Article

News Framing in the Digital Era Based on Moderate Islamic News Portals within the Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic Community

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Abstract: Moderate Islam remains a fundamental pillar in the understanding of Islamic institutions in Indonesia. With the rapid advancement of digital technology, news portals have become the primary platform for disseminating news that reflects the values of moderate Islam promoted by Nahdlatul Ulama. Entman's (1993) framing model is re-evaluated in this study, as its framework does not incorporate digital-oriented elements in news reporting. Data collection was conducted through a qualitative content analysis of 30 news articles based on Entman's (1993) four framing functions: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. In the framing process, nu.or.id adheres to the principle of Islam as a religion of peace. Regarding problem definition, terrorism issues are the most dominant themes in the news content. In terms of causal interpretation, radicalism is framed as the primary factor causing the fragmentation of the Muslim community. For moral evaluation, the principles of moderation and ukhuwah (brotherhood) are emphasized as key messages in the news narratives. Regarding treatment recommendations, the use of media for Islamic preaching is considered a crucial approach to spreading moderate Islamic values. This study implies that the dissemination of moderate Islam in news reporting is inevitable in constructing narratives that align with organizational values and principles. The findings also contribute to the development of Entman's framing theory in the context of digital journalism, highlighting the need for a more effective framework suited to the digital era. Practically, managing moderate Islamic news dissemination through online platforms allows for the rapid spread of peaceful Islamic values.

Keywords: News Portal, news framing, islamic community, digital journalism, Islamic moderate

Introduction

The emergence of various interactive channels through Internet technology has driven a migration among audiences, particularly in the context of information access. As a result, the role of conventional media as the primary platform for delivering information to the public for a long time is now facing competition from new media (Ali & Ismail, 2017). The Internet is considered a major advancement in human civilization. It has become the primary tool for global information sharing, enabling significant development across many interconnected nations. Moreover, it has created vast, dense, and complex interconnectivity. Literally, it is regarded as a key practical or essential component for human development and social progress, leading to massive innovations worldwide (Salman et al., 2015). Digital intelligence (DQ), according to Yuhyun Park, it as the blend of social, emotional, and cognitive traits that empower individuals to navigate challenges and

adjust to the complexities of digital life. It is a collection of social, emotional, and intellectual skills that allow people to handle the barriers and adjust to the needs of modern life (Andika et al., 2024). The change that occurs in a society is called as social change and this change could not be separated from the result of social interaction that happens in a community.social change is a variation of acceptable lifestyles that could bring about changes in geographical level, culture, population composition, ideology, diffusion, and new invention in society. This social change is what is currently happening in society especially in their use of media for communication andinformation (Simamora et al., 2023)

With the rise of social media and online platforms, the media has become a space for self-expression, narrative creation, and documentation (Mat Husain et al., 2024). As digitalization and the Internet continue to develop, the speed and reach of media dissemination have reached unprecedented levels. Consequently, academic papers on media representation of marginalized groups in various fields have significantly increased (Li et al., 2024). At the same time, the discourse on radical Muslims (radicalism) has also become dominant in the public sphere (Hasan et al., 2020), as media platforms tend to provide space for extremist groups due to their tendency to prioritize sensational news coverage. Media outlets often cover violent extremist attacks because they aim to provide sensational stories to the public, and nearly every extremist attack falls under the category of sensational news (Miza et al., 2022). News consumers frequently fail to distinguish between partially inaccurate news and entirely fabricated news. In many cases, false news is used by supporters to delegitimize accurate reports (Martin & Hassan, 2020).

Radicalism is characterized by an ideological stance that leads to actions intended to weaken and replace an established political order with a new system. Islamist radical groups passionately promote their understanding of governance, jihad, and tolerance, either directly or through their online media platforms, which often reflect radical tendencies(Azra, 2014). These groups advocate for a khilafah system of governance referring to the leadership of the Khulafa' al-Rashidun after the Prophet Muhammad's passing—as a replacement for Indonesia's Pancasila-based democracy. They also define jihad as warfare or terrorist acts against non-believers and promote intolerance toward non-Muslims (Romadlan et al., 2021). This demonstrates the power of media in shaping and reinforcing political knowledge structures (Sah Allam et al., 2024). Meanwhile, left-wing extremism refers to a liberal religious understanding that applies liberal paradigms and ideologies to Islam. This liberal paradigm places individual freedom of thought as the primary norm above religious authority. Through this intellectual freedom, reason is positioned as a higher source of truth than divine revelation. Consequently, all values contained in religious texts must be open to rational critique. Based on this rationalist approach, liberal thought idealizes the separation of religion from the state, as religion is considered a private matter and should not influence public governance.

Moderate religiosity, on the other hand, stands at the center between these two extremes. On one hand, it acknowledges the authority of divine revelation while employing rational methodologies of interpretation. Moderate religiosity embraces rationality but avoids strict rationalism. Simultaneously, this moderate stance rejects right-wing extremism, which seeks to establish an Islamic state, instead advocating for the strengthening of Islamic values within modern political systems based on national states. This balance prevents moderate thought from falling into secularism while also rejecting the establishment of an Islamic state (Arif, 2020). Thus, the objective of this study is to identify the types of information disseminated by moderate Islamic news portals within the Nahdlatul Ulama movement from the perspective of news framing (Entman, 1993).

Literature Review

According to Eriyanto (Eriyanto, 2011a) framing is defined as the process of making a message more prominent and examining how the media constructs reality. Framing analysis is also used to understand how events are perceived and framed by the media. From a communication perspective, framing analysis can be used to dissect the ways or ideologies that employ selection strategies, emphasis, and the linkage of facts in news to make them more meaningful, engaging, significant, or memorable, thereby guiding the audience's interpretation according to a particular perspective. Framing analysis can be simply described as an approach to understanding how reality is framed by the media. This framing occurs through a process of construction, in which social reality is given specific meanings and constructed in a particular way. Events are interpreted

based on a specific framing. These elements are not just part of journalistic techniques but also indicate how events are framed and presented (Eriyanto, 2011b).

In framing analysis, the first step is to observe how the media constructs reality. Journalists and media actively shape reality. More specifically, framing analysis examines how the media frames events within a specific construction, focusing not only on whether the media reports positively or negatively but on how the media develops frames around an issue. Entman views framing in two broad dimensions: issue selection and emphasis or highlighting of certain aspects of reality/issues. Emphasis is the process of making information more meaningful, engaging, significant, or memorable to the audience (Entman, 2007).Framing is an approach to understanding the perspective or viewpoint used by journalists when selecting issues and writing news. This perspective ultimately determines which facts are included, which aspects are emphasized or omitted, and the intended direction of the news.

A text can make a piece of information more prominent through placement, repetition, or by associating it with familiar cultural symbols. However, even an unremarkable idea placed in an unclear part of a text can become highly significant if it aligns with the audience's existing belief system. Conversely, an emphasized idea in a text may be difficult for the audience to notice, interpret, or remember if it does not fit within their existing schema. For our purposes, schemas and closely related concepts such as categories, scripts, or stereotypes contain clusters of permanently stored ideas that guide individual information processing. Emphasis is a product of the interaction between the text and the audience. The presence of frames in a text, as detected by researchers, does not guarantee their influence on audience thought processes (Entman, 2007).

The theory used in this research is the mass media construction theory proposed by Berger and Luckmann. This theory is based on several fundamental assumptions: reality is created by humans through their ability to construct their surrounding world; there is a relationship between human thought and the evolving and institutionalized social context; society's reality is continuously constructed; and reality is a quality of the societal existence that is independent of any individual. There are three aspects that can be analyzed using the mass media construction theory; first, Information that affects a large audience, such as sensitive issues. Second, Content that contains elements of sensuality. Third, Content that evokes fear or horror. Sensitive issues refer to societal concerns that cause anxiety or distress within the community (Santoso, 2016).

Metodologi

Framing analysis, or frame analysis, is an alternative analytical model that can reveal the underlying reasons behind differences (and even contradictions) in how media present facts. Framing analysis is used to understand how reality is framed by the media. Consequently, social reality is perceived, interpreted, and constructed with specific forms and meanings. Framing is an approach used to examine the perspective or viewpoint employed by journalists when selecting issues and writing news. This perspective ultimately determines which facts are included, which aspects are emphasized or omitted, and the intended direction of the news. Gamson and Modigliani refer to this perspective as a package. According to them, a frame is a structured way of telling a story or organizing ideas that construct meaning for events related to a particular discourse.

A package is a set of ideas that define what is being discussed and which events are relevant. It serves as a schema or structure of understanding that individuals use to construct meaning and communicate messages, as well as to interpret the messages they receive (Eriyanto, 2011a). The framing model used by Entman consists of four key elements:

  i. Define Problems – The core element of framing that highlights how an event is understood by journalists. The same event can be interpreted differently depending on the frame used, leading to varied constructed realities.

  ii. Diagnose Causes – This element of framing determines who or what is responsible for an event. The cause may be framed as either a what (an issue) or a who (an actor).

  iii. Make Moral Judgment – This element provides arguments or justifications that support the definition of the problem and its causes, shaping the audience's moral perspective.

iv.   Treatment Recommendation – This element emphasizes the proposed solution by identifying the cause of the problem and how the event should be perceived (Dewi & Setiawan, 2022)

The official media studied is NU Online, which is the official media of the Nahdhatul Ulama Islamic group which is the mouthpiece for delivering da'wah through digital media. The news reports collected from the nu.or.id portal are as follows:

Table 1. News Year

News Year	News Total
2020	13
2021	17

The Findings

In the background of the study, the research materials encompass a total of 30 news articles on moderate Islam issues published on the nu.or.id news portal. These news reports were collected from editions spanning May 2020 to December 2021, covering a period of two years. The presentation of the research material profile includes details on news sources, news headlines, news direction, and news support, which are elaborated in detail as follows:

Table 2. News Sources

News Sources	Nu.or.id	
	K	P
Head of Goverment	1	3
Minister / Official	5	17
Principal / Secretary-General	4	13
Chairperson / Religious Figure	18	60
Public	2	7
Total	30	100

The schedule indicates that the news sources in nu.or.id come from various figures, including the Head of Government, Ministers or government officials, Principals or Secretary-Generals of organizations, Chairpersons or religious figures, and the general public. For nu.or.id, the primary news sources are Chairpersons or religious figures, accounting for 60% (18 news articles). The portal also cites news from the Head of Government, specifically President Joko Widodo, at 3% (1 news article). News sources from Ministers or government officials constitute 17% (5 news articles). Meanwhile, news sourced from Principals or Secretary-Generals of organizations make up 13% (4 news articles). Lastly, nu.or.id features news from the general public at 7% (2 news articles).

Table 3. The collected news headlines are as follows:

News Headline Direction	Nu.or.id	
	K	P
Positive	30	100
Negative	0	0
Neutral	0	0
Total	30	100

The analysis of news headline direction in the presented news content includes evaluations based on positive, negative, and neutral perspectives. In certain aspects, nu.or.id demonstrates a predominantly positive stance in its news headlines. This study found that out of 30 analyzed news articles, the positive concept was the most dominant, accounting for 100% (30 articles), while there were no negative or neutral evaluations. This indicates that the headlines produced by nu.or.id are primarily aimed at embracing, inviting, and informing rather than attacking or accusing other parties.

In this section, the focus is on defining the core issue, which is Moderate Islam. One of the key issues identified in nu.or.id's problem definition is terrorism. This can be observed in the following excerpts:

"The government is still struggling to handle terrorism cases in this country, which have yet to come to an end"
(nu.or.id, 2 December 2020)

"Islam has always been marginalized by certain groups due to terrorists who claim to be its followers."
(nu.or.id, 23 December 2020)

In defining this issue, nu.or.id reports that the main problem concerning Moderate Islam is terrorism. This online media highlights that terrorism in Indonesia continues to persist, not only in the form of violent acts but also through the spread of extremist ideologies. Therefore, the Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic movement and the Indonesian government are urged to take a firmer stance in addressing terrorism cases.

In terms of interpreting the source of the problem, the issue lies in the lack of law enforcement. The failure of legal enforcement has allowed terrorism to thrive in Indonesia. nu.or.id reports that terrorist ideologies continue to grow, posing a threat to the unity and integrity of the Republic of Indonesia. This key issue is reflected in the following news excerpt:

"A group of people in Indonesia who have recently been causing disturbances in the capital are those who advocate for God's law. They believe they are not obligated to follow the country's regulations because they consider themselves above the law."
(nu.or.id, 2 December 2020)

In this section, the researcher focuses on the moral evaluation aspect, specifically deradicalization. The deradicalization process can be applied to individuals who have not yet reached the level of becoming terrorists. This indicates that ideological changes in individuals are still possible through proper mental rehabilitation and guidance.

"The government must carry out deradicalization. This should be done for individuals who have not yet reached the level of becoming terrorists but rather for radical-extremist individuals who envision the establishment of an Islamic state (Daulah Islamiyah). 'I believe the state needs to engage them in discussions to bring them back to the recognition of national consensus. Former combatants should be reintegrated through a humanitarian and natural approach"
(nu.or.id, 2 Desember 2020)

In the problem-solving recommendations section, the focus of the study's analysis is to examine how nu.or.id frames the resolution of issues related to Moderate Islam.

This study's analysis found that nu.or.id emphasizes solutions that highlight the role and involvement of religious scholars (ulama) in enlightening the Muslim community while also fulfilling their responsibility as partners to the government.

"Identity politics is highly prevalent. Moderate Islamic media must be able to neutralize religious issues that carry elements of hatred, while still promoting themes of religious moderation, such as tolerance and unity. Furthermore, there is hope that in the future, the socialization of religious moderation can expand and embrace various other religious organizations, not just Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah."
(nu.or.id, 11 December 2020)

"In this regard, religious scholars (ulama), as the heirs of the prophets, have the responsibility to enlighten the Muslim community while also serving as partners to the government. They emphasize that religion should serve as a source of inspiration, a foundation for critical thinking, and a guiding principle in social, national, and state life. Additionally, they stress the importance of protecting religion from efforts to desecrate it. Furthermore, they call on the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to safeguard the nation from any attempts that could undermine the national consensus of the entire nation."
(nu.or.id 27 December 2020)

Based on the overall discussion and analysis of news framing in the nu.or.id news portal, the findings indicate that from a problem-definition perspective, terrorism remains an ongoing issue. The nu.or.id news

portal highlights terrorism as the primary problem. Similarly, regarding the cause of the problem in reporting on the issue of Moderate Islam, the nu.or.id news portal reveals that the main issue is the incomplete enforcement of the law in apprehending and prosecuting terrorism perpetrators. In terms of moral evaluation within the framing of Moderate Islam issues, nu.or.id emphasizes deradicalization, which involves mental rehabilitation and guidance for individuals who commit crimes in the name of religion, leading to acts of terrorism in Indonesia. For problem-solving recommendations, the focus is on the involvement of religious scholars (ulama), highlighting tolerant Islamic preaching (dakwah) and their responsibility as partners to the government.

Discussion

Online media is a new type of journalism as it has a number of features and characteristics that differ from traditional journalism. Its unique features emerge in its technology, offering unlimited possibilities in processing and disseminating new (Siregar, 2014). This online media character strengthens the da'wah in nu.co.id online news. From a theoretical perspective, framing theory focuses on the process of issue selection and the emphasis on specific aspects, with the framing concept consistently offering a way to describe the power of texts in communication (Entman, 1993). Therefore, in the context of framing analysis of Moderate Islam issues in the nu.or.id news portal, the selected issues and highlighted aspects are analyzed through four functional elements, that are problem definition, causal interpretation (identifying the cause of the problem), moral evaluation, recommendation for solutions.

The researcher considers that the findings of this study align with Entman's framing model (1993). In the context of news framing on Moderate Islam issues in the nu.or.id news portal, the problem definition is emphasized through several dominant perspectives, particularly terrorism and tolerance. Understanding the problem of tolerance in Indonesia requires a comprehensive approach. Political leaders must be able to interact productively and be able to resolve differences of opinion with a humble attitude. This means they must have the ability to listen well, respect different views, and find solutions that benefit all parties (Nugraheny, 2023). These issues are then followed by three other framing functions, namely causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and problem-solving recommendations.

In the causal interpretation of the problem, nu.or.id focuses on five key issues, namely incomplete law enforcement, the presence of atheism, cultural traditions, hate speech issues, and the misinterpretation of religious texts. Meanwhile, highlights conflicts and differences, religious understanding, Wahhabi teachings, provocation, and the relativism of truth as the main causes of the problem.

Furthermore, in the moral evaluation element, nu.or.id focuses on six key aspects, namely Islamic moderation, deradicalization, unity among religious scholars (ulama), comprehensive Islamic understanding, non-violent preaching (dakwah), and upholding human rights (HAM). Finally, nu.or.id proposes five key solutions, which include the involvement of religious scholars (ulama) and Islamic organizations, religious scholars serving as inspirations, the use of media for preaching (dakwah), the widespread dissemination of moderate Islam, and the promotion of moderate mosque activities.

Conclusion

The news portal nu.co.id in building moderate Islam emphasizes the aspect of tolerance and also prohibits Muslims from committing acts of violence in preaching. Islamic preaching is one that invites by embracing and also respecting differences and not imposing its own Islamic understanding. Handling not radicalism in Islam, nu.co.id suggests that there must be deradicalization by fostering people involving scholars who can inspire. The active role of moderate Islamic organizations in problem solving can prevent radicalism in religion and this must continue to be socialized without stopping to the community. The religious organizations involved are not only Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, but also all existing Islamic organizations.

In the recommendation, nu online as the official news portal of the Nahdhatul Ulama Islamic Group has done a lot to fight radicalism using the name of religion in its news and articles and the use of competent sources in Islam. This effort must be maintained and continuously improved by increasing the news in an effort to build awareness against radicalism and awareness of tolerance among Nahdhatul Ulama and among

the community to be maintained, especially among the general public and the younger generation who have a high probability of being influenced by radicalism and terrorism. In using online media as part of the da'wah of Nahdhatul Ulama, it is necessary to continue to improve media literacy in the lower community and traditional scholars in the form of media literacy trainings, so that online media can be used effectively in da'wah.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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