

IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION OF KPM IAIN STUDENTS PAREPARE, BATULAPPA SUB-DISTRICT, HOLDS A PRAISE SAFARI

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the implementation of religious moderation through the KPM IAIN Parepare Student Da'wah Safari activities in the Batulappa District. The study aims to understand and promote religious teachings that are fair, balanced, and correctly aligned with the nature of human beings, characterized by monotheism and faith in their spirits. The research methodology involved in-depth observations and analysis conducted by KPM students, who adjusted their work programs based on the observed needs and capacities of the community. The findings reveal that religious moderation encompasses harmonious relationships between humans and their Lord, fostering a close connection to God through activities such as congregational prayers and the Talim Council. Additionally, religious moderation emphasizes the importance of human relations (hablumminannas), leading to a harmonious society where community bonds are strengthened through social assistance and collaborative efforts. Furthermore, the study highlights the significance of integrating religious moderation with nature, including responsible waste management and reforestation activities. The concept of religious moderation does not endorse hostility or hatred but emphasizes collaboration as a means to eliminate evil and promote a better society.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Community Service Lecture, Batulappa District

1. INTRODUCTION

The community service lecture is one of the final semester student courses that lasts for over a month. Its main objective is to assess how students interact with society by promoting religious moderation through various safari activities. One of these activities involves conducting in-depth observations and directly witnessing the daily routines of the community. The observation period lasts for 5 days before designing a work program. Due to the predominantly Muslim population and the lack of religious activities in the Batulappa District, implementing religious moderation aims to increase awareness among individuals to consistently engage in worship and carry out

various activities in accordance with Islamic law. It also aims to enhance faith and devotion to Allah SWT.

Community Service Lecture (KPM) is a vital activity that serves as both a part of life and a means to address existing issues from economic, religious, and cultural perspectives. Traditionally, KPM was perceived solely as a customary practice for final semester students. During the New Order era, KPM was often regarded as an activity that contributed to infrastructure development. However, as times have changed, students are seen as agents of social change. Numerous studies have demonstrated that students engaged in community service fulfill several functions, such as acquiring knowledge and devising solutions to societal problems (Halim, 2020). Some of these activities include students' community service in developing a tourist village (Sara et al., 2021), raising awareness for self-learning outside of school (Arum, 2022), providing clean water facilities (Hamdani et al., 2022), and enhancing understanding of communal living and promoting social awareness (Ismail & Karima, 2021).

The implementation of religious moderation can be applied in various aspects of human life. When considering the relationship between religion and the state, religious moderation reflects a mindset that values love for the country. It also emphasizes mutual respect, tolerance, and regard among followers of different religions, encouraging them not to criticize one another when there are differing religious interpretations. Rather, these differences can be seen as Allah SWT's mercy. The Qur'an and Hadith teach us to respond to differences by adopting a moderate approach (*wasath*), which signifies moderation. Therefore, religious moderation can be understood as an attitude that consistently follows the middle path in religious matters, avoiding extremes and practicing moderation in fulfilling religious obligations (Idris et al., 2021).

The implementation of KPM activities based on religious moderation and education aims to raise awareness among the community and students about the development and improvement of society by prioritizing Islam and the Qur'an as embodiments of a moderate religion. Education serves as a benchmark for teaching religious moderation to children and the people of the Batulappa District.

The activities conducted by researchers to implement religious and educational moderation include Da'wah safaris, Gemah Anak Sholeh (GEMAS) programs, recitals, collective Qur'an studies, practicing funeral management, teaching at schools, organizing competitions, and creating

locally-specific products in the Batulappa District. Based on the observations of KPM students over several days, several problems and needs have been identified in the four villages of the Batulappa District. Here are the specific problems identified in each village:

a. Tapporang Village

The problem in Tapporang Village revolves around the lack of mosque recitations occurring every Friday night. Additionally, the community lacks understanding of the importance of joint recitations on Friday nights. This lack of knowledge regarding the significance of religious moderation results in the absence of recitations at the mosque, depriving the community of this important communal practice.

b. Watang Kassa Village

In Watang Kassa Village, there is a shortage of participants for the sermon, particularly among the younger generation, on Fridays. Often, only one person delivers the sermon at the Nurul Hidayah mosque, which places a heavy burden on that individual. Furthermore, the village does not have a joint recitation gathering on Friday nights, further limiting opportunities for communal engagement.

c. Batulappa Village

The primary issue in Batulappa Village lies in the lack of understanding among community members regarding the proper procedures for managing corpses. While some knowledge has been passed down through generations, only a few individuals possess this understanding. Consequently, there is a discrepancy in adhering to Islamic Sharia when dealing with the deceased, as certain individuals fail to follow the appropriate guidelines. It is important to raise awareness and ensure proper practices are followed in this regard.

d. Kaseralau Village

Kaseralau Village faces a challenge with the habit of people disposing garbage in the river, leading to pollution and environmental degradation. Additionally, waste is indiscriminately disposed of in various areas, including locations that can negatively impact the surroundings. For instance, the improper disposal of waste can result in the emission of unpleasant odors near landfill sites, causing inconvenience and potential health hazards.

2. METHODS

To address the identified problems in Tapporang, Watang Kassa, Batulappa, and Kaseralau villages, a comprehensive approach was taken. The methods employed included community engagement and education, collaborative planning and implementation, safaris, and outreach activities, as well as evaluation and monitoring.

a. Community Engagement and Education

Community engagement and education played a crucial role in raising awareness among community members. Various sessions were conducted in each village, focusing on the importance of religious practices and promoting religious moderation. Educational workshops and seminars were organized to provide in-depth knowledge on topics such as Friday night recitations, sermon participation, proper corpse management according to Islamic Sharia, and responsible waste disposal practices. Expert religious leaders and scholars were invited to deliver lectures and provide guidance on religious moderation and the practical aspects related to the identified problems.

b. Collaborative Planning and Implementation

Collaborative planning and implementation ensured the participation and ownership of the initiatives. Work programs were designed in consultation with community members, village leaders, and stakeholders. Task forces consisting of community volunteers, religious leaders, and youth representatives were formed to oversee the implementation of specific interventions. Regular meetings and discussions were held to monitor progress, address challenges, and adapt strategies based on community feedback.

c. Safaris and Outreach Activities

Safaris and outreach activities were organized to reinforce religious understanding and promote community involvement. Da'wah safaris were conducted, emphasizing the significance of joint recitations, sermon participation, and religious practices. Gemah Anak Sholeh (GEMAS) programs engaged and educated young people, encouraging their active participation in religious activities and sermon delivery. Recitals, Qur'an study circles, and workshops on corpse management were conducted to enhance knowledge and understanding among community members, ensuring adherence to Islamic guidelines. Furthermore, awareness campaigns and community clean-up drives were organized in Kaseralau Village, targeting the issue of improper waste disposal and promoting responsible waste management practices.

d. Evaluation and Monitoring

Evaluation and monitoring played a vital role in assessing the effectiveness of the interventions. A systematic evaluation framework was implemented, utilizing data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, and direct observations. Regular monitoring and progress reports were generated to track advancements, identify areas requiring further attention, and make necessary adjustments to the interventions.

By implementing these methods, the objective was to create sustainable changes, promote religious understanding and moderation, and effectively address the specific problems identified in each village.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of various problems arising from differences in religious views highlights the significance of moderate Islam as a position that lies between attitudes and approaches in addressing these differences. Moderate Islam emphasizes tolerance, mutual respect, and the recognition of diverse beliefs and sects. This understanding of religious moderation is crucial for fostering inter-religious harmony and promoting balance and justice.

Gaining a moderate and modern understanding of Islam is essential, particularly in the context of interfaith relations. It enables individuals to play constructive roles in various aspects of society, including religion, politics, economics, culture, social interactions, and national identity. Practicing religious moderation involves changing our perspective on religion, allowing for a balanced approach.

Moderation entails a steadfast commitment to religion without compromising its principles or engaging in extremes. It involves upholding both vertical rights (ubudiyah) in our relationship with the Divine and horizontal rights (Ihsan) in our interactions with others. However, there is a dilemma when individuals misinterpret moderation or when radicalism becomes a means to pursue temporary interests, including political agendas. It is important to promote moderation for the well-being of all, as extremism and radicalism can lead to adverse consequences.

Religious moderation is crucial because deviations in understanding religion have emerged, and misguided actions have been carried out in the name of faith. Incorrect implementations can result in oppression and an imbalance that contradicts the true essence of Islam as rahmatan lil alamin (a mercy to all of creation).

Religious moderation encompasses the fair, accurate, and balanced understanding of spiritual teachings, taking into account the inherent nature of human beings as monotheistic and possessing faith in their spirits. As creatures of God practicing religious moderation, we are called to establish harmonious relationships. First and foremost is our relationship with the Divine, which enables us to become truly human and close to our Creator. Activities such as temple assemblies and congregational prayers serve as examples of the moderate relationship between religion and God, inviting individuals to develop a deep connection with the Divine.

In addition to our relationship with God, religious moderation also emphasizes the importance of harmonious interactions among humans. Understanding that monotheism and faith are inherent in our nature, we are encouraged to foster positive relationships with one another. This can be achieved through acts of kindness, support within the community, and the pursuit of harmonious societal relations. For instance, promoting the proper disposal of waste by providing permanent trash cans and establishing garbage collection points helps preserve the environment and prevents pollution. Collaborating with village leaders and educators, reforestation activities such as tree planting and livestock rearing can be carried out to enhance the well-being of both individuals and the community, in accordance with the teachings of Allah SWT.

It is important to note that religious moderation does not advocate for mutual hostility or hatred among individuals. Instead, it emphasizes the power of collaboration in eliminating evil and fostering a peaceful society. At its core, religious moderation can be interpreted as a way of life in diverse and pluralistic societies, promoting an orderly and peaceful existence while spreading kindness and compassion. Monotheistic societies exhibit traits of orderliness, as individuals who believe in monotheism possess a heightened awareness that extends to ethical behavior.

Religion, through the concept of religious moderation, promotes overall religious order. By adhering to the principles of religious moderation, individuals can contribute to the establishment of a just and harmonious society (Saifuddin, 2019). During the planning phase of the community service lecture, KPM students in the Batulappa District were assigned to four different posts and conducted observations in four villages over the course of one week. Based on these observations, the author selected several noteworthy work programs to be implemented during the community service lecture in the Batulappa District. These work programs underwent a thorough observation and analysis process carried out by KPM students and were tailored to the abilities of each student.

The work programs conducted as part of the IAIN Parallel Student Program include:

- a. Conducting Friday sermons at various mosques in the Batulappa District, aimed at delivering impactful and relevant sermons to the local community.
- b. Engaging in study sessions with community members and children, providing educational support and fostering knowledge sharing.
- c. Providing training sessions on the proper management of corpses in Batulappa Village, aiming to enhance the understanding and adherence to Islamic burial procedures.
- d. Organizing BTQ (Read and Write Al-Qur'an) activities, promoting Quranic literacy and proficiency among the community members.
- e. Collaborating with the community to successfully organize birthday events, celebrating the joyous occasions and fostering a sense of unity.
- f. Establishing a Shelter Rubbish initiative, constructing designated areas for proper waste disposal to address the issue of littering in the community.
- g. Conducting English lessons in elementary schools, contributing to the development of language skills among young students.
- h. Organizing healthy gymnastics sessions with the community, promoting physical well-being and an active lifestyle.
- i. Creating and promoting locally-made village products, showcasing the unique specialties of the Batulappa District and stimulating economic growth.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of religious moderation through the KPM IAIN Parepare Student Da'wah Safari activities demonstrates the importance of understanding and practicing religion in a fair, balanced, and correct manner. Religious moderation can be interpreted as aligning religious teachings with the inherent nature of human beings, which includes monotheism and faith in their spirits. As individuals with religious moderation, we are called to cultivate harmonious relationships.

The first aspect of religious moderation focuses on the relationship between humans and their Lord, which enables individuals to become truly human and develop a close connection with God. This is exemplified through activities such as the Talim Council and congregational prayers that encourage people to establish a personal relationship with God.

The second aspect of religious moderation emphasizes human relations with one another (*hablumminannas*), leading to the creation of a harmonious society where community bonds are strengthened. This can be achieved through initiatives such as community social assistance, promoting mutual protection and happiness. Additionally, religious moderation extends to the relationship between humans and nature, emphasizing responsible stewardship. Actions such as providing permanent trash cans, maintaining cleanliness, and engaging in reforestation activities demonstrate this aspect.

It is important to note that religious moderation does not promote hostility or hatred among individuals. Instead, it fosters collaboration as a means to eliminate evil and build a better society. By conducting KPM activities grounded in religious moderation and education, the aim is to raise awareness and improve the quality of society, prioritizing Islam and the Quran as exemplars of moderate religion. Education plays a vital role in teaching religious moderation to children and the community of Batulappa District, empowering them to embrace these principles in their lives.

By prioritizing religious moderation and education, the KPM activities seek to contribute to the development and enhancement of society, instilling a sense of moderation and promoting the values of Islam in the lives of individuals in the Batulappa District.

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