

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION (CASE STUDY IN SALATIGA CITY)

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses contemporary issues in the context of religious moderation with a case study in Salatiga City. The aim of this research is to understand how people in Salatiga City cope with issues related to religion and how they adopt a moderate approach in their daily lives. The research method used is qualitative with interviews and observations conducted on respondents selected based on certain criteria. The results of the research indicate that the people of Salatiga have adopted a moderate approach to religion and are able to maintain diversity and tolerance in their lives. However, there are still challenges in addressing contemporary issues such as religious radicalism and extremism. Therefore, efforts are needed from relevant parties to increase understanding and awareness among the public about the importance of religious moderation as a solution to address these issues.

Keywords: contamporar, religious moderation, radicalism

ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini membahas isu kontemporer dalam konteks moderasi beragama dengan studi kasus di Kota Salatiga. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memahami bagaimana masyarakat Kota Salatiga mengatasi isu-isu yang berkaitan dengan agama dan bagaimana mereka mengadopsi pendekatan moderat dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan wawancara dan observasi yang dilakukan terhadap responden yang dipilih berdasarkan kriteria tertentu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat Salatiga telah menerapkan pendekatan agama yang moderat dan mampu menjaga keberagaman dan toleransi dalam kehidupannya. Namun, masih ada tantangan dalam menyikapi isu-isu kontemporer seperti radikalisme dan ekstremisme agama. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan upaya dari pihak-pihak terkait untuk meningkatkan pemahaman dan kesadaran masyarakat tentang pentingnya moderasi beragama sebagai solusi untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut.

Kata kunci: kontemporer, moderasi beragama, radikalisme

Introduction

Indonesia is the most multicultural country in the world, as evidenced by the fact that it is composed of numerous ethnicities, cultures, religions, and races. Indonesia is comprised of 13,000 islands, both large and small, with a population of approximately 250 million people, 300 tribes, 200 languages, and six distinct religions, including Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, among others (Nurchayono, 2018).

Diverse characteristics can be a blessing, even a source of fortitude and individuality, if humans are able to appreciate their differences. However, if diversity is not managed properly, it can backfire on the country as a whole. Therefore, an innovation is required to

mitigate this. The comprehension and application of moderation in religious moderation is one of them (Maria, 2021).

Religious moderation is prevalent among religious believers in Indonesia today. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has promoted institutional moderation in religion as one method for the development of religious persons in Indonesia. As a policy, the study of religious moderation is proclaimed. These preliminary initiatives and studies are described in a book published in 2019. The face of religious moderation in this context is an effort to bring society to a moderate, not extreme or radical, understanding of moderate. Through dialogue, candor, repetition, and manifestation, religious facilitation can serve as a framework for organizing the life of Indonesia's multicultural society. This is due to the fact that moderate religious narratives serve the general requirements of the world's citizens, as opposed to serving only individual needs (Qolbi, 2019).

Religion is a resource for everyday answers and decision-making in all aspects of a person's existence. Humans are obligated to perform their duties in accordance with their religion, so religion does not recognize divisions or groups. Many deviant behaviors in the era of globalization indicate that many people have strayed from their religious values; therefore, we must adhere to religion, as values can be taught (Chudaifi & Muliana, 2021).

The question is what significant issues are emerging in response to the rapid development of the times, in the face of global changes and challenges, and what must be done so that a Muslim can respond to the challenges of the world, the times, and the societal needs in the era of globalization.

After the movement of social change, the ideological conception of Islam continues to evolve at present. The teachings of Islam compel all people to continue acquiring knowledge and employing their intellect. This is what makes the Islamic thought concept dynamic. Islam is the religion of Aqedah, the religion of worship, the religion of science, and the religion of civilization, allowing it to be accepted in every region of the globe. Islam is a religion of revelation, not culture, but it is not a counterculture. Islam endeavors to control culture and ideology for the good of humanity (Vania, 2014).

In this modern era, the Muslim world faces numerous contemporary issues, such as liberalism, pluralism, terrorism, and gender equality. To avoid fostering an anarchic and indifferent society, it is the responsibility of Muslims to think rationally and critically when approaching these issues. Problem-solving even requires a rational outlook and an open mind as the primary method.

According to a study conducted by Maria titled "The Form of Application of Religious Moderation in the Midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic in the Eyes of FTIK UINSI Samarinda Students," 95% of students agreed that religious moderation is a middle way to achieve harmony in society and is very well implemented in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, despite the fact that differences in diversity, thoughts, and beliefs are increasing. While 5% of respondents opposed religious moderation on the grounds that it would harm religion. Then, research conducted by (Malik & Busrah, 2021) titled "Government and Academic Relations in the Issue of Religious Moderation in Indonesia" explains that the article on Islamic Moderation is an academic expression or response to the reality and state of social policies surrounding it.

Regarding this issue of religious moderation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs as well as politicians and academics from several Islamic campuses under the Ministry of Religious Affairs have mutually supportive relationships. In the meantime, the findings of this article indicate that the people of Salatiga have adopted a moderate approach to religion and are able to maintain diversity and tolerance in their daily lives. However, addressing contemporary issues such as radicalism and religious extremism still presents obstacles. Therefore, related parties must work to increase public comprehension and awareness of the significance of religious moderation as a solution to these problems.

This journal's research seeks to investigate and comprehend the religious situation in Salatiga City and identify the factors that influence the community's practice of religious moderation. The study also seeks to identify the efforts made by the community and government to promote religious moderation and preserve diversity in the city. In addition, the purpose of this study is to provide recommendations for the government and the community in Salatiga City to enhance religious moderation practices and interfaith cooperation.

Method

In a study, collecting both primary and secondary data requires a series of procedures, which is commonly referred to as a method. This scientific paper was written using a qualitative research design and descriptive analysis techniques. The primary objective of descriptive research is to describe the nature or characteristics of a particular condition, whereas the cause of a particular symptom is only considered when research is conducted. This is consistent with the opinion of Moleang, who stated, "Qualitative research is research aimed at comprehending a particular event or event experienced by research subjects, such as honesty, perception, impulse (motivation), etc." (Hamzah, 2021; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015).

Result and Discussion

The results of respondents' data on Salatiga people who have applied a moderate religious approach and are able to maintain diversity and tolerance in their lives.

Table 1. Salatiga Society in the Application of Religious Moderation

No	Respondents Data Exposure	Respondents
1.	Religious moderation has been implemented in Salatiga City	7 persons (agree) 3 persons (disagree less)
2.	The importance of building understanding and application of religious moderation in Salatiga City	10 persons (agree) 0 person (disagree less)
3.	Enthusiastic when applying the values of religious moderation in everyday life	7 persons (agree) 3 persons (disagree less)
4.	The understanding of religious moderation is intended so that religious teachings are carried out in a non-extreme manner	10 persons (agree) 0 person (disagree less)

Observations and interviews with respondents yielded data as shown in Table 1. According to the responses of respondents, Religious Moderation has been implemented in Salatiga City by as many as 70%, or about 7 individuals, and by as many as 30%, or about 3 individuals. Then, the responses of respondents who agreed with the importance of fostering

understanding and application of religious moderation in Salatiga City as much as 100%, or as many as 10 individuals, and those who did not concur as much as 0% or 0 were categorised as disagreeing. As many as 70% or as many as 7 respondents agreed with the statement "Enthusiastic" regarding the application of the values of religious moderation in daily life, while 30% or as many as 3 respondents disagreed. The responses of respondents who agreed with the concept of religious moderation are intended to ensure that religious teachings are carried out by 100 percent or as many as 10 extremists, and by 0 percent or no one who disagrees.

The nation of Indonesia is a multicultural society due to its pluralistic nature. Diversity in Salatiga City encompasses differences in culture, religion, race, language, tribe, and tradition, among others. Despite the fact that it is not a religious state, the right to religious freedom is protected by the constitution. The first principle of the Pancasila, "Kedewaan Yang Alsa," demonstrates that the Indonesian state system is founded on religious principles, teachings, and values. All citizens face the difficulty of striking a balance between religious rights and national duty.

The link between religious fervor and national commitment is religious moderation. The developed Indonesian nation can realize the benefits of a religious and national life that is harmonious, tranquil, and tolerant through religious moderation. The word moderation in KBBI is derived from the Latin moderateti, which means moderation (not excessive nor deficient). In contrast to religion, therefore, moderation becomes religious moderation. The term essentially refers to a disposition of reducing violence and avoiding extremes. To establish intra-, inter-, and inter-religious harmony with the government, all religious communities in Indonesia are expected to practice religious moderation (Khamid, 2016).

Increasing religious awareness is one of the main indicators for building the culture and character of a nation. In the context of Indonesia, religious moderation can serve as a cultural strategy for the realisation of a tranquil, tolerant, and dignified nation. Religious facilitation is a way of life that promotes mutual respect, nurture, and tolerance despite our differences without causing conflict. By bolstering religious moderation, religious individuals should be able to position themselves favorably in a multi-religious society and achieve social harmony and equilibrium in social life.

The 2022 Tolerant City Index (IKT) ranks Salatiga, located in Central Java, as the second most tolerant city in Indonesia. Prior to 2021, Salatiga City Ranking was ranked third with a value of 6,357. In 2021, it was ranked third with a value of 6,417. The award was earned through the collaborative efforts of the city government, Forkopimda, FKUB, media, educational institutions, and all of Salatiga City's societal components.

Ganjar, the governor of Central Java, said this on Saturday after inspecting the preparations for Mass at the St. Antonius Purbayan Church on Jalan Arifin No. 1 in Kampung Batu, Pasar Kliwon District, Solo City, Central Java. "Hopefully, Indonesia will have more tolerant communities. Number one Singkawang, number two Salatiga. "Solo is accommodating," he said.

Pak Ganjar also appealed to all social strata to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect. Ganjar stated that despite their diverse ethnicities, races, religions, and groups, they were all unified as part of Indonesia. According to him, Indonesia as a nation must maintain unity. Because national and state life will be enhanced by unity. "Let's create harmony on earth through mutual respect. Mr. Ganjar (Prambadi, 2023) stated, "If we can respect each other's different groups, different religions, and different tribes, our lives will undoubtedly be happier."

H. Noor Rofiq, chairman of FKUB Salatiga City, stated that FKUB is a forum established by the community and supported by the government. FKUB is one of the spearheads of harmony, serving as a strategic partner to local administrations in achieving religious harmony in the region. "The Regional Government and the Ministry of Religious Affairs must improve the quality of religious harmony through coaching, monitoring, and evaluation so that potential conflicts in the community can be predicted from an early age," stated Mr. Rofiq ("FKUB Salatiga City Holds Muskap," 2022).

Mr. Rofiq added that the FKUB of Salatiga City is considered to have positively contributed to the achievement of interreligious harmony in Salatiga. FKUB has been one of the three most tolerant cities in Indonesia since 2015. He continued by clarifying that FKUB's efforts to expand its role in promoting religious harmony continue to face numerous obstacles. "As the government continues to confront unresolved religious issues that disrupt religious harmony, the role of FKUB grows in significance. Rofiq concluded by mentioning the issue of building places of worship, blasphemy and blasphemy, problematic religious factions, radicalism, etc. (Salatiga City Religious Affairs Ministry, 2022) The success of religious moderation in the life of the Salatiga community is revealed by the following four main indicators and a number of other related and related indicators: (1) National dedication. Acceptance of the national principles contained in the constitution: Pancasila, the Constitution of 1945, and its implementing regulations; (2) Tolerance. Respect differences and allow others space to believe, express their beliefs, and voice their opinions. Respect equality and cooperate willingly; (3) Nonviolence. Not tolerate the actions of an individual or group that employs physical or verbal violence to bring about the desired change; (4) Acceptance of tradition. Friendly to the approval of local traditions and culture in their religious behavior, so long as they do not contradict their religion's central teachings.

Since the emergence of particular religious teachings at a particular place and time, tolerance and intolerance have been frequent topics of discussion. Almost no society or nation does not encounter "bad" experiences as a result of intolerance. An event or fact is neutral according to its symptoms; whether it is viewed as positive or negative primarily depends on its interpretation (perception). As is well-known, the emergence of intolerance is always prompted by events and other occurrences that are sometimes minor, or even initially innocuous or inconsequential (Haga et al., 2022).

In Salatiga, a culture of tolerance is not an uncommon occurrence. Tolerance has become ingrained in the "local wisdom" of every resident of Salatiga. This local knowledge has been cultivated for a very long time. As the narrative of Sutasoma demonstrates, it has existed since the time of the Majapahit kingdom. (Kevin, 2015) The realization of local wisdom by the people of Salatiga is evidenced by their use of the Pancasila field, which is frequently used for religious activities; for instance, in December, this field is frequently used by Christians to hold Christmas ceremonies. Uniquely, when Christians in Salatiga celebrate Christmas, the youth of the Great Mosque of Darul Aman actively assist with Christmas rituals, such as regulating the flow of vehicles and determining which residents will perform worship (Michaela, 2015). This is a scene or occurrence that we infrequently observe elsewhere.

The urgency of religious moderation in religious and national life includes strengthening the essence of religious teachings in community life, managing diversity in religious interpretation through religious life education, and an interest in Indonesia as a constituent state of the Republic of Indonesia.

The development of excessive (extremist) religious views, attitudes, and practises, and disregard for human dignity; the proliferation of subjective truth claims and the coercion of religious interpretations and the influence of potentially conflicting economic and political interests; the development of a religious spirit that is not in accordance with the love of the homeland under the United States Constitution; and the influence of potentially conflicting economic and political interests. In addition, Salatiga City still faces difficulties in addressing contemporary issues such as radicalism and religious extremism.

The difficulty of instituting religious censorship in Indonesia is closely tied to the right to freedom of religion and belief (KBB). Freedom of Religion and Belief (KBB) is a fundamental human right under the Human Rights Framework (HAM). Every person has the right to freely choose and practise his religion or belief in accordance with his conscience, unhampered by external threats, pressure, or obstacles, and to be protected from all threats of discrimination, including those posed by the majority religious groups in society or by the State.

In Indonesia, the freedom of religion and belief is entirely guaranteed by the constitution, and the government has ratified and codified a number of international conventions. After amending article 28E paragraph (1) in the Constitution of 1945, it is stated that "Everyone is free to profess and worship according to his religion." Paragraph 2 of Article 28E states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of belief, expression of thoughts, and conduct in accordance with his conscience." Article 28I, paragraph 1, of the constitution states: "The right to life, the right not to be tortured, the right to freedom of thought and conscience, the right to religion, the right not to be enslaved, the right to be recognized as a person before the law, and the right not to be prosecuted on the basis of retroactive law are inviolable human rights." The same spirit is also emphasized in paragraph (2) of the same article: "Everyone has the right to be free from discriminatory treatment on any basis and the right to protection against such treatment."

The Freedom of Religion and Belief (KBB) is supported by Indonesian law. The significance of safeguarding and implementing the right to freedom of religion and belief (KBB) is understandable given that Indonesia is a pluralistic nation where people of various religions and beliefs coexist. In addition, the right to freedom of religion and belief (KBB) is viewed as capable of promoting a harmonious existence because it plays a crucial role in upholding and respecting human dignity and worth. In the name of humanity that respects each other, the fundamental foundation for achieving harmony in a pluralistic society such as Indonesia will be harmony in the context of life between people of different religions and beliefs (Digdoyo, 2018).

Harmonization is intended as part of the implementation of the freedom of religion and belief (KBB) right. It is believed that recognizing the right to freedom of religion and belief (KBB) can promote social harmony because it increases and respects human dignity and dignity. In addition, it should be kept in mind that harmony and harmony between people of different religions and beliefs is not a static state, but rather one that is constantly changing, strongly influenced, and dependent on numerous factors. In addition to internal factors, the relationship between adherents of one religion and adherents of other religions, in order to always maintain harmony, is significantly influenced by external factors such as changes in social, political, and economic conditions.

Therefore, in order to implement religious abstinence in Salatiga City, a number of policy recommendations are necessary, including the following (Hidayat & Sugiarto, 2020): As a pluralistic and multicultural nation, religious conflicts occur frequently. As a solution,

religious moderation is required so that it can serve as a crucial element in establishing a harmonious, harmonious, tranquil, and balanced religious life in personal, family, community, national, and religious life. Socialization of religious rules should always be encouraged among state officials and all levels of society; (2) Optimizing the roles and functions of communities and government-funded organizations, such as the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB), National Intermingling Forum (FPK), Community Early Awareness Forum (FKDM), Interfaith Youth Forum (FPLA), and others, in socializing religious moderation; (3) To create religious harmony, it is necessary to bolster the regulation. And now there is a preliminary regulation on regional harmony; (4) Early detection and prevention of potential religious conflicts involve all factors of concern at the local to regional levels, including community leaders, religious leaders, RT, RW, Headman, Salatiga City Government, and TNI/Polri components pertaining to related factors.

Conclusion

The people of Salatiga have adopted a moderate religious outlook and are able to exist with diversity and tolerance. However, addressing contemporary issues such as radicalism and religious extremism still presents obstacles. Therefore, efforts must be made by related parties to increase public understanding and awareness of the significance of religious moderation as a solution to these problems, among which religious moderation is required as a solution, so that it can serve as a crucial element in creating a harmonious, harmonious, peaceful, and balanced religious life in personal, family, community, national, and religious life. The function of community institutions and government-supervised institutions necessitates a strengthening of their governing regulations. Currently, the draught Regional Regulation on the harmonization, early detection, and prevention of potential religious conflicts addresses all relevant local and regional factors, including community leaders, religious leaders, RT, RW, Headman, Salatiga City Government, and TNI/Polri elements..

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