ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE NETHERLANDS: THE ADAPTATION STRATEGY OF THE INDONESIAN MUSLIM DIASPORA IN THE NETHERLANDS IN RESPONSE TO THE ANTI-ISLAM ISSUES

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Abstract

This research investigates how the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands strategically reduces or even prevents Islamophobia. The study employs a qualitative research methodology to collect primary data through in-depth interviews and direct observation, complemented by secondary data from both published and unpublished literature, including journals and books. The data was examined through descriptive analysis, which reveals that the adaptation strategies implemented by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora through existing religious organizations effectively mitigate the negative stigma associating Islam with violence and terrorism. The significance of this study lies in its examination of how these strategies influence broader perceptions of Islam in the Netherlands. Although the primary focus is on religious organizations, their involvement is crucial in addressing and countering social stigma. The research identifies several multi-path dimensions used to address

and reduce stigma. This includes Track Two Diplomacy, involving non-state actors, and collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia, universities, the European Council for Fatwa & Research, and various Dutch communities. These efforts involve biannual conferences, seminars, and interfaith dialogues aimed at tackling Islamophobia and offering solutions. Furthermore, the diaspora participates in Track Seven Diplomacy by engaging religious communities to promote a peaceful vision of Islam Nusantara in partnership with the European Council for Fatwa & Research. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers, which may influence parliamentary discussions.

Keywords: *Indonesian Muslim Diaspora, Netherlands, Islamophobia, Multitrack Diplomacy.*

A. Introduction

The relationship between Islam and the state has again become a serious concern and has become a global issue. The dialectic between the Islamic and secular states is again being questioned, and the presence of negative stigma and Islamophobia in Europe and among Middle Eastern immigrants continues and increases (Laitin, 2010). Responding to this phenomenon, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a state actor, and religious organizations, as a non-state actor, made ongoing diplomatic efforts and developed the "Interfaith Dialogue, Empowering the Moderates" program (Taufiq *et al.,* 2022), which aims to introduce the idea of moderate Islam and answer the issue of Islamophobia with *Nusantara Fiqh* approach (Taufiq *et al.,* 2022). The intended approach of Nusantara Fiqh is to provide positive narratives and respond in ways that are humane and not frontal. This is the uniqueness of Indonesian Muslims in the Netherlands.

Indonesian Muslim youth organizations have carried out positive narratives about Islam to respond to the problem

of Islamophobia. According to Aziz (2021), he illustrates that the Indonesian Muslim community living in the Netherlands seeks to strengthen a positive image of Islam and become a liaison in cultural diplomacy, including in efforts to overcome Islamophobia. There are several elements in the Muslim diaspora community in the Netherlands, such as the European Muslim Youth Association, Special Branch of Nahdlatul Ulama (PCINU, *Pengurus Cabang Istimewa Nahdlatul Ulama*), Special Branch of Muhammadiyah (PCIM, *Pimpinan Cabang Istimewa Muhammadiyah*), *Stichting* New Generation (SGB) Utrecht, Muslim Student Recitation, Teaching Dharma Wanita at the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague, *Stichting* Indahnya Sedekah Nederland, and Tombo Ati Den Haag.

Research by Gusnelly *et al.* (2021) regarding the critical role of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in responding to Islamophobia resistance in the Netherlands. The Indonesian Muslim diaspora has played a role in forming a network that connects them with religious issues in Indonesia and local social realities in the Netherlands and Europe in general. Their role has significant importance in Indonesia's soft diplomacy initiatives. Furthermore, it serves to foster extensive societal and philanthropic discourse across nations. In light of the increasing prevalence of religious extremism and the current surge in anti-Islamic sentiment, the objective of this book is to offer an alternate perspective in order to foster improved global interaction. Research conducted by Taufiq *et al.* (2022) shows that in dealing with Islamophobia in the Netherlands, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora uses a multitrack diplomacy strategy that has succeeded in spreading friendly, anti-terror, tolerant, and moderate Islam by promoting peaceful Islam through Islam Nusantara*.*

Efforts to spread positive narratives about Islam have sometimes gone smoothly in the Netherlands. An incident occurred when the PCINU Netherlands held a conference in Nijmegen. At the event, there were protests from a group of far-right organizations. They opposed the visit of the Indonesian Minister of Religion, arguing that the Minister still supports the implementation of sharia in Indonesia. However, this incident can be resolved: "There is a statement from Geert Wilder that what you want to reduce is Muslims from Morocco and Africa. Then some ask, what about Muslims from the Netherlands – Indonesia – How? Wilder replied: "They are different, they can live in Holland. That is also the question of some Netherlands anti-immigrant politicians." In other words, this shows that Indonesian Islam can be part of cultural diplomacy in the Netherlands.

From the description above, research on the adaptation strategy of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands in response to anti-Islam issues. This study aims to prove that the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands has a strategic role in reducing or even preventing Islamophobia. By carrying out a moderate narrative and adapting to global values, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora has spread friendly, anti-terror, tolerant, and moderate Islam by promoting peaceful Islam through Islam Nusantara.

The research was conducted in the Netherlands due to several unique factors that make it a particularly relevant and intriguing case for study. Firstly, the colonial history between the Netherlands and Indonesia has created distinctive social and cultural dynamics that influence the perceptions and experiences of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora, differing

from other European countries. Secondly, the Netherlands has a specific approach to integration policies, including a focus on assimilation and regulation of religious practices, which directly impact Muslim communities. Additionally, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands possesses unique demographic and socio-cultural characteristics, such as educational backgrounds, professional engagement, and religious practices, which provide a specific perspective in understanding issues of Islamophobia. These factors make the Netherlands a rich context for exploring how the Indonesian Muslim community adapts to and responds to the challenges of Islamophobia in Europe.

In order to answer the research objectives, qualitative research methods and literature studies were used, which were then analyzed by descriptive analysis. The research employed a comprehensive data collection methodology to explore the experiences and responses of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands. In-depth interviews were conducted with key figures and community representatives, including leaders from PCIM, PCINU, the heads of Masjid al-Ikhlas and Masjid Utrecht, representatives from the Association of Muslim Youth in Europe, Indonesian students, and mosque congregants in the Netherlands. These interviews provided detailed insights into personal and organizational perspectives on the community's adaptation strategies and experiences with Islamophobia. Additionally, observational data was gathered by attending and analyzing various activities organized by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora, allowing the researchers to witness community interactions and responses to challenges directly. The study also utilized Focus Group Discussions

(FGDs) to engage participants from diverse backgrounds, including Turkish immigrants, members of the Indonesian Diaspora Network (IDN) Netherlands, Moroccan immigrants, and representatives from the Indonesian Embassy in the Netherlands (KBRI, *Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia*). These FGDs facilitated the exploration of varied perspectives, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the broader immigrant community's experiences with Islamophobia. This multi-method approach ensured a robust and nuanced analysis of the issues.

B. Islamophobia

Islamophobia has increased significantly since 9/11, initially seen in political discourse (Al-Ansi *et al.,* 2022). Islamophobia is defined as an unfounded hostility to Islam and fear or dislike of all or most Muslims (Escolà-Gascón *et al.,* 2022). Islamophobia can also be negative perceptions and stereotypes directed globally towards Muslim communities and citizens even though most of them are vivacious actors and significant contributors to all aspects of life both in the fields of education, science, politics, economics, sports, and arts (Al-Ansi *et al.,* 2022). Islamophobia is a one-dimensional mindset with four broad categories: prejudice expressed in everyday conversation and reflected in media representations, exclusion from work, from management and responsibilities, from politics and government, discrimination in employment practices, in the provision of services such as health and education, violence involving verbal abuse, destruction of property and physical violence (Rehman & Hanley, 2023).

The prevailing occurrence of Islamophobia, which gives rise to anti-Islam attitudes, is a consequence of calculated political manipulation orchestrated by intellectual factions with divergent perspectives on Islam. These factions depict Islam as a substantial menace (Cheng, 2015). Some understand that Islamophobia is a feature of the religion of a person or group of people among religious people who believe their religious perspective is more legitimate than others (Yendell & Huber, 2020). Usually, these variations in religious practices highlight one particular element of the religion one adheres to while ignoring other elements. Phobias emerge from certain forms of fear and anxiety about specific issues.

The phobia of Islam is not only spreading like a virus in the minds of some Western people but also among citizens who feel they tend not to support the existence of Islam as the majority religion (Najib & Hopkins, 2019). Islam is seen as a force that threatens their interests. Therefore, Islam is often seen, even accused, and considered as a radical religion, an enemy of everyone, a threat to democracy, anti-peace, prone to use violence, involved in acts of terrorism, and the like. There are three fundamental reasons why the issue of Islamophobia is becoming significant in Europe at this time (Pradipta, 2016). *First*, Islam is portrayed as a separate part of European society in an increasingly developing societal climate. Government policies have failed to guarantee equal rights for all groups in society. *Second*, Islam is a scapegoat for economic recession and is constructed as a threat. The concept of Islamization constructed by xenophobic actors becomes a critical agenda to exaggerate the number of Muslims in Europe. Third, the 9/11 tragedy, the murder of

Theo Van Gogh, the Charlie Hebdo massacre, and a series of tragedies involving Islam were used to justify terrorist acts by the perpetrators, making European society anxious and afraid (Titley & Lentin, 2021). This is what the media uses to form stereotypes and stigmatization regarding the image of Islam, which is close to terrorist movements and acts of violence (Pradipta, 2016).

C. Diaspora

The term "diaspora" comes from Greek, namely from the word "diaspeiro," which means dispersion (Karim, 2018). The word "diaspeiro" is first found in the writings of Sophocles, Herodotus, and Thucydides in the early 5th century BC (Dufoix, 2009). Meanwhile, the term "diaspora" emerged as a newer concept in the 3rd century BC, precisely when prominent Jewish scholars in Alexandria translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Throughout history, the concept of diaspora originally referred to the spread of the Jewish nation, considered the oldest diaspora in the world (Elazar, 1991).

Diaspora refers to individuals who come from a country and move abroad for various motives (Kenny, 2013). Diaspora is based on three reasons. The *first* is political reasons related to the conflict situation in the country of origin. *Second*, economic factors can be a driving force, for example, in the form of participation in investments, which are then exported to destination countries or other economic interests. *Third*, social and cultural forces can also encourage diaspora, for example, due to social pressure or cultural differences in the country of origin (Galperin *et al.,* 2014). A concrete example of the diaspora phenomenon is the Thioghoa ethnic group

in Indonesia. In this dynamic, there is a difference between the country of origin and the destination country (abroad) in the context of this individual mobilization (Yayusman & Lissandhi, 2022). In addition, diaspora occurs because they learn, either because of assignments by their institutions or on their initiative and costs, because of the desire to develop their expertise and scientific skills. They generally return to their homeland after completing their studies. However, not a few develop their professional careers and choose jobs according to their expertise in the country where they studied.

From the sociological perspective of international migration related to Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI, *Pekerja Migran Indonesia*), many studies have shown that family influence is dominant in the international migration process for prospective PMIs seeking work abroad (Gheasi & Nijkamp, 2017). In this ontology, PMI families choose to send their family members to work abroad to maintain survival and improve their family's standard of living, especially in groups of people who are financially disadvantaged and have low levels of education. This phenomenon forms the view that being a PMI abroad is a way to improve the status of their family, and this, over time, becomes a mindset and eventually becomes part of the culture that shapes habits among the local community.

D. Multitrack diplomacy

Multitrack diplomacy is an approach that recognizes that diplomacy is not limited to formal negotiations between governments (track 1 diplomacy) (Raboin, 2014). This approach recognizes that global conflicts and problems are

often complex and involve various parties with different roles and interests. Therefore, Multitrack Diplomacy proposes that conflict resolution and international cooperation can be achieved through a series of different paths or "tracks" involving various actors other than the government (Böhmelt, 2010).

According to McDonald (2012), the concept of multitrack diplomacy consists of nine diplomacy tracks, which are explained as follows.

Track One: Diplomacy Government

In this government line or track, all conflict resolution efforts will be carried out through official procedures and involve the government and related institutions that are members of a country. It includes elements of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches (Kaye, 2007).

Track Two: Non-government/professional or Peacemaking through Conflict Resolution

In efforts to resolve conflict, non-governmental groups or individual experts also play an essential role in creating harmonious conditions. Their actions involve steps to prevent, resolve, and maintain relations between countries, carried out by parties outside the government environment (Branco, 2011).

Track Three: Business or Peacemaking through Commerce

The business sector also plays an essential role in efforts to achieve peace. This happens through the

provision of business opportunities for the community. This step is hoped to reduce the economic gap in society (McDonald, 2012).

Track Four: Private Citizen or Peacemaking through Personal Involvement.

This scope includes actions taken by individuals or communities to achieve global peace. This group participation is also often referred to as "people's diplomacy," which involves various activities, such as youth exchange programs, volunteer groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other groups filled with individuals who share the same vision and mission in creating peace (McDonald, 2012).

Track Five: Research, Training, and Education or Peacemaking through Learning.

In this fifth aspect, the actors involved have close links with academics and researchers. They carry out three interrelated roles: Research Conducted by academics in universities and think tanks. This activity involves an in-depth investigation to explore new insights. Training: Aimed at specific community groups and focused on learning about strategies for negotiation, diplomacy, mediation, and conflict resolution. In addition, they act as a third party in facilitating problem-solving. Education: Covers the range of education from kindergarten to university. The curriculum focuses on building tolerance and respect for Human Rights (McDonald, 2012).

Track Six: Activism or Peacemaking through Advocacy

Within this scope, actors trying to create peace are carried out by those who advocate for people's rights in various fields: environmental activists, fighters for human rights (HAM), heroes of legal and gender equality, and various other groups of fighters. This group also implements a specific strategy to defend its goals through advocacy (McDonald, 2012).

Track Seven: Religious or Peacemaking through Faith in Action.

Religious leaders in various countries generally provide direction for people who adhere to the same religion. However, in Inter-Religious Diplomatic Cooperation (MTD), the role of religious leaders is much more significant than just guiding followers of their religion. Religious leaders have a significant impact because they have a broad base of followers, so their voice significantly influences those who follow them. In the MTD context, the role of religious leaders is critical in efforts to create peace, especially in overcoming communal conflicts within a country. The following discussion will explain how religious leaders play a role in reducing conflicts that arise within a country (McDonald, 2012).

Track Eight: Funding or Peace-making through Providing Resources.

This group is included in the category of funders. It is often associated with benefactors who play a role

in supporting the path or actors who seek to bring about peace. Many donor agencies also collaborate with community groups to promote specific issues—for example, environmental issues, human rights, and gender equality (McDonald, 2012).

Track Nine: Communications and the Media or Peacemaking through Information.

In the final stage, the role of the media in creating peace has great significance. Media can be likened to a coin with two sides, namely, positive and negative sides. Media managed by individuals who promote peace will produce materials and messages that encourage peace efforts. Conversely, if the media is managed by individuals who like to create conflict, then the media tends to contain elements of provocation. Especially in the current era, information and communication technology development has made media easily accessible in various places and times. Therefore, the role of the media is critical in determining the level of peace in a country or region. In addition, the media also functions as a channel of public communication, used to convey views, input, or criticism to specific groups or the government. Next, several types of media, including print, film, video, and electronic media, will be explained in the discussion (McDonald, 2012).

E. Islamophobia in the Netherlands

The Netherlands is a country with an open-minded society that welcomes immigrants. However, this does not

mean Islamophobia does not occur in the Netherlands. Several actions indicated as Islamophobic movements have occurred frequently, such as recruiting workers from names without a Netherlands family, rarely being accepted as employees (Zhara, personal communication, 13 July 2023). There is a reasonably systematic movement for job seekers; as long as they are immigrants who do not have Netherlands surnames, they are rarely accepted as employees. They discredit the Islamophobic mission through such means. Academics conveyed the same thing from the University of Amsterdams (Muishout, personal interview, 30 July 2023). Islamophobia in the Netherlands arises from discrimination when Muslim immigrants are looking for work; however, some immigrants do not feel such discrimination, as expressed by a diaspora from Banyumas who has lived for 50 years (Danun, personal interview, 14 July 2023). For him, if a political party develops a phobia against Muslims, they will not get support. Even the Netherlands government will pay serious attention, and parties that discredit Islam will be marginalized by the Netherlands government. Danun's statement, as reported by Huyzer (Dutch News, 23 July 2023), said that prohibiting police officers from joining democratically elected political parties is both impossible and undesirable. However, more must be done to ensure they carry out their duties neutrally. Moreover, respect the Constitution. One of the reports involved an officer in The Hague who was sent home after making "highly inappropriate comments" on social media. The officer is an active member of the far-right PVV (The Party for Freedom) party and was a candidate in last year's local elections.

It differs from what Zhara feels (Personal interview, 15 July 2023). In the Netherlands, two terms are used to describe the people who live there: "*Allochtonen*" and "*Autochthonen*". According to his understanding, the term "*Allochtonen*" refers to minority communities with immigrant backgrounds from non-Western areas, including those who have ancestry from countries such as Morocco, Suriname, and so on. Meanwhile, the term "*Autochthonen*" refers to a society where both their parents were born and raised in the Netherlands and adopted the culture, lifestyle, and mindset that Europeans/Westerners generally embrace.

In the Netherlands, groups that campaign for Islamophobia in the Netherlands tend to come from right-wing politicians with the support of their constituents through media framing. The Netherlands Human Rights Institute describes discrimination as treating people differently, depriving or excluding them based on (personal) characteristics. This characteristic is called the basis for discrimination. Discrimination on the following grounds is not permitted by law. Legislation provides equal treatment to protect. According to Noval (personal interview, 12 July 2023), these groups will emerge just before the election, meaning Islamophobia will become a sexy issue.

In line with Noval, Koen Damhuis wrote in one of the media giving a review that when Geert Wilders, founder, and frontman of the PVV, explained the "Plan for the Netherlands" ahead of the 2017 Netherlands general election, he stated that "the biggest problem in this country is Islamization." This process, says Wilders, is an "existential threat" to "our identity, our freedom. Adding Koen Damhuis in the same media "as far as

I know, PVV is the only political party in the world that only has one official member, Geert Wilders." Noval added that even if we look at the reality of people's lives, especially for the Muslim community, both from Morocco, Turkey, and Indonesia are doing well. Indeed, there is a factor of jealousy in the economic aspect of Netherlands society towards immigrants. They see immigrant communities with extended families receiving state facilities, while Netherlands people tend to have small families and sometimes even live alone.

In line with Noval, a diaspora who has lived for a long time in Amsterdams, Ali (personal interview, 16 July 2023), they also agreed that the problem of the development of Islamophobia in the Netherlands is often generalized that what has an impact is Islam as a whole in the Netherlands. Ali said they had made diplomatic and communication efforts with the Netherlands government through existing Islamic organizations (read diaspora), and the Netherlands government understood what was happening. However, again, the Labour Party, a political party, carried out the media framing. The right-wing was making the issue of anti-Islam increasingly crowded for political interests.

F. Indonesian Muslim Diaspora in Responding to Anti-Islam in the Netherlands

Immigrant groups from Islamic countries, especially those who have chosen to settle in the Netherlands, have formed a diaspora. Many have contributed to building Islamic infrastructure in the Netherlands, with more than 430 mosques established. The call to prayer in the Netherlands is also familiar to the local population. The presence of

many students from Muslim countries has given its nuances and diversity. Today, hundreds of Islamic organizations in the Netherlands, large and small, have become part of the country's religious landscape.

The emergence of Islamophobia in the Netherlands is more due to the media factor, which deliberately backs up issues around terrorism, the perpetrators of which are Muslims and come from Islamic countries. The media framing aims at Muslims, without exception, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora. For this reason, the strategy carried out by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora through existing religious organizations is expected to reduce the negative stigma that Islam is a religion of violence that is synonymous with terrorism (Nur Hasyim, personal interview, 11 July 2023). James B. Hoesterey (International Discussion, 2020) said that this positive activity was part of diplomacy, which was very influential in reducing the tension of the Islamophobia movement in the West. The adaptation strategy implemented by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in counteracting the Islamophobia movement in the Netherlands is part of the Track Diplomacy developed and practiced by McDonald (2012). However, in this study, the use of Multitrack Diplomacy only used tracks considered relevant for completing the adaptation strategy of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in minimizing Islamophobia. It includes the first track for state actors, the second for non-state actors, the fourth for citizens, the fifth for educational institutions and the sixth for activists, and and the seventh for religious institutions.

Track One is diplomacy carried out by the state, known as official diplomacy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

through the Indonesian Embassies in several countries. This path makes the process of adaptation to policy instruments making peace regulations, according to McDonald (2012), held to guarantee bilateral and multilateral relations between countries. According to researchers, this path is an adaptation strategy implemented by state institutions to provide an official narrative to create harmonization and peace.

Track Two is non-state power, namely religious organizations and other social organizations whose function involves actors and non-governmental and professional organizations to spread positive narratives of Islamophobia. In this path, professional non-state actors try to analyze, prevent, resolve, and manage international conflicts (McDonald, 2012). According to researchers, this path is an adaptation strategy implemented by non-state institutions, namely the role of religious and social organizations to provide a positive narrative so that negative sigma is not created because this path is very vulnerable as a victim of Islamophobia in a region.

Furthermore, it is called Track Four diplomacy, employing citizens' personal involvement (McDonald, 2012). In this case, religious organizations have a significant role in spreading the positive narrative of Islam Nusantara to fight Islamophobia in the Netherlands because they have direct contact with Netherlands society. The Adaptation Strategy implemented in this way is to provide reasonable communication efforts to explain understanding to citizens so that the citizen's involvement does not lead to excessive negative stigma and overreaction.

Track Five, namely the diplomacy track, was organized by students in the Netherlands to become ambassadors for

diplomacy in education. The adaptation strategy in this path is fundamental, as Indonesian students are currently studying in the Netherlands because most students are in the Netherlands. In this context, a program organized by Indonesian students in the Netherlands by carrying out research exchanging ideas (discussion forums held regularly at mosques in the Netherlands) has won an Education Fund Management Institute (LPDP) scholarship from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia and 5000 Doctoral programs from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

Meanwhile, *Track Six* is diplomacy pursued through advocacy by activists. In this path, religious organizations actively build dialogue between existing religious communities. The adaptation strategy was implemented by carrying out two-way communication between other religious communities in the Netherlands, namely the religions that developed in the Netherlands.

Track Seven, diplomacy involves religious communities. In this case, the Muslim Indonesian diaspora uses it to spread peaceful Islam Nusantara in collaboration with the European Council for Fatwa and Research to participate in determining fatwas (points of view) in Europe. This adaptation strategy generates recommendations to the competent authorities, which can provide input to parliament so that the decided regulations will bring more blessings to all and provide protection for all citizens regardless of ethnicity, race, and religion.

Track Nine includes diplomacy carried out through the dissemination of information and communication. According to Diamond and McDonald, the central role of information and communication technology is to disseminate knowledge

about peace, conflict resolution, and international relations to the general public (McDonald, 2012). In this adaptation strategy, religious organizations must cooperate with the first channel, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Based on this multitrack diplomacy, the first and second tracks carried out by religious organizations, in this case, the PCINU (Track Two), in responding to Islamophobia are part of the adaptation strategy carried out by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora through the PCINU organization in collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy and the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. (Track One), Collaborating with universities, the European Council for Fatwa & Research, and various communities in the Netherlands to carry out several activities. Among them are biennial conferences and seminars that provide solutions to Islamophobia in the Netherlands. This organization also establishes dialogue between religious communities and has joined the Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations (NICMCR); in this forum, according to Nur Hasyim, Islam was introduced in its entirety (Nur Hasyim, personal interview, 11 July 2023).

The next activity agenda to counter the narrative of Islamophobia in the West is holding a Biennial International Conference. The first conference activity was carried out in collaboration with Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in 2017 with the theme "Rethinking Indonesia's Islam Nusantara: From Local Relevance to Global Significance." The second was held in 2019 in collaboration with Radboud University, with the theme "Searching for the Middle Way (*Al Wasatiyyah*): Articulation of Moderate Islam" (Afnan Anshori, personal interview with the head of the PCINU Netherlands, 16 July 2023).

As McDonald (2012) points out, only some paths can be applied entirely and independently to achieve success. It takes a concerted effort using various channels of diplomacy. Each line of diplomacy has strengths and weaknesses. For this reason, it is necessary to have an adaptation strategy for actors in each channel according to the situation and characteristics of the issues they face.

Official state institutions must be present in the Indonesian Muslim diaspora community. The presence of official state institutions is to develop dialogue among members of the Muslim diaspora regarding Islamophobia that is directly experienced in society, both on issues of economic and social discrimination, so that grassroots issues can be conveyed through official state diplomacy; thus, the weaknesses in this path can be optimized by state institutions.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, as the most prominent Islamic organizations in the world, have a very strategic role in spreading the understanding and practice of religious moderation to the world as a manifestation of the Islamic ideology *raḥmatan li al-'ālamīn* (Islam is a blessing to the universe), seeking solutions to conflicts in the Middle East; combating extremism; and Islamophobia in the West (Taufiq *et al.,* 2022). NU can play a dual role in synergized diplomacy with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia through the Nahdlatul Ulama network around the world, including the PCINU Netherlands, offering the concept of Islam Nusantara as an inspiration for world civilization. The adaptation strategy by Islamic organizations is expected to reduce the stigma that Islam is a religion of violence synonymous with terrorism.

The concept of diaspora carried out by the PCINU Netherlands with an effort to maintain traditional Islamic religious narratives with the *ahli sunnah wal jamaah an-nahdliyyah* experts abroad is something they understand from their homeland, thus forming global traditional Islamic religious connections amid increasingly violent identity battles (Gusnelly, 2017). Therefore, both the Indonesian and Netherlands governments consider the religious practices implemented and promoted by PCINU Netherlands to be an excellent example of building a diverse society. Through the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague, the Government of Indonesia actively supports their activities. The Netherlands government also has a similar attitude. In terms of more concrete operations, the Municipal Government of Moerwijk has several times invited the administrators of the Al-Hikmah Mosque to participate in local multicultural festivals. This was done because they appreciated NU's approach to religious development, which brought new enthusiasm amid increasing conservative sentiment in religion on the one hand and the phenomenon of Islamophobia on the other hand.

In this regard, Gusnelly (2017) concludes that the PCINU Netherlands experience is fertile ground for diaspora studies, especially from a religious perspective. This is nothing new. Azra (2012) also shows the critical role of Indonesian Ulama in building bridges to global religious connectivity in the 17th and 18th centuries. Therefore, if the Indonesian Ministry of Religion continues to echo the vision and mission of building religious moderation, of course, it is part of a large project to build a moderate religious vision in the global sphere for the sake of realizing Islam that is *rahmatan lil alamin*, in the real world.

G. Conclusion

Islamophobia in the Netherlands has experienced ups and downs according to political developments and actual immigrant issues that occurred in the Netherlands. The issue of Islamophobia will continue to develop and escalate as the election approaches. Right-wing political parties driven by right-wing political figure Greet Wilders, through media framing, continue to discredit Islam as a whole, both in obtaining state facilities for immigrants and recruiting employees who do not have Netherlands surnames. On the other hand, many, especially Moroccan immigrants, are also active in political upheaval. Based on the observations of researchers, there are several patterns of immigrant life; Turkish immigrants are more inclined to live their business, and as long as their business is not disturbed by the situation of Islamophobia, they do not put up a fight. Moroccan immigrants' lifestyle will follow every issue and political upheaval in the Netherlands so that they will fight for their rights through political channels. Meanwhile, specifically for immigrants from Indonesia, they are more comfortable making diplomatic efforts to resolve issues that arise.

The failure of the Netherlands government to carry out the process of integration of Muslim immigrants did not go as expected by the Netherlands government, because the migrants preferred to marry other people and even brought their partners directly from their country of origin, even the tendency to be reluctant to form family ties with native Netherlands citizens. This problem gradually became a separate problem. Based on researchers' observations while in the Netherlands, there were hardly any communities

where Muslim immigrants mixed with native Netherlands citizens. They enjoy themselves more with their community. The integration process in the Netherlands could be better due to views that cannot accept the culture and lifestyle of the Netherlands people. Therefore, the strategy carried out by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora through existing religious organizations can reduce the negative stigma that Islam is a religion of violence that is synonymous with terrorism. Multitrack Diplomacy is part of an adaptation strategy carried out by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora, which is seen as effective in providing positive narratives to audiences because the Multitrack Diplomacy strategy allows for the spread of diplomacy from various paths taken.

The research findings confirm that the Indonesian Muslim diaspora has positively responded to Islamophobia, which is still emerging in the Netherlands. It is therefore recommended that the Indonesian government, through the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague, open up space for dialogue between mass organizations promoting religious moderation and communities in the Netherlands as soft diplomacy to reduce the narrative of Islamophobia. For this reason, it is crucial that the government of the Republic of Indonesia opens up space for the facilitation of diplomacy through dialogue between Islamic organizations and the Netherlands government.

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