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Social Dynamics of Actors in Muhammadiyah Organization: Exemplary Behavior, Dual Roles, and Ideological Negotiations in Enrekang Regency

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the importance of understanding the role of actors in the dynamics of religious organizations, especially Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency, which faces social, ideological, and cultural complexity. Muhammadiyah actors at the local level not only carry out structural functions, but also play a cultural role as agents of social change and guardians of social harmony. The purpose of this study is to analyze how exemplary behavior, dual roles, and negotiation strategies of Muhammadiyah actors play a role in responding to the developing social and ideological dynamics. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method, through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Data were analyzed using thematic and interpretive analysis techniques with reference to Anthony Giddens' structuration theory and Pierre Bourdieu's praxis theory. The results of the study show that Muhammadiyah actors have a strategic role in bridging the ideological values of the organization with the needs of the local community through social exemplars, flexibility of action, and a cultural approach. The discussion shows that the success of the organization is highly dependent on the quality of the actor's agency, not solely on structural

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strength. This study provides theoretical and practical contributions in understanding the dynamics of community-based religious organizations in complex and pluralistic social spaces.

Keywords: Social Actors, Role Models, Structuration, Ideological Negotiation, Local Muhammadiyah

INTRODUCTION

The main phenomenon that emerged in the initial research in Enrekang Regency was the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in carrying out dual roles as structural leaders of the organization as well as cultural figures in society, especially in facing ideological challenges and the weakening participation of cadres. This issue is important because the sustainability of the Muhammadiyah movement is largely determined by the capacity of actors to combine progressive Islamic values with complex and changing social realities (Efendi et al., 2021; Khoirudin et al., 2020). The data shows significant variations between active and passive branches, which are highly dependent on the personality, ideological understanding, and exemplary behavior of the leader. As stated in the interview, "The leader must be respected and imitated, not only because of his position, but because of his role in society." According to Giddens, structure and agency shape each other, while Bourdieu emphasizes the importance of capital and habitus of actors in social practices. Thus, the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang reflect the complexity of the relationship between organizational structure, values, and local context.

Previous studies published in reputable journals and academic dissertations have discussed the role of Muhammadiyah in education, health, and da'wah, as well as the dynamics of the organization at the central level and strategic regions such as Java and Sumatra. Several studies also highlight collective-collegial leadership, cadre formation, and the strategy of the modern da'wah movement (Dewantoro & Susilo, 2025; Nur et al., 2020; Sabri, 2023). However, these studies generally focus on institutional structures and have not explored in depth the dynamics of actors at the grassroots level, especially in areas such as Enrekang Regency which have unique social and cultural characteristics. The main drawback of previous studies is the lack of attention to the relationship between structure and agency in the local context, as well as the role of actor role models in bridging Muhammadiyah's ideological values with the social conditions of the local community.

Thus, the study of the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang offers an original contribution to the body of knowledge on community-based religious practices in peripheral areas.

This paper is presented to respond to the shortcomings of various previous studies that tend to emphasize the structural and institutional aspects of Muhammadiyah, but do not explore in depth the role of actors at the local level who operate in a unique socio-cultural context. This study specifically aims, first, to identify the forms of exemplary Muhammadiyah actors as socio-religious authorities who are role models for the Enrekang community. Second, to explore how actors play dual roles in the structural and cultural realms, including how they navigate complex social dynamics through adaptive strategies. Third, to analyze the strategies used by Muhammadiyah actors in responding to ideological tensions at the local level, especially in dealing with other groups that carry different Islamic beliefs ideologically and practically. Thus, this paper offers theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of the social dynamics of community-based religious organizations.

The basic assumption of this study is that the sustainability and dynamics of the Muhammadiyah organization at the local level, especially in Enrekang Regency, are largely determined by the active role and exemplary behavior of its actors, not merely by the strength of the organizational structure. The main argument to be tested is that Muhammadiyah actors have a strong agency capacity to interpret, negotiate, and even transform organizational structures and ideological values in a constantly changing social context. Exemplary behavior, cultural influence, and the ability to strategize in facing local ideological challenges are the main forces that support the vitality of the organization. This study also seeks to examine the extent to which the dual roles of actors in the structural and cultural realms contribute to the revitalization of the Muhammadiyah movement, as well as how the negotiation space between actors and structures creates unique social dynamics at the branch and sub-branch levels, which have so far received less attention in previous academic studies.

METHODS

The research method in this study uses a qualitative approach with the reason for selecting the site and place in Enrekang Regency because this area is an important

representation of the dynamics of the Muhammadiyah religious organization at the local level which is in intensive interaction with traditional Islamic culture and contemporary ideological challenges. The selection of cases is focused on Muhammadiyah leadership actors who have a significant role in driving the organization's programs and strategies, both structurally and culturally. The focus of the research is directed at how these actors build role models, play dual roles, and navigate ideological tensions in society. The unit of analysis is individual Muhammadiyah actors who occupy strategic positions and have socio-religious influence, both formal and informal. The selection is based on their contribution in carrying out social transformation based on Islamic values and their experience in dealing with the complexity of socio-religious relations that are developing dynamically in Enrekang.

The type of research used in this study is descriptive qualitative research with a case study approach, which aims to explore in depth the dynamics of social actors in the Muhammadiyah organization in Enrekang Regency. This study emphasizes understanding the meaning, actions, and strategies of actors in a complex local socio-religious context. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with Muhammadiyah leadership actors, direct observation of organizational activities, and documentation of religious and social activities carried out by Muhammadiyah. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from organizational archives, activity reports, and Islamic documents and local policies that are relevant to the position and role of actors in the structure and culture of society. The use of a combination of primary and secondary data provides depth of analysis, enriches the interpretation of phenomena, and allows data triangulation to maintain the validity of findings related to the strategies and roles of actors in facing ideological challenges and strengthening the organization.

The data sources in this study came from key informants selected purposively, namely Muhammadiyah leadership actors in Enrekang Regency who have formal authority and socio-religious influence at the local level. Informants include the Chairperson of the Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership, the chairperson of the assembly and strategic institutions such as the Tarjih and Tajdid Assembly, the Cadre Education Assembly, and figures who are active in da'wah and community empowerment activities. The selection of informants was based on their active involvement in the dynamics of the organization and their direct experience in facing ideological challenges in society. In addition, community figures, young Muhammadiyah cadres, and sympathizers were also selected as supporting

informants to obtain a triangulation perspective. The selection technique was carried out through snowball sampling, where the initial informant recommended other relevant informants who had in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon being studied, in order to explore the social meaning of the strategies and roles of Muhammadiyah actors contextually.

In this study, data collection techniques used include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted with key Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency, such as regional leaders, assembly leaders, and figures who play an active role in socio-religious dynamics, in order to explore their experiences, views, and strategies in responding to ideological challenges and organizational dynamics. Participatory observation was conducted by participating in organizational activities such as religious studies, deliberations, and community empowerment programs organized by Muhammadiyah, to directly observe patterns of social interaction, actor role models, and community responses. Documentation studies include analysis of organizational archives, activity reports, as well as internal da'wah materials and publications that provide an overview of the structure, vision, and direction of the Muhammadiyah movement locally. These three techniques complement each other and strengthen the validity of the data through a triangulation process, so that the research results reflect a deep and contextual social reality.

The data analysis technique used in this study is thematic analysis with an interpretive approach, which allows researchers to identify patterns of meaning from the narratives, actions, and strategies of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency. The analysis process begins with the transcription of interview data, recording of field observation results, and collecting supporting documents. Furthermore, an open coding process is carried out to mark initial themes, such as actor role models, structural-cultural dual roles, ideological tensions, and negotiation strategies. After that, the themes are classified and linked to each other to form deeper and more systematic analysis categories. Interpretation is carried out by considering the local context, social structure, and Islamic values of Muhammadiyah adopted by Muhammadiyah branch leaders. The results of the analysis are also strengthened by data triangulation between informants and between sources, to ensure consistency of meaning, and increase the validity and depth of understanding of the socio-religious dynamics studied.

RESULTS

Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency play an important role in articulating Islamic values and rules and social practices through exemplary behavior in daily life. This exemplary behavior is not only in religious rituals, but also in simple social life, work ethic, integrity, and commitment in efforts to realize an Islamic society (Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008; Almu'tasim, 2016; Rafiki & Wahab, 2014). This exemplary behavior strengthens moral legitimacy more than structural positions in the organization. The character of Muhammadiyah leaders is based on the hope of leading the organization's citizens to create a primary Islamic society (Wagma, 2013; Yousif et al., 2015). Their authority is built through closeness to the community, activeness in social activities, and the ability to answer the needs of the community in the fields of education, health, and economy, even political activities. Thus, Muhammadiyah actors are not just organizational leaders, but also symbols of values that live in the community. They are able to bridge the doctrine of progressive Islam with the local context through real action, not just discourse. This is what forms the character of influential and socially and spiritually rooted leadership.

This study proves that the exemplary role of Muhammadiyah actors as socio-religious authorities is reflected through a number of important aspects that are evidence of research in understanding the dynamics of social actors of the Muhammadiyah organization in Enrekang. First, consistency in implementing Islamic values in real life, such as honesty, simplicity, and discipline. Second, the active involvement of actors in social services such as education, health, and economic activities of the community shows that their authority is built through real work, not just religious discourse. Third, their ability to become a reference for the community in solving social and religious problems shows the collective trust that the community has in them. Fourth, their position in the strategic organizational structure is not used for domination, but rather to foster, mediate, and mobilize participation. Fifth, their consistent presence in various community activities makes exemplary behavior a symbolic force that legitimizes their leadership in the public space. The Muhammadiyah leadership cycle can be read in the following picture:

The fact about the exemplary role of actors as socio-religious authorities in the Muhammadiyah organization in Enrekang takes place in the context of the socio-religious life of the local community which is strongly influenced by the cultural Islamic tradition and the dynamics of the increasingly diverse religious community. This exemplary role

emerges in direct interaction between actors and residents through da'wah activities, education, health services, and the people's economy which are carried out routinely and openly. In this context, Muhammadiyah leadership actors not only carry out structural functions in the organization, but also play a role as moral figures and agents of social change. When society faces a crisis of values, internal conflict, or ideological challenges from other religious groups, the presence of Muhammadiyah actors as role models offers stability and direction. This context shows that the socio-religious authority possessed by Muhammadiyah actors is not only the result of formal appointment, but is built from moral legitimacy which is proven through closeness, continuity of action, and concern for the real needs of the community.

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Muhammadiyah leadership actors play a complex dual role, namely as structural leaders in the organization and at the same time as movers in society. In the structural realm, they are active in Muhammadiyah assemblies and institutions that have formal programs such as education, preaching, health, and economic empowerment. However, on the other hand, they are also present as informal figures who connect social problems and problem solvers, become conflict mediators, and agents of value change in the community environment. Various social problems and even in the management of problematic charitable efforts are sought solutions through organizational mechanisms under the leadership of Muhammadiyah branch leadership actors. This dual role shows that

Muhammadiyah leadership actors are not limited to the formal structure of the organization, but also play a role in the social space of society. Muhammadiyah leadership actors flexibly practice various strategies in conveying the mission of preaching, adjusting the approach to the local context, and interacting socially across groups. This ability is the key to their success in developing influence without creating new social arenas, as well as strengthening Muhammadiyah's cultural legitimacy in society.

The relationship between factors in the dual role of Muhammadiyah actors in the structural and cultural realms is seen through the close relationship between formal positions in the organization and social influence in community life. In the structural realm, actors carry out administrative and programmatic functions in assemblies, such as education, health, and economics, which provide formal legitimacy to their authority. Meanwhile, in the cultural realm, they play a role as role models, spiritual companions, social mediators, and communicators of progressive Islamic values that can be accepted by the wider community. The relationship between the two is supported by personal factors such as moral integrity, social closeness, and communicative skills. These dimensions reinforce each other: structural positions provide access to resources and influence, while cultural roles provide trust and social support. The dynamic interaction between these elements forms the actor's strength in bridging Muhammadiyah's ideological values with the needs and aspirations of the local community, thus creating adaptive and contextual organizational dynamics.

The context of the relationship between the dual role factors of actors in the structural and cultural realms of Muhammadiyah takes place in the social space of the Enrekang community which is colored by the attachment of religious values, kinship, and the need for an authoritative social guide figure. In this social condition, the organizational structure of Muhammadiyah provides formal space for actors to manage da'wah, education, health, and economic programs. However, the effectiveness of their role is not only determined by formal positions, but also by social recognition based on exemplary behavior, familiarity, and depth of understanding of the local cultural context. When society faces moral, economic, or social conflict issues, the cultural role of the actor becomes dominant, but is still supported by a structural position that legitimizes the action (see Table 1). This relationship occurs in the realm of fluid social life, where the boundaries between the organization and society are not rigid, allowing actors to play a flexible and contextual role in carrying out the mission of the community and social transformation.

In the context of the Enrekang community, religious understanding began to be marked by the emergence of various social community organizations. Muhammadiyah actors face ideological tensions, especially with other religious groups that tend to be exclusive or fundamentalist. Muhammadiyah leadership actors are faced with the challenge of maintaining an inclusive, rational, and modern progressive Islamic identity amidst the competition for religious meanings that takes place in the public space. This study found that members of the leadership who are also involved in several different organizations, some even have controversies with Muhammadiyah. These leaders do not fight openly, but use a more contextual symbolic negotiation and social praxis approach. This tension actually forces them to strengthen their position through cultural da'wah strategies, the development of functional institutions, and the creation of liberating Islamic discourse. In facing this challenge, Muhammadiyah leadership actors act adaptively and contextually, not dogmatically but remain consistent with organizational rules. This interaction pattern reflects the dynamics of social religion which shows that the success of da'wah is not only determined by organizational ideology, but also by the competence of actors in various social community arenas.

The implications and strategies implemented by Muhammadiyah leaders in responding to ideological tensions in Enrekang reflect their careful reading of the local context and their ability to conduct cultural negotiations (see Table 1). Ideological tensions that arise from differences in understanding Islam with other groups such as those with scripturalist or fundamentalist tendencies are handled with a dialogical, educational, and exemplary approach. Muhammadiyah actors do not choose open confrontation, but maximize social spaces such as religious studies, non-formal education, and socio-economic activities to insert contextual and tolerant progressive Islamic values. Negotiation strategies are carried out by building cross-group communication, strengthening religious arguments based on tarjih, and prioritizing moderate and solution-oriented Islamic practices. In this context, the actors not only play a role as structural drivers, but also as guardians of social harmony, who are able to mediate differences and reduce ideological polarization at the grassroots level.

Tabel 1. Role of Muhammadiyah Actors in Enrekang as Socio-Religious Authorities

Aspect	Key Findings	Brief Explanation
Daily Exemplary Conduct	Consistency in Islamic values	Actors demonstrate honesty, simplicity, and discipline in everyday life.
Tangible Social Engagement	Active in community services	Involvement in education, healthcare, and economic development is routine and practical.
Collective Community Trust	Recognized as religious-social references	Community relies on them for resolving religious and social issues.
Participative Structural Function	Non-dominative leadership	Structural roles are used to nurture, mediate, and mobilize participation rather than dominate.
Symbolic Public Presence	Exemplary behavior as legitimacy	Consistent public presence establishes symbolic authority.
Dual Structural-Cultural Role	Leaders and social agents	Actors function both formally in the organization and informally in society.
Integration of Formal and Cultural Roles	Synergy between formal position and social influence	Formal roles provide access to resources; cultural roles build community trust.
Flexible Da'wah Strategies	Contextual and adaptive approach	Preaching strategies are adapted to local contexts without creating social friction.
Ideological Challenges	Confront exclusivist groups peacefully	Symbolic negotiation and social praxis are employed rather than direct confrontation.
Cultural Negotiation Strategy	Dialogical and educational approach	Religious study forums and economic activities are used to propagate progressive Islamic values.
Value of Moderate Approach	Promotes social harmony	Emphasis on inclusivity prevents polarization and fosters broader da'wah outreach.
Moral and Social Legitimacy	Built on action, not title	Legitimacy stems from real social engagement and ethical conduct.
Local Social Context	Rooted in Islamic cultural traditions	Social roles emerge within a context influenced by religious values and kinship ties.
Socio-Religious Dynamics	Flexible interaction patterns	Progressive Islamic ideals are articulated through culturally sensitive methods.
Social Mediation Function	Moral guidance and conflict resolution	Actors serve as mediators during crises or value conflicts.

Organizational Structural Support	Access to formal resources	Formal structure legitimizes and supports social and religious initiatives.
Role as Social Change Agents	Driving transformation	Actors foster value transformation through practical leadership.
Communicative Capacity	Cross-group dialogue	Proficiency in intergroup communication reinforces social-religious authority.
Functional Institutional Development	Institutions as da'wah platforms	Institutions in education, health, and economy serve as vehicles for Islamic outreach.
Contribution to Social Harmony	Bridging ideological differences	Progressive Isla

The value and opportunities of the strategy used by Muhammadiyah's leading actors in dealing with ideological tensions in Enrekang lie in their ability to prioritize a moderate approach that unites Islamic values with local social realities. This strategy not only strengthens Muhammadiyah's position as an inclusive and adaptive organization, but also opens up space for cross-group participation through dialogical and solution-oriented socio-religious practices. An important value that emerges is the community's trust in the actors as guardians of balance, as well as role models that bridge ideological differences without creating polarization. The opportunities opened up by this strategy include strengthening moral legitimacy, expanding the base of da'wah, and increasing collaboration with various parties, including local governments and civil society organizations. Thus, this strategy makes a significant contribution to building social harmony while maintaining the existence of Muhammadiyah as a progressive and contextual religious force in the lives of the Enrekang community.

DISCUSSION

Role Model of Actor

The meaning of the actor's exemplary role as a source of social and religious authority in the context of the dynamics of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency lies in the actor's ability to influence society not only because of his structural position, but because of his personal integrity and consistency in implementing progressive Islamic values. This exemplary role becomes a strong foundation for the formation of social legitimacy that is cultural and moral, where society places trust and respect not because of

formal positions, but because of real behavior shown in everyday life (Greenwood et al., 2013; Johnson et al., 2006; Palazzo & Scherer, 2006). The actor's exemplary role is seen in the simplicity of life, discipline of worship, involvement in social activities, and the ability to be an ethical and spiritual role model. In this context, religious authority is not determined by rhetoric or symbols, but by practice and moral consistency (Pernot, 2006), so that Muhammadiyah actors become a bridge of values between Islamic teachings and the concrete needs of the local community that continue to develop.

Theoretically, the meaning of the actor's exemplary role as a source of social and religious authority is important because it reflects the relationship between agency and structure as explained in Anthony Giddens' structuration theory (Achmad, 2020; Giddens, 2010). Actors are not only shaped by the normative structure of the Muhammadiyah organization, but also become active subjects who reproduce and modify the structure through their social practices. Exemplary roles become a form of practice of the values that exist in the ideological structure of Muhammadiyah, thus making actors a living center of legitimacy. Indicators of this theory are seen in the actor's capacity to internalize values (rules), utilize resources (resources), and reflect on actions consciously (reflexivity). When a Muhammadiyah leader is able to demonstrate harmony between the values adopted and the actions carried out, then his social and religious authority is not only formally recognized, but also morally and culturally accepted by society as a source of trust and role models in collective life.

The main difference in the findings on the role model of actors as a source of social and religious authority in the context of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency compared to other studies in reputable journals or dissertations lies in the depth of the local context and the dimensions of socio-religious practice that are raised. Previous studies generally highlight role models in structured institutional contexts, for example in urban areas or organizational centers with a focus on the formal and symbolic role of leaders. Meanwhile, the findings in Enrekang show that the authority of actors is actually born from direct involvement in the community, through real social work, strong emotional relationships, and loyalty to contextual and down-to-earth Islamic values. Role models here are not elitist or rhetorical, but are formed by daily interactions full of sacrifice and devotion. This makes the Muhammadiyah leadership model in Enrekang more organic and culturally based than structural-formal.

The theoretical contribution of the findings on actor role models as a source of social and religious authority in the context of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency lies in strengthening the concept of agency in Anthony Giddens' structuration theory (Giddens, 2010), especially in how exemplary practices become a concrete manifestation of structural reproduction in social life. Role models are not merely individual moral attributes, but are social practices that mediate the normative values of the organization with the dynamics of community needs. Through consistent, reflective, and value-based actions, Muhammadiyah actors show that social authority does not only come from formal positions, but is formed through cultural recognition that comes from the collective experience of society. This contribution is manifested in a new understanding that religious structures are not static, but are continuously renewed through the exemplary practices of actors. Thus, this study adds depth to the understanding of the concepts of agency and authority in the context of community-based religious organizations.

Actors Between Structure and Culture

The meaning of the dual role of actors in the structural and cultural domains in the context of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency refers to the ability of leaders to carry out formal organizational functions while also becoming social movers that are culturally accepted in society. In the structural domain, actors carry out organizational tasks such as leading meetings, preparing programs, and implementing official Muhammadiyah decisions. Meanwhile, in the cultural domain, they are present as respected community figures, become references in religious, social, and community issues, and have an emotional closeness to the community. These two roles are carried out simultaneously and mutually reinforce each other; the structure provides formal legitimacy, while the cultural role provides moral authority. By playing this dual role, Muhammadiyah actors are able to bridge organizational values with the needs and local dynamics of society, thereby strengthening the acceptability and effectiveness of the organization's role more broadly and contextually.

The most relevant theoretical concept to explain the dual role of actors in the structural and cultural realms is Pierre Bourdieu's theory of praxis (Adib, 2012), especially through the concepts of habitus, capital, and field (Bourdieu, 1986). In the context of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency, the habitus of the actors is formed by long socio-religious experiences, both in organizational structures and in cultural interactions with the

community. They use social capital (networks) (Fathy, 2019), cultural capital (religious knowledge) (Haerussaleh & Huda, 2021), and symbolic capital (public trust) (Bourdieu, 2021) to play a role in the organizational and social realms simultaneously. This theory answers the main problem that the success of Muhammadiyah actors does not come solely from their structural position, but from their ability to adapt and actualize themselves in different social contexts. This dual role is a form of practice that allows actors to bridge formal structures with the cultural needs of society, thereby strengthening the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Muhammadiyah movement contextually.

The meaning of the dual role of actors in the structural and cultural realms is important because it shows that the success of religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah is not only determined by the strength of the formal structure, but also by the ability of actors to interpret, adapt, and articulate organizational values into the socio-cultural context of the local community. In research in Enrekang Regency, Muhammadiyah actors were able to bridge structural commands with cultural responses, thus creating an adaptive, contextual, and participatory leadership model (Kobstan, 2023; Putri et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2022). This role is important in the development of sociological theory because it enriches the understanding of the dynamics of agency in social structures, especially in the context of community-based religious organizations (Adefila et al., 2024, Leach et al., 1999). Epistemologically, this finding strengthens the argument that social actors are not merely passive actors in the system, but rather subjects who actively construct and reproduce social meaning. Thus, this study contributes to strengthening the theory of praxis and structuration in contemporary sociological studies.

The main difference between this study and other studies published in national and international reputable journals on the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors lies in the depth of analysis of the dual roles of actors at the grassroots level. Most previous studies tend to highlight the role of actors in the formal organizational structure at the central or strategic regional level (Bangun et al., 2018), focusing on administrative, institutional functions, or national policy issues (Olowu, 2003). Meanwhile, this study presents the complexity of the role of actors at the branch and sub-branch levels, especially in Enrekang Regency, who actively play the structural functions of the organization while building cultural closeness with the community. This study also emphasizes the importance of social interaction, role models, and actor adaptation strategies in a social context full of ideological challenges. Thus, its contribution is not only to the understanding of the organization, but also to the

dynamics of local leadership based on values, social relations, and the recontextualization of da'wah in a pluralistic society.

The contribution of this research to the Muhammadiyah practical organizational movement and even other organizations lies in strengthening the understanding that the success and sustainability of the movement is not only determined by the institutional structure and system, but also by the capacity of actors to play dual roles effectively in the structural and cultural realms. This research shows that Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency are able to bridge between formal organizational tasks such as managing religious and social programs with personal and cultural closeness to the local community. This contribution is manifested in the form of exemplary leadership modeling, strengthening social relations, and the ability to absorb community aspirations into organizational policies. This finding is important in practice because it can be used as a reference in developing cadre strategies, leadership training, and the formation of actors who have high social sensitivity and cultural adaptability in grounding the values of progressive Islam that are characteristic of Muhammadiyah.

Ideological Tension

The meaning of ideological tension and negotiation strategies in the local context, as revealed in the study of the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency, reflects a situation in which Muhammadiyah actors are faced with differences in religious views with other groups that are more scripturalist or fundamentalist. This tension is not only theological, but also social, because it concerns the influence, legitimacy, and religious orientation of the community. In facing these conditions, Muhammadiyah actors do not use a confrontational approach, but rather choose a negotiation strategy based on exemplary behavior, strengthening the discourse of progressive Islam, and developing inclusive social activities that touch the needs of the community. They use the space for preaching, deliberation, and cross-group cooperation as an arena for reducing ideological conflict. This meaning shows that tension does not always lead to division, but can become a space for articulating values and strengthening religious positions through a communicative, cultural, and solution-oriented approach.

The meaning of ideological tension and negotiation strategy in the local context, based on the results of the study of the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency, shows a tug-of-war process between the moderate and progressive Islamic values

of Muhammadiyah and other religious ideologies that tend to be scripturalist, exclusive, or even conservative. This tension appears in the form of differences in worship practices, approaches to preaching, and interpretations of socio-religious issues in society. However, instead of being tough or clashing ideologies, Muhammadiyah actors choose the path of negotiation through a cultural approach, social role models, and strengthening charitable efforts that touch the real needs of society. This strategy is meaningful as a form of effort to maintain social stability and strengthen Muhammadiyah's position functionally without sacrificing its ideological principles. Thus, this negotiation strategy is not just a way to reduce conflict, but also a contextual and transformative substantive preaching medium.

The meaning of ideological tension and negotiation strategy in the local context is important because it reflects the real challenges faced by Muhammadiyah actors in maintaining their ideological identity amidst the diversity of religious understandings in society. In Enrekang Regency, tension is not only theological in dimension, but also has implications for social integrity, organizational cohesion, and the effectiveness of preaching. In this situation, the ability of Muhammadiyah actors to carry out negotiation strategies is an important key so that progressive Islamic values remain accepted, without causing resistance or open conflict. The negotiation strategy carried out through a cultural approach, social role models, deliberation, and public service shows that actors are able to play a role as ideological mediators and guardians of social harmony. The importance of this meaning lies in the effort to maintain a balance between the Islamic principles believed in by Muhammadiyah and the pluralistic local social reality, so that the organization remains relevant, accepted, and able to carry out its functions sustainably.

The main difference between this study and other studies published in reputable journals lies in the contextual approach and depth of exploration of the ideological negotiation strategies carried out by Muhammadiyah actors at the local level. Previous studies generally highlighted Muhammadiyah's ideological tensions on a national scale, such as debates with conservative Islamic groups or responses to national issues, which were more analyzed within the framework of institutions or identity politics (Arifin et al., 2025; Latif, 2019; Luhuringbudi et al., 2020; Rohman et al., 2024; Syamsuddin, 2017). Meanwhile, this study typically explores the dynamics of ideological tensions that occur in daily interactions in grassroots communities in Enrekang Regency, and how Muhammadiyah actors deal with them through a social and cultural praxis approach. The difference lies in a more operational and concrete focus, namely the strategy of exemplary behavior,

deliberation, and cross-group collaboration as a form of peaceful, dialogical, and contextual ideological negotiation in maintaining social harmony and the relevance of the Muhammadiyah movement.

The theoretical contribution of the findings on ideological tension and negotiation strategies in the local context of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency lies in strengthening the concept of agency in Giddens' structuration theory (Achmad, 2020; Ashaf, 2006; Giddens, 2010) and Bourdieu's praxis theory (Adib, 2012; Bourdieu, 1986). This study shows that actors not only act within the framework of the normative structure of the organization, but also have reflective and strategic capacities in responding to ideological challenges through contextual social actions. Ideological tension is not seen as an obstacle alone, but as a dialectical space between values and reality (Ganesh & Zoller, 2012), where negotiation strategies become a form of active social praxis. This contribution is realized by showing how Muhammadiyah actors use social, symbolic, and cultural capital to create harmony without sacrificing ideological identity. Thus, this study expands the theoretical understanding of the relationship between ideology, agency, and social action in the dynamics of community-based religious organizations in plural and complex social spaces.

CONCLUSION

The most important result revealed in the study on the dynamics of Muhammadiyah actors in Enrekang Regency which is very important is how Muhammadiyah actors at the local level play a very complex dual role, namely as structural authority holders as well as cultural figures who function as ideological mediators, social leaders, and guardians of community harmony. This study successfully revealed that Muhammadiyah's strength lies not only in its established organizational system, but in the ability of its actors to bridge ideological values with the contextual needs of society through exemplary behavior, dialogical approaches, and adaptive strategies in responding to ideological tensions. This finding is important because it shows that the success of a religious organization is not solely determined by its structure, but also by the quality of its actors' agency, which in a local context such as Enrekang, functions as a meeting point between organizational norms and dynamic and challenging social realities. The dynamics and challenges of these actors and organizational structures take place in a dialogical

manner and leave ample room for discussion on various theories and concepts related to the right method for studying it more deeply.

In answering the problem of actor dynamics in the social system of society and the Muhammadiyah organizational system in Enrekang Regency, this study uses Anthony Giddens' structuration theory (Chatterjee et al., n.d.) and Pierre Bourdieu's praxis theory as the main foundation. Structuration theory explains the reciprocal relationship between organizational structure and actor agency (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014), where actors are not only shaped by structure, but also play an active role in reproducing and changing structures through their social actions. Meanwhile, Bourdieu's praxis theory is used to see how habitus, socio-cultural capital, and social arenas shape actors' action strategies in local contexts (Farnell, 2000; Gunarathna et al., 2025; Matoane, 2019). These two theories are combined in a descriptive qualitative approach with case study methods, in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. This approach allows researchers to explore social reality in depth, explaining how Muhammadiyah actors mediate between organizational norms and social dynamics of society, and how they carry out dual roles strategically and contextually.

In general, the shortcomings of the results of this study lie in the limited geographical coverage and participants who are still focused on the main actors in the formal structural scope of Muhammadiyah in Enrekang Regency, so that it has not fully captured the dynamics of non-structural actors, young cadres, and other grassroots groups. In addition, the predominantly qualitative approach has not been accompanied by strengthening quantitative data to strengthen the generalization and validity of the findings. In the future, these shortcomings can be resolved through comparative studies between regions, the use of a mixed methods approach, and the involvement of actors across generations and roles. Urgent themes that need further research include the regeneration of Muhammadiyah leadership in remote areas, the dynamics of ideologization in Muhammadiyah schools and Islamic boarding schools, and strengthening digital literacy of preaching in the face of information disruption. These themes are very crucial in responding to the challenges of the times while maintaining the sustainability of progressive Islamic values amidst socio-religious plurality.

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