

Being Moderate in Religious Societies

Reality and Thoughts on Religious Moderation Education

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ABSTRACT

The thought of learning religious moderation is important because students have a low understanding and behavior about religious moderation. This paper reveals some realities and thoughts about learning religious moderation. Religious moderation is not taught as a lesson in all Religion Subjects in schools, but only as lesson development, which is very dependent on the initiative and competence of a teacher. Thoughts on religious moderation include spirituality, local wisdom, plurality, nationalism, and profiles of religious leaders who advocate moderation. The government should initiate a religious moderation learning movement by asking all teachers to convey moderation messages, for a few minutes while teaching. The messages are focused as previously mentioned.

Keywords: *thought, practice, learning, religious moderation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The discourse of moderation education develops as discourses on religious moderation develop. The concept of religious moderation arises due to the symptoms of changes in the political system from the New Order to the Reformation Era. As the Reformation Era progressed, the political atmosphere seemed to be noisy with the opening of the electoral system accommodating various paradigms, including religious paradigms. Religious values carried by some figures participated in reforming the electoral system, especially to attract social support. The claim of fundamental groups that expressly state the necessity of religious teachings that are used as a measure in determining electoral candidates and votes also appears radical groups that move, sometimes using various efforts, to urge rapid and fundamental political change.

The actualization of these two movements has manifested in their various forms since the end of the New Order. There is a movement to establish a Khilafah state; The involvement of several Indonesians in the movement to establish an Islamic government in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) under the pretext of jihad fi sabilillah, as well as various jihadi groups in Indonesia such as Jamaah Ansaharu Daulah and Jamaah Ansharu Tauhid. In addition, praxis in electoral elections, both representatives of the people and leaders of the country, has formed a polarization of self-identification and groups as supporters of legislative candidates and

certain leaders in the name of religious identity. This form of movement often breeds acts of criminality in the form of terror that interfere with the security and safety of citizens of other countries, such as, threats and/or killings, threats and/or bombs, committed by certain individuals affiliated with the groups of the movement.

The Indonesian government has set various policies to overcome this phenomenon. Various approaches have been implemented, including the religiosity approach. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, since 2019 has initiated a policy of Religious Moderation, and this idea has been included in the RPJMN 2020-2024, as an integral strategic policy direction in advancing Indonesia's human resources. Therefore, the idea of Religious Moderation cannot be separated from education policy. Religious moderation education is important because the direction of national education is an effort to improve the quality of human resources, especially concerning the formation of understanding and moderate behavior in carrying out religious teachings and associating with adherents of different religions.

In addition to the above ideal considerations, the problem of religious moderation with various symptoms has been found factually in the education unit.

2. THE REALITY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION PRACTICES

2.1. Regulation of the National Education System

Regulation on Indonesian National Education has been contained in the values of religious moderation. Article 1 Paragraph 1 of Undang-undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Sistem Pendidikan Nasional is included in the definition of education: “usaha sadar dan terencana untuk mewujudkan agar peserta ... mengembangkan potensi dirinya untuk memiliki kekuatan spiritual keagamaan...”.

In addition, the derivative regulation of Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, namely Peraturan Pemerintah RI Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 Pendidikan Agama dan Pendidikan Keagamaan has mandated religious moderation education. In article 2 paragraph 1 contained the function of religious education, “membentuk manusia Indonesia yang ... dan mampu menjaga kedamaian dan kerukunan hubungan inter dan antar umat beragama”. This function is described in chapters 5 paragraphs 3 and 4:

- (3). Pendidikan agama mendorong peserta didik untuk taat menjalankan ajaran agamanya dalam kehidupan sehari-hari dan menjadikan agama sebagai landasan etika dan moral dalam kehidupan pribadi, keluarga, bermasyarakat, berbangsa dan bernegara.

- (4). Pendidikan agama mewujudkan keharmonisan, kerukunan dan rasa hormat diantara pemeluk agama yang dianut dan terhadap pemeluk agama lain”

This regulatory mandate is very substantive, especially in the social context in Indonesia. Indonesia is a country inhabited by a plural society from various aspects including differences in religious, cultural, and political backgrounds. Indonesian people as individual beings and social creatures have differences and similarities in terms of needs, intentions, feelings, and ideas. These differences and similarities have the potential to give birth to disputes while potentially giving birth to certain groups or communities that can ultimately encourage conflict between groups.

So it is in the life of the nation. Indonesians are made up of diverse ethnic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds that each have different traditions, customs, and languages. Those differences also have the potential to give rise to disharmonies. In the life of the state as well. After entering the era of Political Reform, more and more political parties appeared in the election of leaders in Indonesia. The parties have a different base of supporters. There are national, religious, and social, even ethnic, party-based parties. This difference has the potential to give rise to disharmonies especially when they seek to capture social support during elections.

Paragraph (3) in this regulation directs the process of religious education aimed at the formation of understanding, attitudes, and moderate personality of students. Religious values loaded with teachings of mutual respect for brotherhood, and peace should be used as a foundation in organizing personal life, family, especially in community, nation, and state. Similarly, paragraph (3) explaining the ultimate goal of the religious education process that makes religious values the basis of ethics and morals in the life of society, nation, and state, namely the realization of a harmonious community of religious believers, mutual respect for fellow believers.

These two regulations are the reality of religious moderation education in Indonesia. Indonesia continues to pay attention to the importance of moderation in community, nation, and state; religious values are used as a foundation in ethics and morality. This attention is realized in the form of regulations as a guide in providing services, development, and improvement of human resources.

The government's attention to moderate life is also reflected in the human resources development strategy plan. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, since 2019 has initiated a policy of Religious Moderation, and this idea has been included in the RPJMN 2020-2024, as an integral strategic policy direction in advancing Indonesia's human resources.

2.2. Implementation of Religious Moderation Education

As stated Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Sistem Pendidikan Nasional and Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 Pendidikan Agama dan Pendidikan Keagamaan, that there are two main functions of Religious Education, namely:

- a. membentuk manusia Indonesia yang beriman dan bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa serta berakhlak mulia;
- b. membentuk manusia Indonesia yang mampu menjaga kedamaian dan kerukunan hubungan inter dan antar umat beragama.

It seems that the two main functions of religious education are implemented differently in the education process at all levels of the educational unit. The second function of religious education is not explicitly stated in the structure of the religious education curriculum in madrasahs and public schools. Functions aimed at forming Indonesian people who have moderate understanding, attitudes, and behaviors are not prioritized because they are not implemented in the form of subjects. This is illustrated in two regulations, namely decisions about the process of religious learning in madrasahs and public schools. Only the first function is implemented in the form of subjects in madrasahs,

namely four lessons, namely the Quran, Hadith, Akhlak Creed, Jurisprudent, and The History of Islamic Culture coupled with Arabic.

While in the general education unit (elementary, junior high, and high school) Islamic religious education is held in the form of one subject that is Islamic Religious Education Subjects. The subjects contain five components (such as the five subjects of Religious Education in madrassas) in the subject matter. Similar to the Subjects of Christian Education, the curriculum contains only about dogma and rites, and the church.

It seems that learning about religious moderation is only used as part of Religious Education in the form of a subject matter. Based on research by the Makassar Religious Research Office on moderation education in **Table 1.** Moderation Learning Is Only Taught In Certain Classes.

No	Levels	Religious and Moral Education					
		Islam	Christianity	Catholicism	Hinduism	Buddhism	Confucianism
2	Elementary		II, V	II, IV			
3	Junior High	VII, IX		IX	VII	IX	VIII, IX
4	High School	XI, XII	XII	XI, XII		X	X

The other diversity is the subject matter. The diversity of the material in question is in the form of differences in the content of moderation materials found in each

public schools and madrasas it was found that the Curriculum of Religious and Moral Education contains only one to three materials on religious moderation at each level of education. Religious moderation materials are not taught at all levels of the class at every level of education units, junior high and high school. The condition of the curriculum structure of Religious and Moral Education is found in every type of religion, Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

subject, between one subject of Religious Education with another. Here is the content of religious moderation material for each religious education subject.

Table 2. Religious Moderation Material on Religious Education Subjects and Ethics

Religious and Moral Education					
Islam	Christianism	Catholicism	Hinduism	Buddhism	Confucianism
Unity,	Harmony	Harmony		Harmony	Mutual respect
Peace	Peace	Loving society	Tri Hita Karana	Peace	Become a Member of the Community
Islamic Traditions Nusantara	Multiculturalism	Plurality		Freedom of choice of religion	Harmony in Difference
Tolerance	Human rights	Human rights		Human rights	
	Nationality	Cooperation between religious people		Nationality	
		Nationality			

2.3. Moderation Learning Practices in Education Units

Teachers of Religious and Moral Education encountered obstacles to developing subject matter, especially materials that contained religious moderation. The first obstacle is the demands of the national curriculum. Teachers are required to teach all subject matter based on the Religious Education curriculum that has been compiled by the Government, with various lists of graduation competency standards. These demands led to teachers not being allowed to teach subject matter other than the national curriculum.

This condition is evidenced by the findings of research by the Office for Research and Religious Development on innovation that teachers teach Religious Moderation. This reality is due to the National Curriculum of 2013 which has determined the subject matter conceptually based on Core Competencies, Basic Competencies, and Subject Matter Indicators.

Each subject matter consists of two charges, namely the concept charge and the context charge. The national curriculum seems to have contained systematic concepts of Religious and Moral Education subjects that must be taught by a teacher. The national curriculum seems to have contained systematic concepts of Religious and Moral Education subjects that must be taught by a teacher. These concepts should be taught by teachers and measure teaching success. But the context aspect of the concept can be taught flexibly. The context descriptions listed in referral books published by the government can be replaced by adjusting the level of understanding and experience of students. Aspects of context can also be developed by teaching cultural, social, and environmental phenomena or realities in which students reside. Therefore, the national curriculum has provided opportunities for teachers to develop subject matter in the form of context.

This opportunity seems to be exploited by some religious education teachers to develop subject matter, including teaching context materials that are charged with religious moderation. Furthermore, the same study found that teachers of Religious and Moral Education had innovated in the context material of the subjects. Innovation in contextualizing the subject in the form of religious moderation is done by raising the reality of social and religious facts both facts that occur abroad, domestically, and locally.

According to some teachers that, the substance of religious education material contains beliefs, rituals, and ethics that can be understood and practiced religiously by every religious group. This condition indicates the existence of flexible opportunities for the development of context aspects of each subject matter of Religious and Moral Education. So that every concept material

demanding by the national curriculum can be developed by teachers towards religious moderation contextually.

The second obstacle is the attention and competence of different teachers. Every teacher has a diversity of attention and competence to develop the concept material of Religious and Moral Education to religious moderation. Since 2019, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has paid attention to the policy of improving the quality of religious moderation, even having been included as a strategic agenda to improve the quality of Indonesian human resources. Under this policy, all institutions and work units within the Ministry of Religious Affairs are instructed to schedule this program including religious and religious education units. This policy also has implications for teachers of Religious and Moral Education to pay attention to the development of learning to religious moderation. Therefore, the constraints of teacher attention seem to have been overcome by the establishment of this government policy.

Factually, the development of religious moderation learning is carried out. The process of learning religious moderation informal education units is carried out under the subject matter listed in the National Curriculum. Religious and Moral Education learning take place as before based on the curriculum, which contains several subjects related to religious moderation as previously described. Based on the results of the same research, it has been found that moderation material is not only contained in Religious Education Subjects and Ethics but also found in other subjects, such as Citizenship Education, Sociology, Anthropology, even language subjects in the form of discourse.

But the issue of teacher competence remains an obstacle. The level of professionalism of teachers towards religious moderation materials is still very limited. During this time teachers tend to teach according to the demands of the National Curriculum based on Core Competencies and Basic Competencies that have been compiled by the Government. The demand to complete learning based on the Minimum Completion Criteria in the subjects of Religious and Moral Education causes the dominant teachers to be less creative and innovative in studying religious moderation materials have not been maximal. This condition causes the level of teacher professionalism to religious moderation material to be still low.

In conditions of restriction of religious moderation materials according to curriculum demands, some teachers have high innovation and creativity in developing subject matter in context form. Although conceptually the material does not contain religious moderation, the teacher develops it contextually towards religious moderation. Some teachers develop material contextually by elevating the reality of the diversity of adherents of religions, traditions, customs, languages,

even religious understandings, and organizations; or develop it in the form of learning approaches and methods such as digital games. It seems that every material of religious education both loaded with dogma (creed) rites (worship) and ethics (morals) can be developed contextually towards religious moderation. But the obstacle is not all teachers have a high level of creativity and innovation.

3. RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION THOUGHTS

As explained in the previous section, that the subject matter on religious moderation in the subjects of Religious and Moral Education is very limited. This condition requires a certain study to explore the aspects that allow it to be included as part of moderation education material. The study of the search has been conducted by the Religious Research and Development Office of several 52 religious, indigenous, educational, and government figures in 2020 in the South Sulawesi region.

Some of them have contributed various thoughts on religious moderation education materials, namely:

- a. Religious moderation should be interpreted as Wasathiyah Islam is the basic character of Islamic which include tawasut (moderate), i'tidal (justice), and tasamuh (tolerance). Many Qur'anic verses that advocate these three concepts, surah al-Baqarah (QS. 2): 143 and 238; surah al-Maidah (QS. 5): 89; surah al-Qalam (QS. 68): 28, and; Surah al-"Adiyat (QS. 100): 5. Therefore, moderation education contains at least three materials, namely tawasut, i'tidal, and tasamuh. (Thought by Prof. K.H. Muhammad Ghalib Matola)
- a. Religious moderation education should contain material about wisdom. Wisdom is concerned with knowing our self. Hierarchically wisdom is above knowledge and the evidence that triggers humans so that conflict is because of knowledge (knowledge). Wisdom encompasses moderation, fairness, balance, harmony, and harmony. At this point, it is that national partnerships based on moderation become important. Wisdom will direct a person to respect each other, respect each other, and get along well. All religions line wisdom, including Islam: surah al-Thariq (QS. 86) verse: 5 as follows: "Then let the man pay attention to what he was created". The man should try to find out to know himself. The moderation that all religions seem to agree upon, is nothing but wisdom. (Thought by Prof. Dr. H. Azhar Arsyad, MA).
- b. Religious moderation education should contain material about spirituality. Students should be taught not only to be intellectually intelligent but also spiritually intelligent. Students should be taught Sufism so that they are also spiritually intelligent. Sufi values should be taught to students at a certain age level because they are very useful and enlighten the mind and heart. In the context of religious moderation education, Sufi learning should be understood as "avoiding doing something forbidden". Not then understood as a suggestion to leave the life of the world (demanding and multiplying wealth). Therefore Sufism should be used as part of the Moderation Education Material. (Thought by Prof. DR. Amir HM, MA).
- c. Religious moderation education should be about nationality, tolerance, nonviolence, and local cultural accommodations. The material content of nationality is directed to evoke a sense of student nationalism, which fosters a way of thinking, behaving, and insight that puts the interests of the nation and state above the interests of themselves and their groups. The charge of tolerance is directed at the awakening fair, objective, and permissive attitudes toward people whose opinions, practices, races, traditions, religious customs, and so on. Tolerance is an attitude-free from bigotry, accepting and appreciating differences. The charge of nonviolence, directed at arousing the attitude of students facing imperviousness. Violence in the name of religion arises because it misunderstands the prophet's hadith about preventing imperception with hands, tongues, and prayers. The content of local wisdom is directed to provide understanding to students about the national culture that is based on "gotong royong" culture. (Thought by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yaumi, MA and Prof. Dr. H. Syarifuddin Latif, M.Hi).
- d. Religious moderation education should contain about religious explanations textually and contextually. A student's knowledge of religion textually causes him to think and act radically, while if the student only knows religion contextually it causes him to think and act liberally. (Thought by Prof. DR. Amir HM, MA.)
- e. The provision of knowledge to students contextually and textually must be combined. The combination is important so that students avoid the consequences of the development of religious thought and implementation. (Thought by Prof. DR. Amir HM, MA.)
- f. Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama juga hendaknya memuat materi tentang hubungan antara negara, bangsa, dan agama. Siswa hendaknya diberikan pengetahuan tentang kebangsaan yang terdiri atas wilayah, penduduk, dan kekayaan alam. (Pemikiran Prof. DR. Amir HM, MA.).
- g. Religious Moderation education should also contain material about the relationship between

states, nations, and religions. Students should be given knowledge of nationalities consisting of territory, population, and natural wealth. (Thought by Prof. DR. Amir HM, MA).

In addition to research re-sults related to thinking about reli-gious moderation education mate-rials based on Islam, the Office of Religious Research and Develop-ment has also compiled a Religious Moderation Learning Module based on Christian. The preparation of the module involves practitioners of Christian education, namely teachers of Christian Religious and Moral Education (CRME), supervi-sors of CRME teachers, lecturers, officials of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in charge of CRME, and re-searchers. This preparation takes several stages of activities, namely drafting activities, substantive val-idation, technical validation, and finalization.

From the results of this de-velopment, it was agreed that the content of religious moderation ed-ucation materials in CRE and Eth-ics subjects is: Bible Teachings on Religious Plurality, Christian Val-ues in Local Culture, Christian Values in Strengthening Modera-tion and Human Rights, The Role of Religious Figures in Strengthen-ing Religious Moderation, and The Role of Christian Education for Ad-olescents in the Millennial Era. These five main themes each con-tain five learning materials so that there are 25 topics contained in the Religious Moderation Learning Module on CRE and Ethics.

4. CONCLUSION

The urgency of religious moderation education thinking is based on the reality of regulatory demands and learning conditions in the education unit. The Indonesian state has been mandated to maintain the condition of harmony in religious life because it is very sensitive to trigger conflicts between diverse peoples. While the intensity of religious moderation learning in the educational unit is still relatively low compared to the learning of dogma, rites, and ethics.

Based on these two realities, the thought of learning religious moderation has been voiced by religious leaders, especially in terms of educational materials. The learning of religious moderation should contain about, the subject of moderate, justice, tolerance, nationality, spirituality, local wisdom, textual and contextual explanation of religious teachings, and the relationship between state and religion.

Implementatively, religious moderation learning should be taught massively through the religious moderation learning movement. The government should ask all teachers to teach messages of moderation, sometimes when teaching. The messages contained about the focus material as mentioned earlier.

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