not be clear, but as more data is collected and analyzed, conclusions become more concrete and verifiable.

Results and Discussion

Nahdlatul Wathan versus Wahhabi Group Conflict in Lombok

The conflict between Aswaja versus Wahhabi Islamic groups in Lombok has been studied by several scholars, for example, a study conducted by Saparudin on ideological framing, conflict mosques: The position of the Salafi movement in Lombok (Saparudin & Emawati, 2023). This study explains the conflicts that occurred in Lombok between Aswaja Islam and Wahhabi Islam groups, which were driven by the position of the mosque as a mouthpiece of conflict in ideological contestation in the community. A similar study has also been conducted by Muharrir on the contestation of Islamic education in Lombok: Nahdlatul Wathan versus vis a vis Salafi-Wahabi. This research explains how educational institutions managed by the Nahdlatul Wathan group are challenged by educational institutions managed by the Salafi-Wahhabi group. In a sense, there is contestation in the development of educational institutions of the two groups, along with an ideological dissemination agenda to win public sympathy. (Muharrir, 2022). These two groups compete to build the branding of their respective educational institutions as a form of ideological contestation in the Sasak community. A study relevant to this research is also reviewed by Jeremy Kingsley, Religious Authority and Local Governance in Eastern Indonesia. This study portrays the

role of the master teacher as a peacebuilder in the West Lombok community. In particular, the master teacher who leads the Falah Pagutan Islamic boarding school, West Lombok, maintains inter-religious harmony through inter-religious dialogue. (Sila, 2020)

JID | 174 These studies focus on the study of conflict between Islamic groups in Lombok and how the contestation of educational institutions is managed. Beyond the research, this article wants to show the focus of the study on the communication strategy of the master teacher as a "peacemaker" in the conflict that occurred in the Sasak community, specifically in the Kembang Kerang Daya community, Aikmel sub-district, East Lombok, and West Nusa Tenggara. This research location was chosen because it has a uniqueness; namely, the residents of the Kembang Kerang Daya community are ethnic Sumbawa diasporas who have experienced hybridity with the Sasak tribe. The common identity of the Sumbawa diaspora is then colored by ideological conflicts that make them into two groups, namely, the Aswaja Nahdlatul Wathan Islamic group and the Wahhabi Islamic group.

Historically, the seeds of religious ideological contestation in Kembang Kerang Village have been planted since the 1980s until now. At first, the root of the difference began between the two Islamic communities between the Aswaja community of the Nahdlatul Wathan mass organisation and the Sunnah or Wahabi community, namely after the return of one of the Shaulatiyyah alumni, Makkah, namely Tuan Guru Muhammad Ruslan Zain. Since his return, he immediately preached in the community, namely filling in the public recitation every Friday night at the Jami 'Kembang Kerang Daya Mosque, then in his journey, he developed various Islamic educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, sociologically, the community of Kembang Kerang Daya can be said to be a "pesantren community" affiliated with the Nahdlatul Wathan Islamic organisation.

Meanwhile, the As-Sunnah or Wahabi group is affiliated with the Ass-Sunnah headquarters in Bagik Nyaka village. Statistically, the number of this group is insignificant, with around 30 households living in the hamlet (hut) of Cempaka Putih (Interview with YZ, 2023). At first, the Wahhabi community in Kembang Kerang Daya Village were followers of Nahdlatul Ulama' which developed in Bagik Nyaka under the leadership of TGH Abdul Mannan. TGH Abdul Manan founded the Jamaluddin Islamic Boarding School in Bagik Nyaka. Tuan guru Abdul Mannan has three sons, namely TGH. Muhammad. Husni, TGH Muhammad Luthfi and TGH Abdul Manar. (Faizah, 2012, 2017).

One of Tuan Guru Almanan's sons, TGH Muhammad Husni, is a Wahhabi pioneer in East Lombok. When he returned from his studies in Makkah in the 1980s, Tuan Guru Husni did not continue his father's NU tradition, but instead he became a Wahhabi preaching proponent. He criticized the traditions and practices of both NU and NW groups. Thus, Tuan Guru Husni's Wahhabi ideology emerged as an antithesis to the traditions and practices commonly practiced by NU and NW members in East Lombok. The spirit of purification [purification of Islam] carried by the Wahhabi group became the main trigger for the emergence of stigmatising and labelling heretical and bid'ah to Aswaja Islamic groups such as NU and NW. Therefore, conflicts between Aswaja (NU and NW) and Wahhabi groups in several places in villages and villages in the East Lombok region are inevitable, such as conflicts in Mamben, Toya, Kota Raja, and Bebidas villages. (Said, 2019).

According to several informants, the conflict over religious ideology in Kembang Kerang Daya village began with a struggle for religious authority at the Jami' Nurul Wathan Mosque. The motivation was a new ideology, namely that the Wahhabi group considered Aswaja from the Nahdlatul Wathan community who dominated the Mosque in Kembang Kerang Daya as ahlul bid'ah (Interview with MA, 2022). They [Wahhabis] are not willing to be the makmun of the imam and khatib who belong to ahlul bi'dah, because according to them the worship performed under the leadership of ahlul bid'ah is not valid. Therefore, the Wahhabi group then separated themselves and built their own Mosque.

They separated themselves from the Aswaja Islamic group. Since the construction of the new mosque, the Wahhabi group has criticized the traditions and practices of the NW group through the mosque speakers by labeling the NW community as "*ahlu-bid'ah*." This conflict became ideologically stronger after the emergence of Wahhabi youngsters who were alumni of Sunnah pesantren from East and Central Java and even Saudi Arabian alumni.

One young Wahhabi da'i, ZA, who is an alumnus of one of the Sunnah Islamic boarding schools in Central Java, launched attacks through his preaching from the mosque against the NW community. He loudly accused the NW community in Kembang Kerang Daya of heresy, bid'ah and shirk. In fact, he went to Tuan Guru Ruslan Zain's house to invite a debate by bringing books from Salafi-Wahhabi scholars. However, Tuan Guru Ruslan did not want to respond to him. Because Tuan Guru Ruslan did not want a response from the NW congregation that could potentially lead to physical conflict. The NW community, which is Tuan Guru Ruslan's congregation and students, did not remain silent. They considered Ustaz ZA's actions to have harassed the dignity of their teacher. A group of people gathered and wanted to carry out a physical attack, even wanting to burn down the Wahhabi Mosque. However, Tuan Guru Ruslan forbade the congregation so that this problem would not be extended to cause physical conflict. This is because Tuan Guru Ruslan's main reason is that even though they have different ideologies, the people of Kembang Kerang Daya are still one family.

However, continuous ideological contestation and polarisation inevitably lead to conflict. Society is divided and socially degraded. Identity and ideology are the main triggers of conflict. One of the young Aswaja NW preachers, Ustaz RA, felt offended by the lecture of Wahhabi Ustaz ZA. Ustaz ZA said that it is not appropriate for an imam and khatib to still smoke and pursue a hobby of fishing. According to Ustaz ZA, this is something that can damage the muru'ah of a religious figure. The next day, Ustaz RA came to ustaz ZA and immediately there was a physical conflict that caused a commotion in Kembang Kerang Daya Village. However, this conflict can be resolved by the community, and does not expand. If we analyse the data findings above, the source of conflict can be constructed sequentially starting from the difference in interpretation of religious teachings, the struggle for religious authority in the Mosque, the label of heresy against others, the implementation of inappropriate da'wah methods, and the birth of differences in ideology and identity among the two mass organizations.

Master Teachers' Conflict Resolution, Leadership, and Communication Strategies

The findings of the study on the conflict of religious ideology in Kembang Kerang Village based on the results of observations [*participatory observation*] and *indepth interviews* with

several informants, are the actualisation of conflict management through conflict resolution efforts cannot be separated from the role of the spiritual leadership of the Darul Kamal NW Kembang Kerang Islamic Boarding School, namely Tuan Guru Ruslan Zain Annahdy. Some of the steps used by Tuan Guru Ruslan to resolve conflicts and at the same time become a *peace maker* are: *First*, controlling his followers [pesantren community] not to commit acts of violence in responding to any resistance from the Wahabi community both in the form of behaviour and delivery of da'wah. Of course, as a wise figure in responding to conflicts, Tuan Guru Ruslan never gave violent or even physical resistance to Wahabi groups that were different from him or his followers. According to him, acts of violence can cause victims from both sides, and acts of violence are strictly prohibited by religion (QS. Ali Imran verse 159, QS. Al-Maidah 132, QS. Al Anbiya' verse 107). The *avoiding option* is the right choice rather than confronting them, even though many of the young people want another option, such as responding back with the same action. But the reason for this choice is due to the experiential reality that the community of Kembang Kerang is a pesantren community that upholds the religious values of being from the same family in accordance with the message of QS Al Hujurat verse 10 that Islam is brotherhood. In other words, the reason for altruistic and family values is the reason Tuan Guru H Ruslan chose not to take violent action against the Wahabi community even though it is considered to be very contrary to Aswaja [e.g. accusations of bid'ah and shirk].

Secondly, increasing the volume of *ngaji* activities in providing enlightenment and knowledge to the community, especially about the existence of differences in understanding religious teachings as something that is *sunnatullah*, and recognition of this is part of Iman. In between delivering recitation materials with the breadth of sources or arguments in religious charity, the views of ulama'-ulama' sourced from various books, he also always provides views and advice so that the community continues to increase patience in responding to various problems in living everyday life. Therefore, he responded to the conflict by delivering advice at the Pengajian on an *istiqomah* basis. With these recitation activities, the community's understanding of religious teachings [especially Aswaja teachings] is getting wider so that this has an effect on changing the constructive reactions of pesantren communities in responding to any wahabi teachings that are considered different from their understanding of religious teachings. In every recitation, Tuan Guru Haji Ruslan always conveyed to his jam'ah, namely, "We carry out what we believe in our *aliyah*; if there are those who do not like it, then leave it to Allah SWT. We must continue to maintain and care for the good traditions inherited from our teachers". The choice of this option can be understood because Tuan Guru H. Ruslan's educational background is an alumnus of Asshoulatiyah Mecca. His knowledge of Wahabi ideology while studying in Mecca was not a consideration in choosing conflict resolution options according to the context in Kembang Kerang village.

In various references, it is asserted that conflict resolution and management will be effective and beneficial if it is managed practically and supported by transparent communication, listening, and understanding of the perceived focus of disagreement (Ellis & Abbott, 2012). Furthermore, Ellis and Abbott recommend avoiding the seven Cs before undertaking conflict resolution efforts: commanding, comparing, condemning, challenging, demeaning, contradicting and confusing. According to Pondy (1969) states that recognising the signs of conflict and the source of origin will determine how best to prevent it. To minimize conflict or manage it effectively, it is crucial to

understand the person in conflict. Thomas and Kilmann (Kilmann, 1974) proposed an instrument theory of conflict management methods including five management styles that can be applied differently according to the scope of the type of conflict itself: collaborate, compromise, accommodate, compete, and avoid.

In conflict resolution efforts, the leadership role of religious leaders or, in the context of this study, the spiritual leadership of pesantren is very strategic in helping to prevent or resolve conflicts positively. Abraham Lincoln once said that the spiritual dimension of leadership is qualified by the values of bonds of affection. (Trueblood 1900-1994., n.d.). The spiritual leadership of Tuan Guru H Ruslan Zain Annahdy in resolving conflicts is carried out peacefully with messages that are filled with religious values and full of kinship. In line with the results of Suprpto's study (2015) namely, religious leaders - Tuan Guru, in resolving conflicts, always try to create conditions of peace and calm in their respective communities. They convey *religious* messages that contain peace and harmony. This is shown by continuing to conduct guidance [*ngaji*] both individually and collectively to the community as part of one family [love]. The choice of *resolution style*, namely *avoiding* violence by Tuan Guru Haji Ruslan, is in line with the findings of (Mariani et al., 2023) that is, the madrasah head uses an avoidance strategy when the problems that arise do not have a severe impact that causes division. This is not meaningful as the meaning of the concept of *avoiding* itself (Thomas, 1992); (Kaimenyi, 2014); (Katz et al., 2011); (Kazimoto, 2013); Rahim (2000) and (Gerzon, 2006) avoiding the concerns of both parties through ignoring, postponing the issue of concern or pretending that the issue does not exist, but *avoiding* means avoiding violent actions while still making other efforts.

Post-Conflict Socio-Religious Relations

The role of the spiritual leadership of Tuan Guru H. Ruslan Zain Annahdy's pesantren in conducting conflict resolution can be used as a prototype in managing and resolving cases of religious ideology conflicts in society that always arise anytime and anywhere. One indicator that can be observed is the socio-religious relations of the community in conflict.

The social capital of the Kembang Kerang Daya community is the bond of allied kinship, which is the main capital in building social-religious relations between the two different religious ideologies. Post-conflict social relations are united by these ties. In addition, socio-cultural tools and traditions helped normalise the post-conflict socio-religious relations between Wahhabi and NW groups. For example, the tradition of *begawe*, whether *begawe* marriage, birth, circumcision, and even death. In the culture of the allied Kembang Kerang community, this tradition is a place to bring together and rebuild kinship between families. The *begawe* tradition can be an ideologically free public space in the sense that there is no longer an ideological dividing line in the context of *begawe*; the people of Kembang Kerang Daya will reunite and help each other.

In addition, the Aswaja-NW and Salafi/Wahabi communities in Kembang Kerang have tolerated and understood each other's differences. Some Wahabi groups, especially the older generation, realize that their family ties have been broken due to different ideological affiliations. Thus, many of the Salafi Wahabi groups no longer question the differences that have been a source of conflict.

Furthermore, in the context of religion, both communities are bound by contracts in their respective religious understandings. In the Aswaja-NW community, it was found that the pattern of da'wah and the spread of its teachings remained consistent through ngaji activities and Islamic educational institutions [pesantren, madrasah and schools]. Meanwhile, there is something interesting about the pattern of da'wah in the Wahhabi community, which was previously through radical da'wah, calling his Aswaja-NW brother with the title of *bid'ah*, *shirk*, and others, changing his da'wah pattern through an individual approach. They tend to approach people who are middle to lower economic classes with various offers of assistance, such as financial assistance, after which they begin to spread their teachings. This pattern is considered quite effective after conflict resolution in spreading Wahhabi teachings in Kembang Kerang Village in the current context.

Conclusion

The conflict between Aswaja-NW and Sunnah-Wahhabi in Kembang Kerang Daya Village is a picture of the empirical reality of religious and ideological contestation in Lombok. This is caused by differences in understanding (interpretation) of religious teachings and the struggle for religious authority in the Sasak community. The conflict can then be mediated by the role of the master teacher in playing his communication strategy with a religious and cultural approach. In this context, the figure of Tuan Guru H Ruslan Zain Annahdy is able to become a prototype of a peacemaker to avoid efforts to act violently in the conflict of the Aswaja Islamic group versus the Wahhabi community. The communication strategy played by Tuan Guru Ruslan derives from religious and cultural-humanist values. Through the majlis pengajian, Tuan Guru Ruslan campaigned for the importance of peace to the jama'ah in Kembang Kerang Daya Village. Furthermore, Tuan Guru Ruslan strengthened the community's socio-cultural capital, namely the common ethnicity of the Sumbawa diaspora as a tool for peace. For example, peace efforts are knitted back through the silaturrahim tradition of *begawe* (feast/celebration) of marriage, birth, circumcision, and even death.

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