IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION FOR SANTRI AT THE MIFTAHUL ULUM SUREN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL KALISAT JEMBER EAST JAVA

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Abstract

Today's religious moderation is an interesting topic in the interaction and relations of modern society. The emergence of a group or individual actions that are intolerant and disrespectful of other people or groups in physical or verbal treatment is a serious problem in religious moderation. This study aims to explain and describe the implementation of religious moderation education in Islamic boarding school Miftahul Ulum Suren Jember which has a positive influence in forming a safe, dynamic, and conducive community structure. The type of this research was qualitative with a phenomenological approach. The participants in this study were 7 people including clerics and students who meet the predetermined research criteria. Data were collected through interviews and observations using interview and observation instruments. The data analysis technique used in this research was the reduction, presentation, and interpretation of the data. The study’s findings showed that in the implementation of religious moderation education at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school, there are two important themes which are the concept of religious moderation education and the obstacles and support in its application. The value of mutual respect and tolerance is the main concept that is taught. Group fanaticism and culturing of figures are negative values that need to be eliminated in religious moderation education. Constraints and obstacles in applying religious moderation education in Islamic boarding schools include the regeneration of Kiai who have equal knowledge to continue the existence of the pesantren. The implication of this religious moderation education has a positive impact in constructing the society’s knowledge and culture. This research still has many limitations both in terms of themes and studies and research implementation techniques. In the future, further research can enrich and strengthen the results of this previous research.

Keywords: Islamic education, Islamic boarding schools, religious moderation, tolerance, fanaticism

INTRODUCTION

Today's diversity in the modern world is an interesting topic to discuss. The developed industrial revolution raised complex problems in addition to the advantages of the world community’s advancement. From both the social and social-economic aspects, the high life pressure creates a high level of resistance or friction. People tend to argue between one group and another easily. This friction is not only in the social sphere or social interaction, but also in many conflicts on behalf of groups on a religious basis. The prohibition of religious figures who are not allowed to speak in certain places, the conflicts between mass organizations, and terror in the name of jihad (Harto & Tastin, 2019) by certain groups indicate religious problems in society. One of the effects of conflict and terror in the name of religion is the emergence of islamophobia (Kistoro et al., 2020). The discourse on religious moderation is getting stronger with the increase in radicalism by individuals or groups.
As a way of teaching religious material, religious education has a strategic role in educating society about good religious moderation. Religious moderation is a concept that must be understood as a religious attitude by respecting differences in beliefs or differences in balanced attitudes and behaviors as a form of understanding and practice of good religion (Sutrisno, 2019). The balance between understanding and practicing religion is a way to avoid excessive and fanatical attitudes in the meaning of religion (extreme). Religious moderation promotes mutual respect and emphasizes high tolerance. One kind of good religious moderation is achieving high emotional intelligence individually and in groups (Kistoro, 2014).

Looking at this phenomenon, educational institutions have a neutral role in religious moderation. Educational institutions are generally categorized into formal educational institutions including schools and non-formal educational institutions represented by pesantren.

Currently, teaching in formal schools is mostly provided on the campus or college because the tertiary institutions are expected to advance the quality of the young generation who will take part in society. Students as one of the stakeholders must have a deep understanding of religious moderation. Meanwhile, in the pesantren, non-formal education provides religious moderation education, which Kiai often exemplifies in his daily behavior. This is certainly an interesting phenomenon because the charisma of a Kiai will be highly respected and imitated regarding his actions. The role of pesantren in providing religious moderation education needs to be studied further. With the huge number of pesantren in Indonesia, it is believed that it can become a starting point for widely strengthening religious moderation education.

Admittedly or not, the role of pesantren in religious moderation education is significant, particularly the influence of the Kiai or other figures in the community. Apart from being respected as a religious expert, a Kiai is also often asked for advice and solutions to problems faced by the community. A firm religious moderation will foster a dynamic and tolerant community (Hamid, 2018) so that the attitude of religious moderation in society can be developed and implemented by pesantren as a middle way or washatiyah to achieve a humanist, dynamic, and religious society (Nirwana, & Ridhwan, 2020).

The attitude of religious moderation which is increasingly complex today is a challenge in social life. One of the impacts of the lack of religious moderation understanding is the emergence of violent attitudes and actions, feeling victorious, and disrespecting the differences in society. This statement also could be a kind of pressure in the social or economic aspects faced by society. In this context, pesantren provides a middle way by providing education to the public in responding to and dealing with such problems.

This research aims to reveal and describe the model of religious moderation education in Islamic boarding schools in Jember, East Java. Another question is the existence of obstacles and supports in the implementation of religious moderation education in the Islamic boarding school.

Based on the problems explained above and the phenomena that occur in the community, this research focused on the implementation of Religious Moderation Education for Santri at Islamic Boarding School Miftahul Ulum Suren Kalisat Jember, East Java.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is qualitative with a phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2014). Participants in this study were 7 Kiai or caregivers of Islamic boarding schools, religious teachers, and students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations using interview and observation guide instruments (Nurdiani, 2014). The sampling technique in this research was purposive sampling. The criteria to be a participant was a person who is considered to have a lot of roles and information regarding this theme (Latipah et al., 2020). The data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and data interpretation (Miles, 1994). The obtained research data are separated according to the main themes and important points that are looking for and presented in categorical themes. The final step is to provide a complete interpretation or
narrative that connects themes that emerged in the research data and in the literature review to become a complete analysis result (Miles et al., 2018).

DISCUSSION
The Concept of Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools

Diversity in the concept of Islam is a provision that Allah has given. Differences in ethnicity, race, religion, and culture are a form of diversity in society, not only at the local level but also at the global level. This kind of difference can, on the one hand, become a formidable community strength if it can be assembled into a complete and strengthening community. On the other hand, diversity can trigger disputes and friction between communities in social, economic, and religious life. The radicalism and terrorism that appear in people's lives are signs of a lack of understanding and meaning of the concept of difference. To deal with it, one alternative is to educate the community about the concept of this difference, especially in religious life. Moderate Islamic education is one of the keys (Suharto 2017).

In a language adapted from Arabic, the word moderation is "al wasathiyah" which means in the middle (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019). This concept has a deep meaning in Islam. There are many commands in Islam, especially in the Al-Qur’an about the importance of tolerance and mutual respect (Muklis, 2019). Rasulullah has manifested this in a community structure formed by him in the city of Madinatul Munawarah. How the Prophet who became the first leader to practice religious moderation did. Harmony and community dynamics are maintained in all aspects of life, in religion, society, economy, and even politics (Amirudin, 2018). The discussion on religious moderation in the concept of Islam can be divided into four main themes which are moderation of faith, worship, morals, and the formation of sharia or tasyrî "(Sarji, 2020; Irama & Zamzami, 2021).

Pesantren, a large Islamic educational institution and spread in various corners of the region, can ideally take a role in strengthening the values of religious moderation. This is based on the education and curriculum in the pesantren. The students in the pesantren are scientifically equipped with sufficient and in-depth religious knowledge. Many of the values in their textbooks contain high values of moderation. The deepening of strong religious material is also strengthened by exemplifying the daily attitudes and behavior of the Kiai or ustaz as leaders and caregivers in the pesantren.

The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Jember is a long-standing boarding school and was founded by KH. Ahmad Mudzhar. At the beginning of this pesantren, it was called Ar Rohmah. The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School has long been one of the pesantren which initiates the pluralism movement. In this pesantren, the concrete form of education is to apply the value of tolerance to adherents of other religions, teach equal rights and obligations for men and women, and even confront all forms of violence and terrorism. This is in line with the statement of one of the caregivers or ustaz who said that: “Kiai exemplifies the moderate attitude in their daily life directly, particularly in his words and deeds that reflect a friendly attitude and respect for others”

The concept of religious moderation taught at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school is more focused on the values of humanism, human existence as a creature of Allah SWT or as a servant, and as a mandated caliph to maintain world peace and prosperity. Strengthening these values is influential in disentangling, organizing, and managing education for students and the community. This is proven by the respect and obedience of the students and the community with everything taught by the Kiai and ustaz. The religious moderation taught and practiced at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school has a positive influence on its environment. This is strengthened from the interviews’ result conducted with other clerics who explained that "In pesantren, we are taught to respect others, more specifically to Kiai or other scholars. Even though in practice there are sometimes different opinions, we are always directed and encouraged not to blaspheme or insult, and are still asked to respect"

The main concept and value in religious moderation education at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school is the internalization of the verses of the Al-Qur’an
in QS Al Anbiya verse 107 concerning anti-violence (Firdaus, 2019). Also, there is a value of religious moderation in the form of the ummatan wasatan in verse 143, QS Al Baqarah (Rahmawati, 2017). Aware of the environment and always stand on the truth by verse 30, QS Ar Ruum, is another value that is taught (Marinda, 2019). A fair attitude, one of the foundations in religious moderation education, is also listed in the reference (Susanti, 2015).

The basic attitudes and values taught at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school keep fanaticism and egoism away from the groups that understand the most. Showing comprehensive awareness and understanding will lead to a sense of tolerance and respect for fellow community units, individually and in groups.

Understanding these basic values is a fundamental part of forming a dynamic heterogeneous society by referring to religious values and does not go beyond the limits of Islamic Syariah provisions. Usually, having high knowledge and understanding will construct religious attitudes and behaviors that strengthen the modern religious system based on humanist, egalitarian, and transcendental aspects or in the Arabic language is rahmatan lil 'alamin behavior.

**Forms of Constraints And Supports For the Implementation of Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools**

The behavior and attitudes shown by the Kiai, ustadz, and santri at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school illustrate that religious moderation education can indirectly be absorbed, understood, and practiced. This behavior reflects the true teachings of Islam. Also, the position of pesantren has a significant role in building a good community order. A good religious concept will certainly make it easier to direct society to create dynamic, tolerant, and egalitarian conditions.

The implementation of the religious moderation concept in this pesantren is certainly not as easy as imagined. It takes a long process and journey. There are obstacles faced in implementing this education. Therefore, the attitude of religious moderation in the pesantren requires pioneering and sustained efforts and strategies to provide a framework for understanding, thinking, and acting for the pesantren and community.

The first obstacle faced is the central figure of the Kiai who cannot be replaced. This is a concern for the sustainability of the pesantren. When the central figure held by the Kiai is missing, the pesantren usually has a regeneration problem. However, many pesantren have been able to cadre the next generation which is equal or more. This was admitted by one of the clerics who was a caregiver at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school. In his interview, he explained that "sometimes when a Kiai is absent from attending an event or because of illness, for example, often it is difficult to find a suitable figure".

The second obstacle faced in implementing religious moderation education in Islamic boarding schools comes from external factors, which is the diversity of students. This means that students who come from all corners of the region have different customs, cultures, languages, and characters that require time and appropriate treatment. Coupled with the interaction with the community who do not understand and know the place’s culture where the students came from.

Besides that, other obstacles arise from the thoughts and movements of other communities in different pesantren circles that are considered extreme. Although sometimes conflicting in opinions and actions, the Miftahul Ulum Suren pesantren remains moderate in acknowledging the other communities, believing in differences, and not using violence. Even though the atmosphere remains conducive, the intrigue and friction that occur is an obstacle faced at any time.

The next obstacle is the absence of more attention from other parties, in this case, the government, to strengthen and accelerate religious moderation education. The role of the government is deemed necessary to facilitate formal and non-formal educational institutions in educating the public about the importance of the religious moderation concept.

In addition, pesantren also has advantages and supports in the implementation of various moderation education. First, the Kiai's broad knowledge of religious knowledge. Second, the behavior of Kiai,
ustadz, and santri reflects a high and real value of religious moderation. Third, the power of Kiai in infrastructure and economy that can manage pesantren is still running and exist in his activities. Fourth, the broad network of Kiai. This can strengthen relationships and deepen the knowledge of students and the community in recitation or studying from other Kiai or ustadz.

These constraints and support are certainly a reality which needs to minimize. Strengthening and improving internal and external factors will facilitate the implementation and targets achievement of the expected religious moderation education.

**The Implications Of Religious Moderation In Islamic Boarding Schools For The Community**

Apart from these constraints and supports, one of the most important aspects in the application of religious moderation education is the use of the Al-Qur’an as an essential reference for its application. Understanding, appreciating, and applying it will certainly have implications for life.

In general, in the community, especially in East Java, there are emerged large groups, namely traditionalist and modernist groups. There are differences and similarities in paradigm and practice carried out by these two groups. In the context of religious moderation, ideally, these can complement and strengthen each other.

The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School has several unique and interesting characteristics. First, the use of verses in Al-Qur’an as the basis of social life must be manifested in a simple form and accepted in public (Zamimah, 2018). Second, understanding religious teachings combined with rationality in technical implementation (Islam, 2020). Islam, which has the Al-Qur’an as a way of life, is believed to solve all social problems (Amin, 2014). Third, the use of verses in Al-Qur’an as the basis of social life must be manifested in a simple form and accepted in public (Zamimah, 2018). Fourth, the use of ijtihad as a way to find solutions to socio-religious problems. An ijtihad is an attempt to interpret the verses of the Al-Qur’an in real life (Aziz, 2020).

The construction of religious moderation that has been built at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school has implications for religious life in society. One of the obvious effects is the empowerment pattern for the internal and external communities of the pesantren. Empowering...
women in strengthening their role in the household as informal educators in the family (Bosra & Umiarso, 2020). Strengthening the morals and personality of the community leads to the construction of a moderate society (Huda et al., 2020).

Another implication of religious moderation education at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school is the education about equality in society. The person of the highest status is the most pious. Meanwhile, the reflections of piety are manifested in daily speech, deeds, and attitudes that cannot be separated from religious values. Recognition of these rights and obligations resolves horizontal conflicts between communities, especially differences in beliefs and religions.

In the implementation of education, the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school can integrate religious teachings or revelations of the Al-Qur'an with reason or ratio. This ability is an advantage to accommodate modernity with all its problems. In the context of religious moderation education, local wisdom will easily grow and develop. The totality of belief and diversity does not become an obstacle in establishing the relationship between modern science and spirituality.

The concept of religious moderation internally in the pesantren also influences pesantren scholarship. The open and adaptive attitude that is taught reduces bigotry in choosing schools and practices of worship. They understand that broad knowledge will certainly bring out views in many perspectives even though each understanding differs depending on the level of knowledge mastery, but in this pesantren, they continue to collaborate with other parties openly. The principle is with sufficient religious knowledge, it can open dialogue and seek all problems without having to harm other people or groups.

**Strengthening Religious Moderation Education In Islamic Boarding Schools**

Pesantren Miftahul Ulum realizes that one way to educate the public, especially about religious moderation, is through education. Studying in the Islamic boarding schools fully explains Islam in the context of the revelation of the Al-Qur'an, which essentially provides the basics of a complete education for the advancement of science in various fields. In the Islamic context, understanding and developing a new concept is known as *ijtihad*. The function of *ijtihad* in modern life is important to become the basis and find solutions to society’s problems. This integration effort is carried out in science and technology with the revelation of the Al-Qur’an.

The main goal in integrating Islam is to reduce the stagnation of Islamic knowledge and scholarship. One of the major problems in Islam is the emergence of stagnation and rigidity of thinking. This condition has inspired the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school to rationalize the verses of the Al-Qur’an with the understanding of Muslims in modern times. One of them is implementing Islamic teachings in society, especially in the context of the diversity of society. Concretely, the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school invites the public to think critically and always understand what is happening in society.

It is realized that education construction will be carried out properly based on the competence of educators, curriculum, and infrastructure readiness. The curriculum provides guidance and direction on the values of religious moderation to be studied. Adjustment of the material to the current situation becomes the basis for determining the content of the curriculum.

In this case, the competence of educators, the *Kiai* and clerics who are caretakers of the pesantren, is highly needed. The high knowledge of educators makes them easier to deliver educational material on religious moderation. Ideally, the competencies possessed are personality competencies, pedagogic competencies, professional competencies, and social competencies (Adi et al., 2019). In addition to the use of a suitable and appropriate learning model.

The spirit of inclusion in education emerges and develops in line with religious moderation education. The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School is open to anyone. This spirit of inclusion is to find truth and solutions to problems that occur in society by using dialogue between groups or groups with
this friction. The concrete form in the spirit of inclusion is a sense of tolerance, the spirit of respecting, and not imposing one's will. This openness in dialogue is also the result of religious moderation education.

In the implementation of its education, Islamic boarding school Miftahul Ulum also emphasizes comprehensively understanding the Al-Qur’an and does not let go of general knowledge as a tool for translating social realities. Al-Quran itself encourages creativity and high curiosity to explore knowledge in the Al-Qur’an. Maximizing reason and science will enhance and develop knowledge in science, technology, and the social field.

To achieve this, designing a curriculum to accommodate the relevant and appropriate aspects to be taught in the pesantren is necessary. As a form of strengthening the role of pesantren in countering radicalism and extremism, it is significant to internalize religious moderation in the pesantren curriculum (Khotimah, 2020). The boarding school curriculum substantively usually emphasizes a hidden curriculum, where the presented material is automatically conveyed in the formal material being taught. It is also intended to emphasize the intensive and comprehensive internalization of the teaching of religious values.

During its development, the hidden curriculum has become an important aspect of the applied moderate religious education. Indirectly, the behavior of Kiai and ustaz in the pesantren is the hidden material that is conveyed and contains moral values related to religious moderation a sense of nationalism and nationality, tolerance, anti-violence, and friendly attitude are the simple indicators of religious moderation.

Nationalism is an understanding of the love of the country and its components. This could be different in other countries regarding the race, language, culture, and religion or belief. Tolerance implies an understanding of individual or group differences. One can respect different beliefs and forms of worship. Friendly and non-violent attitudes are manifestations of morals that are embodied in the crystallization of religious values.

In the core curriculum, the emphasis of students on general knowledge is the basis of knowledge. The content in the learning material is intended to form moderate character. The Kiai or ustaz has an important role in shaping this character.

Religious moderation is part of multicultural education. The concept of multicultural education, in general, is education about plurality or plurality as a consequence of diversity in religion or belief, ethnicity, and culture. A curriculum that is congruent with religious moderation will play an important role in implementing education in Islamic boarding schools.

Principally, the religious moderation education at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school is based on the basic concept of Islamic teachings, rahmatan lil 'alamin. This concept, in its embodiment and practice, is called Islamic modernism. The concrete form is the cultivation and implementation of religious moderation in an attitude of not hating Islam, degrading non-Muslims, and being hostile to violence.

Different views, concepts, or even insights do not become barriers to interacting in social and religious life. This reflects the history of how Rasulullah in the city of Medina unites all different groups both from the aspect of belief, group and others. The Prophet advocated being friendly and eliminating any violence. Even minority groups that exist can mingle with the majority of Muslims in Medina. They are invited to work together to build civilization by emphasizing diversity.

Infrastructure which includes buildings and other facilities and the education system is also a supporting factor for the success of religious moderation education in Islamic boarding schools (Fanani, 2017). Physically, the traditional and modern forms of pesantren can be distinguished. Modern Islamic boarding schools have been arranged with sufficient management with all the facilities. The structure and concepts of education and learning have been designed in such a way to prepare students for facing the current of modernity. (Awwaliyah, 2019). Meanwhile, the traditional Islamic boarding schools emphasize quality teaching materials,
even though they have not used organized management.

Pesantren Miftahul Ulum in implementing education based on religious moderation is a bridge and a transformation of the education system which has implications for the community’s needs. Islamic boarding schools can be at the forefront of strengthening religious moderation in today's problems. Pesantren is also expected to become mediators in solving problems that occur in society.

CLOSING

This study indicates that the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school has a great influence on religious moderation education. The Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School can bridge the gap between communities with a sufficient education on religious moderation. This is manifested in the behavior of Kiai, ustadz and students at the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school. They provide role models for building good interactions with others, mutual respect and understanding, and tolerance.

The education system can be a preventive solution in overcoming social and community problems. Community behavior is formed by the concept of religious moderation education in the Miftahul Ulum Islamic boarding school which is based on Islamic teachings through the verses of the Al-Qur’an. This achievement process certainly does not happen easily. There are many obstacles faced internally and externally. The characterization of the Kiai's central figure in its development will become a serious problem if the Kiai or ulama who is the patron dies. It is necessary to continue with generations who have an equally scientific and moral quality. The diversity of students in terms of culture, language, and culture requires a suitable learning model. It is also expected that the government can increase the acceleration and success in the implementation of this religious moderation education.

The support of the implementation of moderation education in pesantren is a sufficient and strong basis. The science and high capacity of the Kiai and ustadz are the main points. Apart from the strength in managing the pesantren so that it continues to their activities. This research in its implementation is still limited and constrained in many ways. The development of themes and deeper studies on religious moderation with a more comprehensive research approach can strengthen and add to the discourse on research with the theme of religious moderation.

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