Prevention of Radicalism Infiltration in Pesantren

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ABSTRACT
This article discusses about how to prevent infiltration of radical thoughts into pesantren, or Indonesian Islamic boarding school, equivalent to South Asian madrasah. Questions of the research are as follows. How is the pattern of radicalism infiltration into pesantren? What are the steps for preventing infiltration of radicalism in educational institutions like pesantren. This research uses a qualitative method, with a phenomenological approach, and using secondary data. The data are analyzed qualitatively. This article concludes that prevention of radicalism infiltration in pesantren could be carried out by the following steps. First, revitalizing the school’s cultural values by prioritizing the principle of tawāsus, tawazun, and tasamuh, (all means moderatism in religion) in their thoughts, behavior and action. Second, reformulating the school’s educational system and curriculum, the one that promotes patriotism, moralities, and peaceful values of religion (Islam). Third, tightening the filter in the process of teacher recruitment by considering their backgrounds of education and their track records. Fourth, promoting inclusive attitudes, in particular, against groups outside the pesantren community. Fifth, being careful when receiving any donors from any institution, especially one that is binding on pesantren’s educational institutions.

Keywords: Infiltration of radicalism, pesantren, Islamic educational institution

1. INTRODUCTION

Surveys conducted by the Board of the National Counter of Terrorism or (BNPT) in 2016-2018 indicated that radicalism and intolerance were creeping into educational institutions, both formal an informal. In 2016, the head of BNPT, Saut Usman Nasution, said that there are 19 boarding schools in Indonesia that were indicated teaching radicalism-laden doctrines, namely Pesantren al-Muaddib (Cilacap), Pesantren al-Ikhlas (Lamongan), Nurul Bayan (Lombok Utara) pesantren al-Ansar (Ambo), pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah (Makassar), pesantren Darul Aman (Makassar), pesantren al-Islam Amanah (Poso), pesantren Mission Island Center (Jakarta Utara), pesantren al-Muttaqin (Cirebon), pesantren Nurul Salam (Ciamis), and several Islamic Boarding Schools in Solo, Aceh and Serang, Banten.[1] In 2017 the head of BNPT Suhardi Alius stated that today were were hardly any quarter that is clean from radical understandings, including the world of education. Educational institutions, both secular and religious, have the potentials to be infiltrated by radical understandings, including Islamic boarding schools. Thus, it is very important to strengthen the role of Islamic boarding schools in preventing the spread of radicalism and extremism in Indonesia.[2]

Ideas of radicalism can penetrate every institution everywhere, including that of the educational kind, such as pesantren. Pesantren is considered as a potential hotbed for the spread of radical understanding, especially through its religious learning. Although majority pesantren in Indonesia do not tolerate, nor teach radical forms of thoughts and actions to their students, it is indicated that a number of pesantren had been infiltrated by a specific group that inculcate intolerant values of Islam to the pesantren’s students (santri). The inculcation of intolerant teachings of Islam will in turn trigger negative reactions among the students, such as heightened split and violent actions leading to extreme violence.

Yet, a widespread assumption that regards a pesantren institution as a center for radicalism and extremism is misleading. In fact, pesantren is believed to be one of the few educational community-based institutions in Indonesia that taught religion-based educational characters of Islam. The negative assumption about pesantren is wrong, and thus needs to be clarified, so that societies are no longer worry about activities of learning and teaching inside the pesantren’s dormitories.

Based on the above background, it is significant for us to conduct a study that enhance the prevention of radicalism infiltration in educational institutions such as pesantren. The kind of question, that this research wants to answer is as follows. First, how is the pattern of radicalism infiltration taking place in pesantren? What are the steps that are needed in order to stop the spread of radicalism infiltration in pesantren?

Research which is related to the prevention of radicalism has been written by Sofyan Hadi (2018). His study leads to the classification of radical Islam in the understanding of kyai (the religious leader of pesantren) and santri of Miftahul Ulum pesantren.[3] This study only examines the preventive efforts done by the pesantren.

Iman Fadhilah, Sjafuddin, and Retno Mawarini, conducted an ethnographic study on the spread and
acceptance of ideas of radicalism and terrorism among a local community in central Java. This study concluded that acceptance of ideas of Islamism among local Javanese people was developed through four ways. They are: the use of the Internet among young people; the spread of Islamist ideas through clandestine movements; the Islamic activities which were shown by a group of Islamist organizations; and through kinship relations.[4]

2. RESEARCH AND METHOD

The research method which is used in this study is a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. This approach admits the existence of an empiric-ethical truth, which requires rational and moral explanation. Reason and ethics contain a meaning-making process, which do not only talk about correct or incorrect, but also about considering the use of morality and ethics.

Questions of this research will be examined through the use of social construction of reality theory. To answer the problems that have been in described in the background of study above, it is required the deep analysis to obtain the answers of research formula. The infiltration of radicalism that is found in the educational institution can’t be separated from the construction of social reality, which is exist in the pesantren’s environment and social community that made it. The data, obtained from social and online media, books, and scientific journals, were processed and analyzed qualitatively.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Typology of Pesantren in Indonesia

Law Number 18 Year 2019 concerning the existence of pesantren in Indonesia, strengthens the position of the boarding school in joining the efforts of shaping, establishing, constructing, and protecting the unity of the country, its traditions, values and norms. According to the law, pesantren education is an education that is organized by pesantren, exists in a pesantren environment, and develops a curriculum that is based on pesantren’s specific tradition, that is, the so called Kitab Kuning (yellow book), Arabic-texts of Islam written by Muslim scholars from the classical period of Islamic history (i.e. 11th - 12th century). In other words, the existence of pesantren is very important for a community development effort, because pesantren is born out of the community’s aspirations.

Muhammad Qamar defines pesantren as a Islamic learning and teaching institution which is supported by dormitories as the permanent student’s residence. Pesantren is mainly identified by its charismatic leader, called kyai, functioning as a role model and leader of the pesantren. Other elements of pesantren include the student (santri), mosque, dormitories, formal and non-formal education, extra curricular activities, and so on. Generally, Islamic boarding school has three functions. They are: religious function (dinîyah), social function (ijtimâiyah), and education function (tarbawiyyah). Pesantren has for long time been characterized by the following philosophical teachings: tasammuh, tawassuth, tawazun and itidâl. All of this means that pesantren always teaches moderate understanding of Islamic teachings, or Islamic Wasathiyah, which is also known ahu al-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ‘ah (members of the tradition and the community).[5] The forerunner to the establishment of pesantren was based on its function to teach or disseminate the foundations of Islamic teachings, to produce scholars, and to instill Islamic traditions in society.[6] Since its establishment, the Pesantren has committed to spread the peace traditions, moderate, and accommodating to differences in views that exist in society. The principles of tasammuh (moderate), tawâsuth (balanced), tawâzun (tolerant) and itidâl (straight to the rule) are inherent in pesantren institutions, which became the proof that pesantren are institutions that spread the values of peace and anti-radicalism, even pesantren has a vision of producing insightful theologian cadres (tafaqquh fi al-dîn).[7]

During Indonesian history, it is known that pesantren educational institutions are, in fact, very tolerant and open. This is evidenced by the provision of religious learning materials that promote Islamic ideas based on "rahmatan lî al-alamin" (grace for all the universe). Obedience is always upheld in holding religion. They are not extreme or radical. Furthermore, pesantren are moderate in holding religion. Pesantren strengthens local cultural values, as well as traditions of tawâsuth thoughts, tawâzun, and tasammuh in thinking, behaviour and actions, having been established in traditional pesantren in Indonesia for very long time. This will certainly facilitate the prevention of infiltration of radicalism into pesantren. The interpretation of tasammuh must not eliminate the Islamic identity that has been discussed in the Qur’ân, and guided by the prophet (the Sunnah). Since mistakes in interpreting the meaning of tolerance are worried about to eliminate this identity, education in pesantren must uphold an education that enhance the production of Islamic identity, without necessarily ignoring the values of tolerance.

Such teaching is somewhat urgent to be developed in Indonesia since it is a very diverse country, with so many cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Syafii Ma’arif reinforces that pluralism in Indonesia is a blessing for Indonesia, functioning as a source of ideas in a developing society that faces many new challenges.[8]

3.2. Interpreting Radicalism and Extremism

There are several synonyms to interpret "radical religion" (al-tathrîf al-dînî) including “ghulaw” (excessive attitude), “tanâhihku”, and "tasyid” (hard, pressing). This attitude is contrary to the meaning of "wastafiyyah" or moderate taught by Islam. The radical understanding in Arabic is interpreted as Syiddah at-Tanathu (loud, exclusive, narrow-minded, rigid and a monopoly of truth).
Radicals are Muslims who are narrow-minded, rigid in understanding the teachings of Islam, and being exclusive in seeing other religions.[3][9]

If the word radical is considered as an attempt to change a social phenomenon in a totality and revolutionary manner, it surely was applied during the time of the Prophet Muhammad against the unbelievers Arabs, by carrying out an anti-paganism ideology that was also interpreted radically for his opponents.[10] Radical interpretation which turns into radicalism turns out to have very significant and detrimental aspects of sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. Literally, the meaning of radical is not negative, but etymologically, radical has a narrowed meaning, so it has a negative connotation.

The change of radical meaning into a progressive liberal ideology movement occurred in Great Britain and Mainland Europe in the 19th century. Western glasses never labeled groups outside of radical Islam and terrorists, as embedded in the Islamic Ummah (community). Therefore, it is necessary to reconstruct and straighten the meaning of radicalism, so that no particular group feels cornered by the labeling of the word radicalism.[11]

The Indonesian nation is a multicultural society that has three categories. First, the society that shows the diversity of cultures based on the characteristics of a subculture of a society that is still within one cultural sphere. Second, diversity which based on critical thinking that develops in a society. Third, diversity which is based on an awareness of the different principles of beliefs and practices that exist in complex and complex societies. This pluralism is a characteristic of the Indonesian people that must be instilled with the values of togetherness, tolerance, and recognizing their existence in order to adapt to all forms of difference, so that conflict in society can be avoided.[12]

The meaning of religion with the scriptural paradigm makes an individuals intolerant to other religions. The other religions and beliefs must be fought because they were considered wrong. In the other words, the meaning of jihad for scripturalist is war to take up arms to fight beliefs that are not in accordance with their beliefs.[1]

The violence acts are often used in achieving goals, although their use is adjusted to the interests, situations and conditions carried by each actor, but it still has a similar meaning. Therefore it is closer to the terms puritanism, nativism, extremism, fanaticism or militancy.[13] Buddhists are seen as not extreme according to certain circles. In fact, there are also a group of them who act extreme, as there are in the Rohingya ethnic group in Burma.[13] Many factors trigger a person to be radical, including education, economy, environment, or political ideology factor that develops around him.

The research on radicalism is always interesting to study due to the definition of the radicalism concept in general is still growing. According to Borum, defining radicalism always focuses on two aspects, namely: (1) On violent radicalization, where emphasis is put on the active pursuit or acceptance of the use of violence to attain the stated goal, and (2) on a broader sense of radicalization, where emphasis is placed on the active pursuit or acceptance of far reaching changes in society.[14]

The perspective that positions Islam as a religion that is identical with violence against modern civilized countries based on the theory of the clash of civilizations is inappropriate according to Noorhaaidi Hasan.[15] “The social networks that promote violence as an effective means of significance restoration to increase individuals’ likelihood of engaging in violent extremism, because they validate the notion that violent means are an appropriate method of attaining individuals and group goals”. [16]

It is the right time for the stereotyping Islamic issues to be equal to the ideology of violence that is touted by the Western world to be brought to an end.

3.3. The Patterns of Infiltration of Radicalism and Intolerance in Pesantren

The pesantren institution is considered a strategic place to transfer radical understanding through religious studies. Therefore, it has become a shared duty and obligation to build a movement to break the regeneration of radical understanding among the younger generation through a learning process based on "Islam rahmatan li al-alamin". Moreover, building a movement to break radical regeneration among the younger generation through the educational process is done through strengthening and structuring in understanding science in various disciplines taught to students.[17]

The process of radicalization is not something that is instant and simple, but it is a long and interconnected chain. This process is fairly complex and systematic. It starts from the recognition process, self-identification, indoctrination, radicalization, and ultimately committing acts of terror. This radicalization instrument can be held through various platforms, for example through mosques, education, or other vulnerable places that are easily accessible (such as online media).

To reveal the infiltration patterns of radicalism and intolerance in pesantren institutions, it can be highlighted with social construction on reality theory or dialectical theory, initiated by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, that society is formed through three stages of dialectics, namely the externalization process, the objectification process, and the internalization process. This theory is a part of the sociocultural tradition. This theoretical study focuses on the shared meanings and interpretations compiled in community networks and their implications for the construction of organizational life (rules, norms, values, actions accepted in organizations).[18] These three processes occur between individuals in a social community.

Human activities and actors experienced typification. The habitualization and certification processes are experienced collectively and mutually between humans. These processes have some potentials to bring up strong social institutions. The process of externalization is an individual's expression in the reality of life, so it's the
opposite of internalization. Then it proceed with the objectification process, the results of human activity are transmitted and developed and then shared with other parties. These three processes occur dialectically between themselves and the sociocultural reality.

The internalization process is the process of accepting the definition of an institutional situation. This process is divided into two processes. They are primary stage and secondary stage. Primary socialization is encountered by individuals during childhood then it becomes the part of their society. At this stage individuals learn more cognitively. The secondary socialization in the socialization proceed outside the family environment, sometimes in the school environment, game-mates, or the community. In this process, everyone learns more aspects of life and social roles that exist in society.

The infiltration of radical understanding into pesantren institutions was preceded by the externalization of religious perspectives and attitudes instilled in pesantren circles. Then it became objectification. The objective reality related to exclusive religious understanding that infiltrated the pesantren institution, so there was acceptance of the notion which was perceived as correct. Furthermore, there was an internalization process. The institution which was infiltrated by absorbing religious values and brought understanding to students and the community. This pattern proceeds with a long journey that gradually changes and shapes the personality, behavior, emotions, and thoughts of the santri to become radical and even fundamentalist.

According to Barry Rubin, the formation of radicalism occurs through a process of radicalization. There are 5 aspects that play a role in influencing the process of radicalization. They are: (a) an individual process; regarded as a process of finding one's identity; (b) Process through the surrounding environment; (c) Religious emotional factors, such as a sense of solidarity with friends who are oppressed by political power; (d) Ideological Factors; regarded as the inability to position themselves as competitors in culture and civilization, encourage radical groups to take the path of violence to show their cultural hegemony, and (e) Government policy factors. The inability of the state to take action to improve the situation of growing frustration and anger due to the dominance of ideological, military and economic superpowers.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that the infiltration pattern of radicalism through pesantren is formed through a long process through radicalization, namely by using three moments that are related to each other, namely externalization, objectification, and internalization. The process of externalization is somewhat complex and systematic, starting from the process of recognition, self-identification, to the indoctrination of radical understanding on the target being targeted. The process of objectivity occurs through repeated affirmations given by someone so that it has same subjective definition of the justification of radicalism. This internalization process, where radicalism is firmly rooted in pesantren institutions, is such as justifying acts of terror and violence, spreading hatred, and it is difficult to accept differences.

### 3.4. Prevention of Radicalism Infiltration in Pesantren

The government as a policy maker and community protector has taken sufficiently steps, they are the de-radicalization program and they followed up with the establishment of the National Counter-terrorism Agency (BNPT), through the issuance of Presidential Regulation Number 46 of 2010 and amended by Presidential Regulation Number 12 of 2012, and finally the government issued Law Number 5 of 2018 concerning Eradication of the Criminal Acts of Terrorism. The Indonesian government also intensively builds synergistic relations between public bodies and educational institutions, especially pesantren, such as conducting scientific meetings and religious studies that include Islamic boarding schools.

What the government has done is in line with what Lazuardi Birru said, that all efforts to neutralize radicalism are carried out with various interdisciplinary approaches. Steps that can be taken in order to eradicate radicalism in Indonesia are (a) counter terrorism; (b) preventing the process of radicalism; (c) preventing provocation, spreading hatred, enmity between religious communities; (d) prevent people from indoctrination; (e) increasing public knowledge to reject terrorism, (f) enriching the comparative understanding, (ism). Related to the infiltration of radicalism in pesantren in points b, e, and f can be activated at Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. The Islamic boarding school’s community is given a correct understanding of various notions that come from the outside that are contrary to the noble values of Islamic teachings. Islam is not a religion that justifies hatred, violence, and hostility among humanity. It is also necessary to revive dialog-oriented “bahtsal masail” studies to be more open in accepting differences.

The next step that can be built is to strengthen the synergy between religious and educational institutions, the synergy between educational institutions and civil society, namely social organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, and NGOs.

The prevention of infiltration of radicalism in pesantren institutions is an effort to build a future generation that is free from radical and extreme understandings. this becomes the collective task of all Indonesian citizens to maintain the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Prevention of infiltration of radicalism in pesantren education institutions can be done by (1) revitalizing the values of pesantren culture that prioritize the principles of tawāsul, tawāzuz, and tasmīh, in thought, attitude and behavior; (2) Second, reformulating the educational model and pesantren curriculum based on the love of homeland, politeness, character education and based on cool and peaceful
Islamic values, without ignoring the understanding and belief of students towards Allah SWT as the Creator; (3) Filtering the recruitment of teaching staff and caregivers for students by considering their educational background and track record; (4) promoting an inclusive rather than exclusive attitude. The attitude of inclusiveness among the pesantren community is not meant to follow and mix other cultures and religious concepts into Islamic teachings or vice versa. The principle contained in Qs. al-Kafirun (lakum dinukum wa liya dīn, meaning, yours is your religion, mine is my religion) must still be used as a guide; (5) having a prudent attitude in receiving funding from certain parties which are binding on pesantren educational institutions.

Islamic boarding schools face challenges to formulate Islamic boarding school education based on multicultural theology. So that, inclusive understanding will grow in order to achieve cultural, ethnic, and religious harmonization between community life. Therefore, the right strategy is needed to prevent infiltration of radicalism. This strategy must also concern on teaching and learning activities carried out in Islamic boarding schools. First, teachers must position themselves as educators who are not separated from the national mission, and educate the nation's life. Every instructor must be given a briefing on nationalism, because teachers are also educators (role models) for their students. Second, the teacher must be able to build student character through learning strategies through argument and dialogue, not monologues. Radicalism can also occur when teachers are accustomed to doctrine lessons, especially in the fields of social science and religion. Third, leaders of pesantren need to provide the guidance to educators and monitor learning content in class. Fourth, it is necessary to strengthen moderation material as the development of radical understanding hazard material which is integrated into subjects, both religious and general subjects and it is necessary to strengthen the formation of students who are pious socially and spiritually, which can accept differences in religion, ethnicity, and political choices. Therefore, a safe, peaceful and peaceful life can be realized.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the infiltration pattern of radicalism through pesantren is formed through three stages. They are the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization. The process of externalization is complex and systematic. It starts from the process of recognition, self-identification, to the indoctrination of radical understanding on the targeted individuals. Then, the process of objectivity occurs through repeated affirmations given by someone so that it has a uniform subjective definition of the justification of radicalism. At the objectification stage, those who have been given an understanding of radicalism have a universal symbolic meaning. They are the view of the same life that gives legitimacy and justification for that understanding. The internalization process is the process in which radicalism becomes firmly rooted in pesantren institutions. The relationship between pesantren and radicalism can occur because of two possibilities, first, the pesantren was born from an educational pattern imported from a radical Islamic-based country. Second, their understanding of Islam is scriptural in nature so that the understanding of the context of religious texts is lacking. Generally, like Middle Eastern countries, which are influenced by the thinking of Eastern thinkers, such as Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al Banna, and so on.

The prevention of infiltration of radicalism in pesantren institutions can be done by (1) revitalizing the values of pesantren culture, ones that prioritize the principles of tawāṣut, tawāzun, and tasānuh; (2) reformulating the pesantren’s educational curriculum, one that is based on multiculturalism and peaceful Islamic values; (3) Tightening the filter during the process of recruitment of students, and of caregivers of the students; (4) promoting an inclusive rather than exclusive attitude; (5) having a prudent attitude in receiving funding from certain parties which are binding on pesantren educational institutions.

This paper provides recommendations to related parties to revitalize pesantren education based on values of patriotism, and Islam that is rahmatan li al-lamālāmin, by giving emphasis to education of nation’s character. In addition, this paper is aimed to strengthen the relationship between members of pesantren community (kyai, caretakers of Islamic boarding schools, teachers or clerics, and students), with government institutions, and make as synergy with each other, for monitoring the possible penetration of ideas that are not in accordance with Islamic values that are not in accordance with Islamic values, religious tolerance, and pesantren’s traditions Moreover, this paper is aimed to balance between inclusive ideology (infitāhiyyah) and plurality (ta'addu'iyah).

REFERENCES


