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Strengthening Religious Moderation In University: Initiation To Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar

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ABSTRACT

Students, educators, and education staff who do not understand the totality of the essence and urgency of religious moderation in the scope of UIN Alauddin Makassar are essential issues. The rooted religious moderation is one of the Chancellors' thoughts that has been actualized by the Moderation House's declaration. This study aims to initiate a strategy for UIN Alauddin Makassar College in strengthening religious moderation in the academic community. This research is qualitative research located at UIN Alauddin Makassar using a socio-cultural approach. The idea generated from this research is a Road Map of Moderation, which is integrated into the Tridarma of Higher Education, such as a curriculum that contains religious moderation, moderation-based research assistance, and others.

Keywords: *Religious Moderation, Colleg, Covid-19, UIN Alauddin.*

ABSTRAK

Mahasiswa, dosen, dan tenaga kependidikan yang tidak memahami secara totalitas esensi dan urgensi moderasi beragama di lingkup Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar merupakan isu penting. Moderasi beragama yang mengakar adalah salah satu pemikiran Rektor yang telah diaktualisasikan dalam peluncuran 'Rumah Moderasi'. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menginisiasi strategi perguruan tinggi UIN Alauddin Makassar dalam memperkuat moderasi beragama dalam lingkup civitas akademika. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang berlokasi di UIN Alauddin Makassar dengan menggunakan pendekatan sosial budaya. Ide yang dihasilkan dari penelitian ini adalah memberikan masukan tentang penguatan moderasi, yang diintegrasikan ke dalam Tridarma

Perguruan Tinggi, seperti kurikulum yang berisi moderasi beragama, bantuan penelitian berbasis moderasi, dan lain-lain.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Perguruan Tinggi, Covid-19, UIN Alauddin.

INTRODUCTION

Hamdan Juhannis, as Rector of Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar (UIN Alauddin Makassar), has five ideals (Pancacita), one of which is rooted in religious moderation. (Asrullah, 2019) This goal is a continuation of the efforts of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in campaigning for religious moderation for the last five years by providing an understanding so that practicing religion is not extreme. (Syatar, Amiruddin, and Rahman, 2020) The goal of strengthening deeply rooted religious moderation is easily echoed and remembered within the scope of UIN Alauddin Makassar

The interesting fact is that universities have been shocked by the research results, which states that some campuses in Indonesia and their students are exposed to radicalism. Setara Institut (2019) mentions that ten well-known state universities are exposed to radicalism. The ten colleges include Universitas Indonesia (UI), Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Yogyakarta, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (UNY), Universitas Brawijaya (UNIBRAW) Malang, Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR), Universitas Mataram (UNRAM), UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta dan UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The highest levels occurred in IPB and ITB. Meanwhile, in Islamic universities, it occurs in UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta dan UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Another news that adds to the impression of exposure to the campus world, as expressed by Ryamizard Ryacudu, when he was still the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia, which states 23.4% of Indonesian students are exposed to radicalism. (Murtadlo,

2019) Higher education serves as the last bastion to maximize religious moderation because it is the last level of education. (Juhannis, 2020)

More interestingly, universities were shocked by the Covid-19 pandemic. Higher education never thought that Covid-19 would have an impact on the form of lecture methods. (Syatar, Amiruddin, and Rahman, 2020) Covid-19 forces Islamic religious colleges to adopt an online lecture system. (Ningsih, 2020) However, online lectures can still increase student motivation. (Susilawati and Supriyatno, 2020) Thus, strengthening religious moderation in higher education is global demand—religious colleges or colleges with courses related to religious studies. Religious moderation has become a priority and demand for public universities by incorporating religious material into the curriculum to produce moderate academic behavior. Higher education must have a standard concept and action related to religious moderation. (Darmalaksana, 2019)

Indonesia has strong social capital to face the challenges of diversity and diversity that arise. Conflicts and tensions that arise in society do not always reflect the acuteness of intolerance and conservatism in religion. It sometimes happened due to the absence of data, which led to miscommunication and misunderstanding, which led to tension. (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019) Therefore, Islamic religious colleges can become the commander in providing information related to strengthening religious moderation. Miscommunication and misunderstanding can be prevented and eliminated through the generation of community members in higher education.

The mainstreaming of religious moderation in the digital space found momentum at the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. (Hefni, 2020) Phenomena studying online makes it hard to deny that Covid-19 has an

important role in this. This global pandemic has "forced" lecturers to use various online media as teaching tools such as WhatsApp groups, Zoom, Google Meet, and the like. Moderate Islamic groups, which have seemed far removed from online media, are beginning to enjoy using this medium. This phenomenon may be driven by the need to continue teaching students or spreading Islamic da'wah during the holy month. However, it is possible, after the pandemic, this moderate segment of Islam will continue to use online media for certain purposes. (Muhtada, 2020) Various moderation internalization methods are needed through face-to-face online lectures, tutorials, seminars, and the like. The evaluation is carried out through oral and written Islamic insight screening periodically from lecturers and tutors. (Purwanto et al., 2019) One form of moderation in Islamic religious colleges is moderating the curriculum with multicultural learning methods. (Ekawati et al., 2019)

Covid-19 has not shown any signs of ending. Concern and fear of the development of radicalism in the context of religious moderation in Islamic religious colleges, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Various arguments that reinforce the 'emergency' of religious moderation in Islamic religious colleges understand among students who are anti-democracy and question the basis of the state. Religious moderation education in Islamic colleges of religion during the Covid-19 pandemic is still very much needed to rebuild national commitment and be grateful for national and state consensus achievements. Thus, of course, universities in Indonesia must provide information related to strengthening religious moderation not to create an impression that creates a phobia towards religious teachings.

This article is field research with a qualitative research type using a socio-cultural approach. The research location was conducted at one of the

Islamic religious colleges in the Makassar area, namely the Alauddin Makassar State Islamic University. The data collection techniques use observation, interviews, distributing google forms to students, and teaching staff and literature studies relevant to this research. Observations were made to ask the views of students and lecturers of UIN Alauddin Makassar. Observations were made through several stages, including initial observations carried out before the research was carried out. Observations were carried out at the research location. Data management in field research occurs since the data collection process is carried out in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusions or verification. The terms in qualitative research used for testing the validity of data are different from the terms used in quantitative research. This difference is based on the validity of the data to be validated. The data validity test consists of internal validity (credibility test), external validity (dependability), reliability, and objectivity (confirmability). In this study, researchers only used one data validity testing model, namely the internal validity or credibility tests. The data credibility test used was the extension of observations, increased persistence, and triangulation of documents and informants. Research limitations are only on-campus residents of UIN Alauddin Makassar, especially students and lecturers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Moderation Concept

Moderation word came from Latin, *moderatio*, which means justice (not excessive and not less) and self-control. (Ropi, 2019) Muslim scholars explore the meaning of the language of moderation with *wasatīyah* taken from the Koran and the sunna, which has the meaning of the most suitable, balanced, or middle position between the two extremes. (Islam and Khatun,

2015) Religious moderation can also be interpreted as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes the middle's flow, always acts fairly, and is not extreme, extreme right and extreme left in religion. (Kementarian Agama RI, 2019) Religious moderation greatly contributes to preventing the issue of radicalism. (Arifinsyah, Andy, and Damanik, 2020) Religious moderation has become a viral term in recent years. It does not make the term religious moderation appear today, but the term has been known long ago. The Koran uses the term 'wasthan's meaning in a sensible way, which explains that Muslims are just and wise, not to the left and not to the right.

The development of technology 4.0 makes tolerance gradually degraded in its purification because it is assumed that the tolerant has a higher level (majority) than the tolerant recipient (minority). In this case, the tolerance model requires contextual modification, namely religious moderation, as a basis for more acceptable social interaction between citizens and netizens. (Kawangung, 2019) The urgency of understanding religious moderation so that the nation's problems can be resolved by cooperation between religious adherents. (Yanti and Witro, 2020) The public has understood that exclusive views and violent extremism with religious clothing will only damage the nation's diversity.

Religious moderation should be built based on a universal philosophy in human social relations. (Sutrisno, 2019) So, in the end, religious moderation's ultimate goal is the key to creating tolerance and harmony, both on a local, national, and international scale globally. The choice, moderation tries to reject extremism and liberalism in religion so that it is balanced to maintain civilization and create harmonious peace.

Intolerance Problems in Universitas Islam Negeri Makassar During Pandemic

Tolerance and intolerance have not ended until now and cannot be separated from social life. Intolerance in the UN affirmation of the declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination is based on Religion or Belief. It describes that intolerance and discrimination in religion are defined as differentiation, neglect, prohibition, or priority based on religion or belief whose purpose or consequence negates or reduces the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and the rights of fundamental freedoms on a balanced basis. (Luqyana and Sukmono, 2020) Some of the causes of youth radicalism, such as economic, political, mental, religious, and cultural issues, need serious attention. (Qodir, 2018) The issue that voices moderate Islam in cyberspace is very important to counterbalance the dominance of radical and intolerant Islamic voices. Radical and intolerant Islamic circles have been using cyberspace for their benefit. (Muhtada, 2020) Thus, students are expected to be able to understand and explain well the meaning of tolerance.

Higher education should become one of the fundamental instruments as a medium for forming the nation's character (nation and character building) amid heterogeneity and plurality, which are the main characteristics of the Indonesian nation. (Mukhibat, 2015) Although higher education hopes for a tolerant attitude, some students have the potential for religious intolerance. The indication is that these groups provide support to groups that behave in a discriminatory manner, do not give appreciation, and do not want other parties who have different religious beliefs or ideals. (Tholkhah, 2013) The campus must prevent the potential for intolerance by developing multicultural insights and developing a culture of tolerance in universities.

Religious moderation is a middle way of dealing with various possible differences in higher education, both extreme and fundamental. The application of religious moderation in multicultural societies such as in Islamic religious colleges that need to be done is to make educational institutions the basis for religious moderation laboratories and take a socio-religious approach to religion and state. (Sutrisno, 2019) The potential for intolerance during the Covid-19 pandemic may occur in universities because of the consideration of those who have high religious enthusiasm to create a narrow and extreme view.

Online Learning = Trigger Comprehensive Understanding in University?

According to Noerchalis Madjid (Madjid, 2017), two schools regarding religion are inclusive and exclusive. Inclusive Islam is an understanding or religious insight that is open, flexible, and tolerant. (Abidin, 2013) The fact that the diversity of society is pluralistic and is a reality that cannot be avoided. This problem is recognized in the constitution. It has been confirmed that there is a guarantee for each religious adherent to carry out teachings following their respective beliefs.

Lately, social media users must apply a moderate attitude in filtering the information contained in them. (Kosasih, 2019) Information filtering is needed, especially for academics in universities. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed Islamic teaching and study activities in online media. (Muhtada, 2020) Therefore, during the Covid-19 pandemic, lecturing activities were carried out online. Education online should still prioritize moderate attitudes in religion.

Education as a process is closely related to efforts to develop three aspects of life, namely life views, life attitudes, and life skills. (Redaksi,

2012) Efforts to develop these three aspects can be carried out on-campus or off-campus and in a family environment. This concept makes education culture or "enculturation," a process to make someone able to live in a certain society with various cultures and beliefs. Consequently, compulsory educational practice is following society's development because educational practice must be based on educational theories. These educational theories must come from a view of the life of the community concerned. Education can be seen as a symbol of civilization that advances society, a nation, and a global.

UIN Alauddin, as the largest Islamic religious university in eastern Indonesia, certainly has its strategy in strengthening religious moderation. The actualization and habituation of religious moderation in UIN Alauddin have been progressing. It is evidenced by the derivation of the Chancellor's goal of implementing a 100 reference book program and maximizing the webinars with the main religious moderation theme.



Diagram 1.1. Student Experiences against Intolerant
from Pilot Research http://bit.ly/FORM_PERANAN_PT_MODERASI



Diagram 1.2. Students Understanding on Moderation Concept obtained form
Pilot Research http://bit.ly/FORM_PERANAN_PT_MODERASI

Initial observations found that many UIN Alauddin students do not understand well the essence of religious moderation itself. There are still many students who have witnessed intolerance during the pandemic. Intolerance is like forcing the will to the mosque when there is an appeal for prohibition, disregarding government recommendations such as not maintaining distance and not wearing masks when worshipping at the mosque.

CONCLUSSION

Strengthening religious moderation at the university level should be more optimal. There are still many students who do not know and understand the essence of religious moderation. Some students of UIN Alauddin still do not know well about the concept of religious moderation. Ironically, the term religious moderation is still less familiar in the minds of some UIN Alauddin students. Strengthening moderation during the covid-19 pandemic needs to be proclaimed even more. Lecturers and education personnel of UIN Alauddin must synergize to advance the idea of "Moderation House" which has been launched right during the covid-19 pandemic. The hope of "House of Moderation" is not just a program that

does not run. Synergy is expected for all elements of academia on campus to advance the program.

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