

Religious Moderation Character Education: A Strategy To Maintain Diversity And Indonesianness

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explain the significance of religious moderation education in strengthening the character of national insight to maintain plurality in Indonesia. This article uses a qualitative approach by applying descriptive-analytical method, which is trying to critically describe the substance of various concepts and theories related to religious moderation. Data collection was analyzed using the content analysis method, namely by analyzing the meaning contained in the concept of religious moderation and how the concept is implemented in the life of Indonesian society. The concept of religious moderation is an approach in religious education that aims to produce individuals who are tolerant, able to dialogue, respect diversity, and able to maintain peace and security in a society of diverse beliefs. It cannot be denied that religious extremism is often caused by an extreme mindset in understanding religious texts in a rigid, textual and scripturalist manner, without considering historical dynamics, social context, and maqashid in religion. **Keywords: Character Education, Religious Moderation, Dialogue, Counter Radicalism**

A. INTRODUCTION

The form and color of religion in the reality of human life often show diverse patterns. The diversity of this style is due to the universal religious doctrine and sourced from God's revelation, which when grounded in the reality of human life does not present in a culturally empty environment, so that religion does not appear in a uniform face, but varies, such as human diversity itself. In this context, religion is actually present as a guide for the creation of a life full of order and harmony in the midst of the reality of diversity. This actually has a theological-sociological blessing for efforts to create cosmic order in diversity as *sunnatullah* (Muhammad Harfin Zuhdi, 2012).

Indonesia is a plural society with religious, linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity. This population diversity requires affirmation of an Indonesian Islamic model that reflects the diversity of society with universal messages of Islam and humanity. However, the phenomenon of some groups still sees Islam from a normative-doctrinal perspective so that it is not uncommon to give birth to an excessive apologetic attitude.

This attitude, to some extent, leads to unwarranted truth claims. This group's understanding is trapped in a one-sided perspective and justifies its interpretation as the most correct while accusing other groups of practicing heresy, heresy and infidelity. This attitude not only stigmatizes the noble teachings of religion substantially, but also denies the ideological-historical reality that the essence of a religion is the spirit of peace, inclusive humanity and moderation that cannot be separated from historical dialectics.

It cannot be denied that religious extremism is often caused by an extreme mindset (*tatharruf*) in understanding religious texts rigidly, textually and scripturally, without considering historical dynamics, social context, aspects of *mashlahah* and *maqashid* in religion.

The paradigm and practice of religious moderation is actually not only the needs of Indonesian society, but the global needs of the world community. Religious moderation invites extreme right and extreme left exponents, ultra-conservative and liberal religious groups to find common ground and meeting points in the middle, namely becoming moderate people. The idea of religious moderation is based on two main aspects, namely:

First, discursively, the religious moderation movement is believed to support the creation of social harmonization in a multicultural era. Because after all, multiculturalism is a historical reality in society that must be addressed positively. Thus, religious exclusivity is totally believed as religious truth, which can be a stumbling block to solving the problem of pluralism in Indonesia;

Second, in praxis, the practice of religious life that still dichotomizes truth claims in each religious community must be eliminated so that there is no mutual blame between adherents of one religion and adherents of other religions. The problem of diversity is often caused by the fanaticism of religious truth that raises the attitude of the adherents of one religion to another. *a priori* and radical extremes. Therefore, concrete efforts to build interfaith tolerance continue to be made as part of a sustainable social process (Zuhairi Miswari, 2004).

B. METHOD

This article uses a qualitative approach by applying descriptive-analytical method, which is trying to critically describe the substance of various concepts and theories related to religious moderation. The method used in collecting data is library research, which is research

conducted by relying on library data without empirical tests (Noeng Muhajir, 2000). The texts studied are books, books and references both primary and secondary related to the theme of religious moderation.

The collected data were analyzed using the content analysis method, (Imam Suprayogo, 2003) namely by analyzing the meaning contained in the concept of religious moderation and how the concept is implemented in the life of Indonesian society. Data analysis is carried out using description, interpretation and reflection procedures. Everything related to the concept of religious moderation is explained descriptively, while interpretation and reflection are used to understand the concept and its implementation.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Genealogy of Moderation: Its Meaning and Traditional Setting

Etymologically, the word moderation is defined as: the reduction of violence or the avoidance of extremes. While the word moderate means: always avoiding extreme behavior or leaning towards the middle path (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 2008). While in Arabic, the word moderation is usually translated with the word *wasathiyyah* which means: something that is in the middle between two sides. In the dictionary *Lisan al-Arab*, the word *wasath* (waw, sin, tha) is found. With several meanings: (1) mediator between two ends (2) best and most excellent (3) just (4) mediator between good and bad (Ibnu Manzhur, n.d).

While in terminology, *wasathiyyah* is defined as: the middle way between two opposing sides, neither excessive, nor deficient, but rather the best and fairest way between the two (Ahmad Umar Hashim, 1998). The words that are similar are the words *tawazun*, *i'tidal*, *ta'adul* and *istiqamah*.

From these various variants of meaning, it can be concluded that *al-wasathiya* has at least four meanings as follows: (1) best, praiseworthy, fair. (2) a mediator between two qualities (3) a mediator between two things (4) a mediator between good and bad or between good and bad. Thus, it is not necessary that what is considered *wasath* (mediator) in terminology has two sides, for example justice, has no other side, except *zhulm* (injustice), honesty has no other side, except lies (Yusuf al-Qardlawi, 2011).

Yusuf al-Qaradlawi asserts that *al-wasathiya* or moderation is a balance between two opposing sides where it does not allow either of them to influence excessively than it should. Furthermore, al-Qaradlawi gave an example: moderation is located in the middle between two different characteristics namely *rabbaniyah* (divinity) and *insaniyah* (humanity), between material and spiritual, between the life of the world and the hereafter, between revelation and reason, between the past and the future, between individuals and collectives, between reality and ideals, dynamic and static (Yusuf al-Qaradlawi, 2011).

Al-Qaradlawi also highlighted that there is a mistake in placing the use of the meaning of *wasathiyah* where some people interpret it as a mediator between two sides without accompanying it with goodness. If this erroneous opinion is held, then *al-wasathiya* means taking matters lightly and withdrawing from responsibility. In conclusion, the word *al-wasathiya* can be used if two conditions are met: (1) goodness (2) a middle position between two sides, whether something abstract or concrete. So something moderate must bring goodness. This opinion of al-Qaradlawi is in line with the views of Khaled Abou el Fadl, a contemporary Muslim intellectual, who says that moderation is a good thing. Moderation is an

understanding that takes the middle way, namely an understanding that is neither extreme right nor extreme left (Zuhairi Misrawi, 2010).

Based on this understanding, it can be formulated that moderation is a view or attitude that always tries to take the middle position of two opposing and excessive attitudes, so that one of the two attitudes in question does not dominate in one's thoughts and attitudes.

Religious moderation must be understood as a religious attitude that is balanced between practicing one's own religion (exclusive) and respecting the religious practices of others who have different beliefs (inclusive). This balance or middle way in religious practice will undoubtedly prevent a person or group of people from excessive extremes, fanatics and revolutionary attitudes in religion. As hinted earlier, religious moderation is a solution to the presence of two extreme poles in religion, the conservative or extreme right pole on the one hand, and the liberal or extreme left on the other (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019).

Thus, religious moderation is actually the key to creating tolerance and harmony, both at the local, national and global levels. The choice of moderation by rejecting extremism, radicalism and liberalism in religion is the key to balance, for the sake of maintaining civilization and creating peace. In this way, each religious community can treat others with respect, accept differences, and live together in peace and harmony. In the context of a multicultural society like Indonesia, religious moderation becomes a necessity, not just an option.

Based on this understanding, it can be formulated that all forms of discourse of religious thought and understanding that invite to be radical and commit acts of violence in the application of religious teachings are contrary to the substantial values of religion which do not have strong roots and foundations in the history of the life of the nation and state. But on the other hand, religious thoughts and understandings that invite to the application of the concept of religious moderation is an important dynamic root in the tradition and social culture of Indonesian society.

Religious Moderation in Islamic Perspective

As elaborated earlier, the basic idea of religious moderation is to find similarities rather than sharpen differences. Furthermore, the significance of mainstreaming religious moderation is based on three main reasons, namely (Lukman Hakim Saifudin, 2019):

First, the essence of the presence of religion is to maintain human dignity as a noble creature of God's creation, including guarding against taking his life. That is why every religion always carries a mission of peace and salvation. To achieve that, religion always presents teachings about balance in various aspects of life; religion also teaches that protecting human life must be a priority; Eliminating one life means eliminating the lives of all humanity. Thus, religious moderation upholds human values.

Second, along with the development and spread of humanity, religion has also developed and spread. Religious texts also experience multiple interpretations, the truth becomes multiplicative; some religious adherents no longer cling to the essence and essence of religious teachings, but are fanatical about the interpretation of the truth of the version they like, and sometimes the interpretation that suits their political interests. Thus, conflict is inevitable. Such complexities of human life and religion occur in various parts of the world.

This context causes the importance of religious moderation, so that human civilization is not destroyed due to conflicts with religious backgrounds.

Third, specifically in the Indonesian context, religious moderation is needed as a cultural strategy in maintaining Indonesianness. As a very heterogeneous nation, since the beginning the founding fathers have succeeded in bequeathing a form of agreement in the nation and state, namely Pancasila in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which has clearly succeeded in uniting all religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. Indonesia is agreed not to be a religious state, but also not to separate religion from daily life day of its citizens. Religious values are preserved, combined with the values of local wisdom and customs, some religious laws are institutionalized by the state, religious and cultural rituals intertwine in harmony and peace (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019).

As a plural and multicultural country, religious conflicts have the potential to occur in Indonesia. That is the basis of the argument, why religious moderation is needed as a solution, so that it can be an important key to creating a religious life that is harmonious, peaceful, and emphasizes balance, both in personal life, family, community, and in the lives of fellow humans as a whole.

In the context of multi-religious Indonesia, the moderation discourse is often described through three pillars: moderation of thought, moderation of movement, and moderation of action.

Basically, every religion teaches its followers to be loving and compassionate towards others. The fundamental message of every religion on earth is to live in peace with all God's creatures. No religion teaches its followers to act radically, anarchistically and spread terror. Indeed, in all aspects of its teachings, religion is characterized as "balanced" (moderate).

Islam, being moderate in religion comes from the concept of "tawasuth", because in all aspects of its teachings Islam is characterized as moderate. In fact, Islam recommends not to exaggerate in religion or be extreme (ghuluw). Islam with the mission of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, which is a mercy for the universe, requires its people to be moderate. Wasathiyah Islam is "middle way Islam" to realize the best ummah (khairu ummah). Allah SWT makes Muslims moderate (wasath) in all religious matters, both in religious affairs and worldly affairs. Islam as a universally applicable din is diametrically opposed to the attitude and behavior of tatharruf, ghulluw, liberal, and various other similar terms (Muhammad Harfin Zuhdi, 2017).

In the Qur'an, Islam and its people are referred to as the religion and people of the "middle" (wasathan), as confirmed in the words of Allah SWT:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

"And likewise We have made you (Muslims) a just and chosen people that you may bear witness to the deeds of men and that the Messenger (Muhammad) may bear witness to your deeds". (Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 143)

The mention of wasathan can be identified by several characteristics, namely:

a) Al-Khairiyah, as confirmed in Q.S. Ali Imran: 104

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

b) Al-'Adl, as confirmed in Q.S. Al-Ma'idah: 8

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

c) Raf' al-Haraj, as confirmed in Q.S. Al-Hajj: 78

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

d) Al-Hikmah, as confirmed in Q.S. Al-Nahl: 125

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

e) Al-Istiqamah, as confirmed in Q.S. Hud: 112

فَاسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أَمَرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطَّعُوا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

f) Nahyu 'an al-ghulluw, as confirmed in the Prophetic hadith:

وَأَيَّاكُمْ وَالْغُلُوفَ فِي الدِّينِ فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ الْغُلُوفَ فِي الدِّينِ (رواه النساء)

"Avoid exaggeration in religion. Because the Ummah before you was destroyed because of this trait". (HR. Nasai).

Religious Moderation in Cultural Perspective

Indeed, almost all communities in Indonesia have local cultural wisdom sourced from their culture, because local wisdom is a view of life and science as well as various life strategies in the form of activities carried out by local communities in answering various problems in fulfilling their needs. Local wisdom is all forms of wisdom based on good values that are believed, applied and always maintained over a long period of time from generation to generation by a group of people in a particular environment or region where they live them.

Historically, the term local wisdom was first introduced by Quaritch Wales (1948-1949), an archaeological scholar, who called it local genius. Although it was further developed by Bosch, a classical archaeologist. Quaritch Wales, explained "the sum of the cultural characteristics which the vast majority of people have in common as a result of their experience in early life" (Mungmachon, 2012). According to him, local genius is the ability of local culture to deal with the influence of foreign cultures when the two cultures are in contact. As a result, there is a process of acculturation, in which local culture accepts the influence of foreign culture.

In the Indonesian Dictionary, etymologically, local wisdom consists of two words, namely wisdom and local. wisdom means wisdom, intelligence as something needed in interaction (Muin Fahmal, 2006). The word local, which means a place or in a place or in a place where something grows, exists, lives that may be different from other places or exists in a place of value that may apply locally or may also apply universally. Other terms for local wisdom include local wisdom, local knowledge and local genius (Ayatrohaedi, 1986).

In Arabic, local wisdom is interpreted as al-'adah and al-'urf. The word al-'Adah etymologically is at-tikrar which means repeatedly (Muhammad Shiddieqy, 1996). Al-'Adah is something that is continuously done, accepted by healthy tabi'at, and occurs repeatedly. This habit is called al-'urf al-'amaliy. While 'urf etymologically derived from the word 'arafa (Amir Syarifuddin, 2001), ya'rifu means something known, something that is considered good and accepted common sense (Satria Effendi, 2005).

Meanwhile, the definition of local wisdom according to Law No. 32 of 2009 is the noble values that apply in the community life system that aims to protect and manage the environment sustainably (Law N0. 32 2009).

According to Sedyawati, local wisdom is defined as wisdom in the traditional culture of ethnic groups. Wisdom in a broad sense is not only cultural norms and values, but also all elements of ideas, including those that have implications for technology. Local wisdom is a view of life and science as well as various life strategies in the form of activities carried out by local communities in answering various problems in fulfilling their needs. Local wisdom is all forms of wisdom based on good values that are believed, applied and always maintained over a long period of time from generation to generation by a group of people in a certain area where they live (Edy Sedyawati, 2006).

Based on the various definitions above, it can be explained that local wisdom is human knowledge and experience in the form of norms that have been traditionalized or steady in an area to maintain and protect itself from external influences, then this tradition is passed down from generation to generation. Local wisdom contains high life values and deserves to be explored, developed, and preserved as an antithesis to socio-cultural change and modernization, because the values contained are considered universal.

Thus, local wisdom can be interpreted as a cultural synthesis created by local actors through a repetitive process, through internalization and interpretation of religious and cultural teachings that are socialized in the form of norms and used as guidelines for daily life for the community. Local wisdom which is an unwritten rule that becomes a reference for the community covering all aspects of community life, in the form of: (1) rules concerning human relations, for example in social interactions between individuals and groups, relating to the hierarchy in customary government, marriage rules between clans, and manners in everyday life, (2) rules concerning human relations with nature, animals, plants that are more aimed at nature conservation efforts such as in Maluku there is the rest of the land and the rest of the sea, (3) rules concerning human relationships with God, humans and nature (Journal Editor Team Affairs, 2010).

Local wisdom has vital roles in society. Among these roles are: first, as a marker of a community's identity such as an identity that shows that the community has a culture of peace which means that the community is a civilized community; second, providing a cohesive aspect in the form of adhesive elements across religions, across citizens, and beliefs; third, different from the application of positive law as a conflict resolution medium that has been pluralized by law enforcers whose impression is coercive; Fourth, it gives the color of togetherness to a community and can function to encourage the building of togetherness, appreciation, as well as a joint mechanism to ward off various possibilities that can reduce, even damage communal solidarity which is believed to originate and grow on the shared consciousness of an integrated community; Fifth, it changes the mindset and mutual relations between individuals and groups by placing it on its culture (Wasito Raharjo Jati, 2013).

Local wisdom like a culture always reproduces according to the level of human needs and patterns of cultural adaptation. The process of cultural reproduction is an active process that emphasizes its culture in social life so that it requires adaptation for groups that have different cultural backgrounds (Irwan Abdullah, 2010).

As a cultural product, the reproduction of local wisdom is highly dependent on what Geertz calls the world view of a particular social group. World view refers to an intellectual understanding, a way of thinking about the world and its work that is prevalent in certain social groups on religious, ethnic, and political bases (Syafi'i Mufid, 2010). When the world view is

no longer considered capable of solving social problems, cultural reproduction will occur so that a new world view is formed that is considered more capable.

The reproduction of this local wisdom has been able to save people from various kinds of conflicts and one of the most effective ways to prevent, handle and maintain peace is by functioning existing social institutions, or forming and agreeing on new social institutions. These social institutions can take the form of norms, values, beliefs and rules that are agreed upon and recognized by the community, so that they are still believed by the community as values that are able to glue the Indonesian nation together and ward off negative values from outside.

However, in reality, the knowledge of the community is still very limited related to local wisdom, the widely developed understanding that local wisdom is part of culture only, even limited to tourist commodities, not as a basic value and moral system of the nation. Community participation is still very low in the process of maintaining local wisdom as a system of values, norms, cultural speech and spatial planning.

In fact, local wisdom is policy values that arise due to human interaction with the natural universe, so local wisdom is made as a value system that directs humans to coexist synergistically with nature for benefit.

Local wisdom itself consists of 4 major dimensions, namely values/morals, oral speech, landscape, and art, all of which function as sites to remind humans of the rules that must be maintained for the balance of nature where humans live. The four dimensions of local wisdom have an effective influence and significance as a potential deterrent to radicalism-terrorism (Interview, 2019).

In the context of NTB province, especially on the island of Lombok, local wisdom can be in the form of customs, institutions, words of wisdom, proverbs, *petuah*, *awig-awig*, *ciloka* and so on. To functionalize local wisdom, the community must recreate new local wisdom (institutional development), namely "renewing old institutions that once functioned well" and in an effort to build traditions that are continuously formulated or recreated in accordance with changing social, economic and religious needs in society. This institutional development must be carried out by the local community itself, by involving government and non-government elements, with a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches (Ismail, 1990). So what is meant by local wisdom in this research is a cultural synthesis created by local actors through a repetitive process, through internalization and interpretation of religious and cultural teachings that are socialized and used as guidelines in everyday life.

Local wisdom has a wide scope and is inherent in language, customs, culture and other regional characteristics. Local wisdom that exists in this society contains noble values, politeness, and characteristics of Indonesian society as a tolerant society in diversity. On this basis, local wisdom needs to receive more attention as a solution to the potential of radical terrorism in the community.

The characteristics of the people of NTB are not too different from other regions, namely the diversity of customs, culture, language, and religion. This diversity often causes conflict in the community. Therefore, local wisdom can be used as a way of life and science as well as various life strategies in the form of activities carried out by local communities in answering various problems in meeting their needs (Ismail, 1990).

The term local or place is not just a landscape but a locus where the process of meaning is carried out by humans in relation to various activities carried out daily, but the local is a center of meaning or a field of concern based on human experience, social relations, emotions and thoughts. Therefore, it is said that the place or locale where humans live is a reservoir of meaning, where humans can take various meanings and interpretations which are then implemented in daily behavior and life, including behavior in religious life. Thus, psychologically, the relationship between People and the places where they live are very strong because it is from there that meaning and meaningfulness are born (Richard, 2022).

In this context, there are three components of place consciousness that can explain how local becomes a source of value for people's lives, including in religion, namely local as a physical setting, local as a setting for human activities and local as a place where human social and psychological processes occur (Gazi Saloom, 2016). Social and psychological processes that take place in human consciousness involve three factors, namely local, human activities and interactions.

In the perspective of psychology in general, social and psychological processes always rely on three things, namely cognitive processes involving the realm of thought, affective processes involving the realm of feelings and psychomotor processes involving motor activity. These three processes are intertwined over a long period of time, creating a strong bond between a person and the location and activities they do every day. That is what reinforces local or place consciousness in human life.

Thus, it can be said that local wisdom is also part of cultural construction. In John Haba's view, local wisdom refers to a variety of cultural wealth that grows and develops in a community known, trusted and recognized as important elements that are able to strengthen social cohesion among community members (Irwan Abdullah, 2008).

Every local wisdom must have certain noble values that are considered good and are used as social rules and norms. These values then bind people in a community and guarantee them to live in peace, harmony, friendship, mutual respect and honor, and help each other. This fact must be recognized as a natural strength that grows from and for the community itself. As such, it is well worth reinforcing and strengthening its position in the context of the community realizing peace in social relations, in addition to law enforcement and national governance (Rasid Yunus, 2014).

Substantially, local wisdom is the embodiment of values that prevail in a society. Values that are believed to be true and become a reference in the daily behavior of the local community. Thus, this means that local wisdom, which contains elements of intelligence, creativity and local knowledge of the elites and the community, is decisive in the development of the civilization of the community (Nurma Ali, 2007).

Based on this elaboration, religious moderation from the perspective of cultural wisdom is a fair and balanced attitude in all matters. The prerequisites are breadth of knowledge, nobleness of mind, and an attitude of not exceeding limits. The main characters of its adherents are wisdom, sincerity and courage (Nurma Ali, 2007). These basic principles, prerequisites, and main characters of moderation have in fact become the empirical experience of the multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Indonesian Nation. But because of the various pulls of extreme right or left ideologies that spill over into Indonesia, especially due to various battles at the global level, strengthening religious moderation becomes a necessity.

Strengthening religious moderation based on cultural wisdom is chosen, because the empirical experience of the Indonesian nation shows that the character of religious moderation has actually become an inseparable part of the identity of the Indonesian Nation. What needs to be done is strengthening so that these values appear as a driving force both in the realm of the state in various regulations and policies and in the realm of society in various movements and social institutionalization that it has (Baiq Mulianah, 2020).

Strengthening the Character of Religious Moderation Education

The socialization of strengthening religious moderation is on the agenda of the Government, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Education in realizing the four basic sources of character education values, namely Religion, Pancasila, Culture, and National Education Goals, which produce eighteen characters aspired by National Education, namely religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, communicative, peace-loving, reading, care for the social environment, and responsibility (Presidential Regulation of Indonesian Republic. No. 87, 2017). From the 18-character education values, it can be derived and focused on 9 religious moderation characters, namely: religious, tolerant, democratic, national spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendly/communicative, peace-loving, and social care. The nine characters of religious moderation based on religious norms and cultural wisdom are shown in the table below (Writing Teams Ministry of Education, 2010).

Character Value of Religious Moderation

No	Value	Description
1	Religious	Attitudes and behaviors that are obedient in carrying out the teachings of the religion they adhere to, tolerant of the implementation of other religious worship, and live in harmony with followers of other religions.
2	Tolerance	Attitudes and actions that respect differences in religion, tribe, ethnicity, opinions, attitudes, and actions of others who are different from themselves.
3	Democracy	A way of thinking, behaving, and acting that equally values the rights and obligations of oneself and others.
4	National	Spirit A way of thinking, acting, and having an outlook that puts the interests of the nation and state above the interests of oneself and one's group.
5	Love for the Country	A way of thinking, behaving, and acting that shows loyalty, concern, and high appreciation for the language, physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment of the nation.

6	Respect for Achievement	Attitudes and actions that encourage themselves to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect the success of others.
7	Friendly/Communicative	Actions that show pleasure in talking, getting along, and cooperating with others.
8	Love Peace Attitudes	words, responses and actions that cause others to feel happy and safe in their presence.
9	Social Care Attitudes	words, and actions that always want to provide assistance to others and communities in need.

When examined in depth about the dynamics of societal change, the phenomenon of intolerance, extremism, radical terrorism is only one of the currents in globalization and democratization. On the other hand, there is also the opposite, what Thomas Reuter calls the revitalization of tradition as a way to counter radical terrorism in a dialogical and absorbing manner. Reuter points out, at least in Asia, that as a response to globalization with environmental damage, control of natural resources and religious radicalism, there is a movement to revitalize traditions and religions that are local in nature but have strong traditional roots and build a new tradition of harmony. However, this movement is still weaker than the issues of environmental damage, exploitation of natural resources and radicalism (Thomas Reuter, 2013).

One important strategy to prevent the rise of radicalism is to strengthen and revive local traditions and revive local knowledge. Da'wah and religious missions now tend to provide too much opportunity for knowledge that comes from outside while ignoring and even closing, not to say suppressing, local knowledge and traditions. The influx of new views and interpretations of religion or knowledge from outside itself has actually been happening for a long time. However, in the past, each new view and interpretation had to first to be discussed and dialogued with the living traditions of the community for acculturation or revitalization. Whereas now, with the advancement of information technology, especially with the support of an effective government, one can impose these new views and interpretations on the people with information technology, regardless of the reactions and disadvantages of the local people.

Reuter's revitalization of tradition is also a new face of the way local traditions respond to external influences. In the past, the response was more defensive or resistant, rejecting or accepting very selectively as far as possible. But now the process is more open, in addition to trying to give new meaning to outside influences creatively, it is also accompanied by a new and contextual reinterpretation of local traditions and rituals in connection with the entry of new influences in a dialogical and absorbing manner. The revitalization of local traditions and rituals that involves the community as a whole with new meanings is the key to the spirit of tolerance and dialogue.

There are several technical strategies recommended in this regard, namely (Harfin Zuhdi, 2015): First, is to revive community institutions and ritual practices that are local and have strong cultural roots in the community. This step can strengthen cultural cohesiveness and revive "social capital" in the community, namely the growth of trust in the community and social mechanisms that result in sanctions for people who violate these traditions. Traditions

that live in the community have a strong control over changes that come from outside. It is not the other way around as it is now, where something from outside controls the tradition and even wants to eliminate it. Dialogue takes time and patience. In its character in Indonesia, local traditions and rituals always contain high tolerance for other understandings including new ideas and understandings that come from outside, so that people are always open and dialogue in various matters. Various studies on religion in the archipelago show the flexibility of religious relationships or beliefs with other religions that come from outside the archipelago. This happens thanks to the wisdom of community leaders and religious leaders who live in the midst of society. In the context of educational institutions, it should not only teach academic knowledge, but it is important to introduce students to local wisdom and the workings of leaders; both religious leaders and community/customary leaders who live in the community directly. Therefore, educational institutions or universities must be present and appear to take on the role of mediating the gap between the academic world and the real world in society. Even at the same time mediating between new views from outside with the community through these organic leaders.

Secondly, the involvement of religious leaders and community leaders who have wide influence in the region (local) itself in the educational process in educational institutions directly, although their academic abilities may be low, but they have very rich experience and wisdom. Knowledge about local wisdom or local knowledge should be included in the curriculum in every school, because students are projected not only as academics, but will also play a broad role in society later.

Third, include lessons or courses on comparisons, whether inter-religious or intra-religious comparisons. Because in reality there is no single religion that has a single interpretation, but there are various interpretations and interpretations. Therefore, the introduction to other views and perspectives will open up insights to be able to accept the thoughts and truths of the other side. In addition, it is very significant to include the content of local wisdom about the traditions that live in the community into the educational curriculum of schools, boarding schools and universities (Harfin Zuhdi, 2021).

Implementation of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

The strategy of strengthening and implementing religious moderation is the answer to the question of how the values of religious moderation that have been formulated previously are strengthened, institutionalized, and implemented in the lives of individuals, communities, and the Indonesian state.

In this context, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as the leading sector has gone far enough, where the discourse of religious moderation is no longer limited to discourse, but is systematically socialized, and has even been institutionalized as an integral part of the Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJM) with various derivative documents. But in this context, the implementation of religious moderation values is not finished only at the national level, but how to reduce it to the local, regional and provincial levels throughout Indonesia.

Regarding the implementation of religious moderation at the state level, it can be done with the initial discussions, the nomenclature used is actually "mainstreaming" religious

moderation. After some consideration, this word was replaced with "strengthening", without completely eliminating the substance of the process.

The strategy of strengthening or mainstreaming religious moderation is a strategy that is carried out rationally and systematically to make moderate religious perspectives, attitudes and behaviors a commonly accepted perspective and basis for thinking in building Indonesia's human resources (HR). The use of the diction "mainstreaming" is not to show that so far the idea and practice of moderation in religion has not been widely known, or has not been practiced by most religious people. The nomenclature of moderation, or *wasathiyah* in the Islamic context, has indeed long been a public discourse, but it is still individual and has never been part of the macro policy direction of human resource development (HR) of the Government of Indonesia. So, in the context of religious moderation, this mainstreaming is then intended as a strengthening effort so that moderate views, attitudes and behaviors in religion become an integral part of state policy.

Efforts to strengthen religious moderation are carried out systematically and continuously, at least through 3 (three) strategies, namely: a) socialization and dissemination of religious moderation ideas; b) institutionalization of religious moderation into binding programs and policies; and c) integration of religious moderation perspectives into the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 20202024.

One of the consequences of integrating the vision of religious moderation into the RPJMN 20202024 is the need for the Ministry of Religious Affairs to develop a Strategic Plan (Renstra) 20202024, which is in line with and can accommodate the translation of the house of priority programs and activities that have been formulated in the Initial Draft of the RPJMN. This is of course in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 25/2004 on the National Development Planning System, which mandates that the heads of ministries and institutions prepare a draft Renstra in accordance with their duties and functions.

Religious moderation is formulated as a perspective, attitude and behavior by always taking a position in the middle, always acting fairly, and not being extreme in religious understanding and practice. Since then, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has sought to make religious moderation part of the government's perspective in planning national development, and in developing its human resources. Institutionalizing religious moderation means translating religious moderation into institutions, agencies, structures, or units that specifically think about the implementation strategy of this concept so that it manifests into measurable and sustainable programs and activities.

The implementation of religious moderation can be done through several things, such as internalizing the essential values of religious teachings, strengthening state commitment, strengthening tolerance, and rejecting all types of violence in the name of religion, as stated in the religious moderation indicators section.

Specifically related to the internalization of essential religious values, this is a very important thing to implement both in personal life, society, and the nation and state. The keyword "essential" needs to be underlined because religious moderation emphasizes strengthening substantive religious understanding, not *harfiyah* or formalistic.

The internalization of essential religious values is also a feature that distinguishes religious moderation from the deradicalization movement which tends to only try to restore

ultra-conservative, or right-line, religious understanding to become moderate, without providing a sufficient portion to internalize religious values.

Commitment to the essence of religious teachings is very important in the context of religious moderation. The alignment of moderate religious views, attitudes and behaviors emphasizes the essence of religious teachings. For example, one of the essences of the presence of religious teachings is to maintain human dignity as a noble creature of God's creation. If there are views, attitudes and behaviors in the name of religion that result in the loss of human dignity, then it is actually contrary to the value of religious moderation.

D. CONCLUSION

Presenting religion as a spirit of peace is a necessity that must be done simultaneously and contextually through religious moderation character education that must be instilled early and in a broad community environment, especially among students as agents of change. The implementation of religious moderation education is actually peace education to create a just and sustainable future. Therefore, strengthening the tolerance aspect in the religious moderation socialization program is a necessity, because moderate and tolerant attitudes can be developed through learning and habituation (learning habits). This learning process will run faster and more productive if supported by environmental factors, in this case it can be family or social association, especially among universities. In this context, this is the strategic point of significance of religious moderation education to build the character of Indonesia's national insight.

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