The Implementation of Religious Moderation in the Public University of Malang

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Abstract. Religious moderation has become a new trend upon conflict and intolerance resolution among religious communities, especially in Indonesian universities. This paper aims to explain the process of implementing religious moderation to enhance appropriate socio-religious attitudes and religious tolerance at Universitas Merdeka Malang. It is a case study with an in-depth interview followed by observation and documentation study. This study finds that the implementation of religious moderation is carried out in 3 stages, namely (1) coordination meetings of lecturers in the religious study forum (RSA) to discuss lecture material, (2) Preparation of RPS or Rencana Pembelajaran Semester or syllabus by including religious moderation material, (3) applying religious moderation through (a) religious education lecture, citizenship education, and religious enrichment. (b) off-campus classroom through (i) students’ religious activity units (SAU), including Jubilee SAU (Christian), Loyola SAU (Catholic), Alhuda SAU (Islamic) and Dharma WTC SAU (Hindu). Non-Muslim religious activities can be carried out at the mosque since this is the center of worship building on campus, (ii) activating a student’ council Instagram account for broadcasting information about religious moderation, and the existence of local cultures to represent national commitment and accommodative attitudes towards local cultures.

Keywords. Religious moderation; Process of Implementing Religious Moderation; Socioreligious Attitude
A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multicultural country that reaps many conflicts and interests. (Fajarini, 2014) had reported that the conflict among the community is caused by the lack of understanding of different ideologies. Several factors leading to various conflicts occur, including cultural, ethnic, and religious sentiments, but religious sentiments occupy the most dominant position (Hidayati, 2008). The government’s efforts in dealing with conflicts in the name of religion and intolerance are reflected in the 1945 Constitution, Chapter 28E, Verses (1) and (2) and Chapter 28), Verses (1) and (2) regarding freedom to choose and profess their respective religions. However, it turned out to be inversely proportional to the facts on the ground, such as bombing in front of Makassar Cathedral Church (Nugroho, 2021) on Sunday, March 28th, 2021. It was a real phenomenon of riot action with religious motive.

The spread of radicalism that led to the growth of intolerance generally targets students at public universities (PU). PU is easier to be the target of radicalism because most students come from public and vocational high schools (SMU and SMK) whose understanding of the basics of religion is still relatively low (Basri & Dwiningrum, 2019). In contrast, Azca (2013) views that students are very vulnerable to radicalism and intolerance because they are going through a period of unstable growth, so they are relatively prone to experiencing identity crises and are very easy to influence. Meanwhile, the efforts to prevent radicalism and intolerance around the educational environment is still in the minimum threshold. The curriculum, lecturers, and the attitude of the academic community towards diversity still left many problems. Around the school environment, for example, there are still many schools that have not adopted a curriculum that holds inclusiveness, pluralism, and multiculturalism (Munadilir, 2016). In higher education, the lack of collage curriculum is to adopt and integrate multicultural education, national insight, and Islamic education in one unit (Bahri, 2018). It causes the growth of intolerance and disrespect for different cultures and religions.

Society and the younger generation need to strengthen themselves as individuals who can live within the scope of diversity. This is where the importance of moderate and not extreme understanding in religion is necessary. Many intolerant attitudes, radicals, and fanaticism that occur. Religious moderation is required as a way out in creating a peaceful religious life and minimal violence in the midst of a plural and multicultural life (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). Ali (2021) stated the values of religious moderation that can be applied around the educational environment, such as the value of tolerance, justice, balance in the association and equality. These values can be internalized through learning management, curriculum design, learning design, and teaching as well as learning activities in the classroom and beyond. Hilmy in Ali (2021) stated that to effectively internalize the values of religious moderation around the educational environment, an understanding of religious teachings is required, namely (1) comprehensive Islam, (2) The contents of the Quran and Hadith, (3) socio-religious dynamics of society, (4) human values, (5) religion, culture, and political pluralism, and (6) the rights and obligations of minorities.

To respond to the problem of diversity conflict and intolerance of society and youth, one of the public universities (PTU) in Malang, the University of Merdeka(UNMER) has innovated a strategy in the form of implementation of religious moderation in the learning curriculum. Some literature that examines religious moderation in the college environment tends to three things. First, the implementation of religious moderation is intensified in Islamic religious universities (PTKI) which are considered more feasible and qualified in terms of religion (Musyafak et al., 2021). Second, the lack of integrating the values of Islamic education with multicultural education, it makes many students have an anti-
democratic understanding and still question and doubt the basis of the state (Murtadlo, 2019). Third, prevention through preventive efforts is only focused on forming mutual respect, whereas other attitudes such as tolerance and socio-religious are also significance for students to have as their preparation in the real social life (Prihantoro, 2019). Moreover, so far, the college has only focused on the formation of the most basic attitude of respect so that students do not get involved in conflicts of differences in the campus environment but related to the formation of tolerant attitudes and deep socio-religious attitudes have not been studied considerable in research.

This paper responds to the high potential for conflict in the name of religion and intolerance in universities, especially in public university. Universities are expected to help prepare students to have a tolerant attitude and high socio-religious, so as they can face the cultural and religious realities that exist in society. It can be embodied through the implementation of religious moderation in intensifying socio-religious and tolerant attitudes in religion at the University of Merdeka Malang. Thus, it is formulated two questions, namely (1) How the understanding of religious moderation taught at UNMER Malang. (2) How is the process of implementing religious moderation in improving socio-religious attitudes and religious tolerance in UNMER Malang.

Both questions are based on several basic arguments including: First, there is a new trend of religious moderation activities that can be a solution to the rampant cases of diversity and intolerance that have occurred lately. Second, the importance of the implementation of religious moderation carried out in the environment of public universities in intensifying tolerant and socio-religious attitudes and fortifying the younger generation from the spread of intolerance cases.

B. METHOD

This research is a case study, which describes the process of implementing religious moderation to enhance appropriate socio-religious attitudes and religious tolerance at UNMER Malang. It employs a constant comparative and modified induction method. The research output can offer insightful ideas regarding the latest and actual of implementing religious moderation. Therefore, data collection techniques with in-depth interviews to the leaders, lectures, the students of UNMER Malang, observation, and documentation study considered most representative to find the data related to the focus of the current study. The data were analyzed through the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing as well as verification. Data validity is made through triangulation techniques, namely sources triangulation, techniques, and time.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Understanding Religious Moderation
   a. The Concept of Religious Moderation

The concept of religious moderation understood by lecturers of UNMER leads to the concept of tawassuth, and moderation is by taking a middle ground when determining or taking an action to deal with the differences that occur and more towards tolerance, especially in the scope of diversity. The concept is adopted from several experts, namely from al-Qardhawi in Abror who explained that wasathiyah or also called at-tawazun is an effort to maintain a balance between two opposite or opposite sides so that one does not dominate and affirm and degrade the other (Abror & Mhd., 2020). Shihab who revealed the religious moderation (wasathiyah) is not an attitude which is not firm in the face of something, not also an attitude that regulates individual affairs but the affairs of every group, society, and country (Mawaddatur Rahmah, 2020).

Furthermore, the concept is socialized to students through learning every day with the aim they appreciate and realize the differences and diversity in daily life, so that they
can live in a balanced manner, especially in the campus environment. Thus, religious moderation has a balanced definition in understanding religious teachings, and a balanced attitude that is consistently appreciated by still holding the principles of religious teachings and recognizing the existence of other parties. Therefore, the concept of religion taught by the lecturers of UNMER is in accordance with the concept of religious moderation that has been applied and understood by most experts, so there are no gaps and discrepancies upon conveying it to the students.

b. Principles of Religious Moderation Used
The process of implementing religious moderation in UNMER is guided by the rules made by the rector, namely the decree on structuring the burden of credits for basic compulsory subjects (MKWD) and deepening religion in the University of Merdeka Malang (Unmer, 2022). Thus, the implementation of religious moderation at UNMER is principled in strengthening the character of the nation, with the aim of realizing a generation of noble character, love for the homeland, defend the country, and be able to improve national identity.

Puspitasari revealed that defending the country is the attitude and actions of citizens based on a sense of love for the homeland, awareness of the nation and state, and the belief in Pancasila as the ideology of the nation and state (Puspitasari, 2021). The implementation principles of religious moderation in Islam are tawazun (balanced), tasamuh (tolerance), musawah (equality), syuro (deliberation). The spirit of the reliance in Pancasila instilled in students is in line with the vision of a moderate, tolerant, and egalitarian society, as well as rahmatan lil - 'alamin, no need to be an Islamic State. The principle of religious moderation in Indonesia is in accordance with the tenet of moderation in Islam. Therefore, the values of Pancasila are in line with moderate Islamic education (Priatmoko, 2018). Subaidi in Riyanti classifies the nation's cultural values derived from religion and Pancasila. Religious values reflect the religious nature of Indonesian society, social life, and the nation is rooted in religious thought and beliefs (Riyanti, 2022). Hence, the values of character education must be based on the values and rules of religion and Pancasila. It can be concluded that the principle of religious moderation in UNMER is more directed to the tenet of nationality.

c. Indicators of Religious Moderation
In general, around the UNMER environment, a student is judged be moderate if they can interact peacefully, communicate with other religions, cooperate regardless of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and coexist and blend in with friends of different cultures and religions.

Regarding tolerance indicators, (Rizkiyah & Istiani, 2021) revealed that tolerance is an attitude of respect, appreciation and acceptance of differences as a natural fact (sunnatullah), so that tolerance becomes a significant foundation in realizing the order of democratic society in Indonesia. It is one direction with the UNMER environment where students already have the awareness to always interact and communicate peacefully with other students regardless of religious or cultural background. In this stage, it also emerged mutual respect among others proved they blend in a variety of activities both in the classroom and on campus. Through the attitude of tolerance in relations between different religions in the campus environment UNMER able to realize the availability of mutual dialogue, working together between them in the context of social life (Rizkiyah & Istiani, 2021).

While the indicators of national commitment and accommodative to local culture is the most important indicator in realizing religious moderation in a multicultural and multi-religious environment, this indicator affects the mindset, behavior, actions, and diversity of
a person related to his loyalty to the basic consensus of nationality and willingness to accept a variety of local wisdom as part of natural law (Adha & Susanto, 2020). If it is viewed from perspective of the paradigm of prophetic Social Science (ISP) in embodying the attitude of religious moderation can be judged to be in line with the value of humanization and amar makruf (Rizkiyah & Istiani, 2021). This is because the national commitment contains the value of unity during the pluralistic social life of Indonesian society. The reality in the campus environment of UNMER has described they can work together regardless of ethnic and religious backgrounds and are able to coexist and blend in with friends of different cultures and religions. This condition illustrates the strong national commitment of UNMER Malang students.

Ultimately, the indicators of anti-violence and radicalism have a common point in the paradigmatic foundation of the value of liberation in an effort to eliminate all forms of evil actions and crimes that can harm harmony in social life (Rizkiyah & Istiani, 2021). The radicalism and violence itself is still the main scourge that haunts the lives of moderate students on campus (Hayati et al., 2021). The circumstance in UNMER Malang depicts the level of radicalism and violence among students is quite small compared to other public universities. It is evidenced by the absence of friction or conflict on behalf of the tribe, race or religion that occurred in the environment of UNMER campus during the last few years. Thus, it can be valued that the values of religious moderation have been applied in the UNMER student environment and show a moderate attitude among them. Unfortunately, they are personally more inclined to display a humanist attitude although ultimately this humanist attitude is what leads them to a truly moderate attitude.

d. The Function of Religious Moderation

Religious moderation at UNMER functions to maintain unity and integrity around the campus environment and to create a moderate attitude and mutual respect, so safe and comfortable learning atmosphere is achieved. It corresponds to what (Akhmadi, 2019) suggested that moderation attitude is fundamentally required in multicultural life to create multicultural understanding and respects for diversity, differences, and willingness to interact with everyone equally.

This condition shows that the attitude of unity and integrity around multicultural environment is highly prominent to grow as it will create mutual respect for different ethnicity, race, culture, and religion. Meanwhile, religious moderation plays as a creative effort to develop a religious attitude amid diverse constraints. The commitment of religious moderation to tolerance can be used as the best way to ward off religious radicalism that threatens religious life (Putra, 2020). Around the environment of UNMER Malang, moderation serves to create a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere and free from any kinds of conflicts.

2. Religious Moderation Implementation to Improve Socioreligious Attitudes and Religious Tolerance in Public Universities

a. Religious Moderation Implementation Planning

Religious moderation implementation requires careful planning to achieve the desired goals. Planning is a process of systematic thinking activities regarding what to carry out (the steps, methods, and the objects) and what to achieve, which are formulated rationally and logically and are oriented towards the future (Werdiningsih & Umah, 2022). It agrees with the opinion of Akhmadi (2019) that planning is one of the functions of the bureaucrats and instructors of religious moderation in an educational institution. They play a role by planning, organizing, and executing activities, as well as monitoring them for evaluation. Therefore, planning for religious moderation is vital. Meanwhile, the planning of religious moderation implementation at UNMER covers three stages: (1) Rector’s Decree
containing an appeal regarding Basic Mandatory Courses (BMC), (2) Coordination meetings administered by BMC lecturers, who are members of the Religious Studies Forum (RSF), (3) Preparation of Learning Plan for Religious Education I, Religious Education II, and Advanced Religious Education.

From the Rector's Decree regarding BMC, the course lecturers and RSF hold a coordination meeting on the implementation of religious moderation in BMC. The meeting also discusses about the provisions for achievements, steps, methods, and implementation to achieve the predetermined goals, mainly to instill a moderate attitude and tolerance among students. It is in line with the argument of (Werdiningisih & Umah, 2022) that planning must be carried out by people who understand the flow of the activities. The planning covers: 1) what to do, 2) who is in charge, 3) when, 4) where, 5) how, and 6) what is needed to achieve the goal optimally.

Therefore, it concludes that the religious moderation implementation in UNMER Malang is planned in appropriate stages. The planning stage considers rational, estimation, preparation, efficiency, effectiveness, and operational elements. Regarding religious moderation, all activities conducted by the academic team, including RSF, must reflect tolerance and moderate attitude.

b. Religious Moderation Implementation Strategy

Strategy is as important as planning. The effectiveness of religious moderation implementation process depends on the planning and strategies adopted. According to (Muhammad Nur Rofik, 2021), one of the strategies of religious moderation implementation at schools or other educational institutions is a concern on teacher professionalism upon delivering materials related to religious moderation. Besides, their skills of handling students’ problems concerning radicalism and of conveying religious moderation are also vital. Likewise, lecturers’ skills are the main weapons for the implementation of religious moderation around the campus environment.

Meanwhile, at UNMER, the strategy for the implementation of religious moderation is performed through the lecturer’s respective teaching actions in the daily learning process, from greeting, delivering an introduction (apperception), giving students the opportunity to convey their findings and learning (presentation), making discussions, questions, and answers, providing clarification, and drawing conclusions at the end. If we review further about the types of learning strategies, in general most UNMER lecturers do not tightly refer to a single strategy but a combination. During the presentation of a material regarding the relationship with non-Muslims, they might lead students to explore the existing contextual problems in the last few decades. It triggers them to think about the solution to the problem, which in this case is in line with the concept of PBL (Problem Based Learning) strategy (nauli josip mario Sinambela, 2013).

In other materials related to social life, the lecturers provide topic contextualization close to reality. It is a stimulus that encourages students to identify related problems and seek answers (solutions). Furthermore, at the end of the lesson, evidence (verification) is presented. It goes in accordance with the concept of discovery learning strategies which are set to be student oriented (Ana, 2019). Correspondingly, the concept of ‘delivery strategy’ is giving students opportunities to seek, understand, and find solutions to life’s problems independently. Lecturers play as mentors, caregivers, advisors, and facilitators and feedback givers (Sodikin, 2019).

Therefore, it concluded that every BMC lecturer at UNMER has their own strategy to implement a moderate attitude during learning. Every lecturer has the right to use any strategy, but in essence to instill and strengthen the moderate character of the students.
c. The Process of Religious Moderation Implementation

Religious moderation at UNMER is implemented in intra and extra activities. That in the intra activities are manifested by inserting the religious moderation values into Basic Mandatory Course (BMC), such as religious education I, religious education II, and Citizenship and Religious Studies. These courses are sustainable, and all students are required to follow all of them to get a PUAS letter as proof that they are ready to enter the community. Meanwhile, according to Sumarto, religious moderation in its implementation can be carried out through internal activities, such as integration with relevant courses. Furthermore, (Sumarto, 2021) divides 3 strategies of religious moderation implementation in education that we can apply in higher education, namely inserting moderation values into each course, promoting critical thinking and respecting the opinions of others, and conducting religious moderation training.

However, if we analyze further about the insertion of religious moderation values into the topics in the learning plan, we do not find an explicit topic that really discusses religious moderation at UNMER. The learning plan only displays a few general religious topics. Meanwhile, in addition to the insertion approach, there is also an inculcation approach in the form of instilling the religious moderation value directly in students. Therefore, religious moderation can be taught directly with the best practice moderation method (Islam, 2021), but it seems that it has not been found at UNMER Malang. In practice, the lecturers only provide material orally in class during learning. Maybe, there is a small part of the lecturer’s own strategy in teaching religious moderation. However, it is not clearly patented in the learning plan or other learning plans in practice.

Then, for the extra activities, the implementation is through religious student activity unit (UKM) fostered by the coordinator of lecturer of each religion at the University of Merdeka Malang. (Purwanto et al., 2019) revealed that internalizing moderation values could be made by (one of them) strengthening tutorial integration activities and fostering student activity units at the university. This activity can be used as a place to carry out best practices in addition to classroom learning activities because students will find a lot of experience through UKM.

It concluded that the implementation of religious moderation at UNMER Malang in general has referred to the guidelines and directions given by the Directorate General of Education, yet if it is specified further there are several points to note that the implementation of religious moderation should result in an activity by design. It explicitly contains topics of religious moderation. It has not been found in UNMER because the religious moderation is only implemented by insertion in a few courses, which do not even include explicit themes of religious moderation. In addition, there is also a need for best practices for students during internal learning activities, namely through lectures. Although some students can get it through UKM, not all students follow it. Therefore, to implement religious moderation effectively and comprehensively, we need to place it in the internal activities of lectures.

d. Evaluation of Religious Moderation Implementation

Evaluation is one of the stages to find out the results of the program that has been implemented. According to (Widoyoko, 2009), evaluation of learning programs prepared and implemented by teachers/educators should include an assessment of: (1) learning design, which covers developed competencies, selected learning strategies, and program content; (2) Implementation of learning programs or learning quality; and (3) results of learning programs.

Meanwhile, the reality proves that the evaluation process of religious moderation implementation at UNMER Malang is carried out in 2 ways, academically and non-
academically. The academic implementation goes in accordance with the above theory, which consists of written tests in the middle semester and final semester, and through lecturer monitoring in the classroom when students do discussions and checking student papers. It corresponds with the argument of (Widoyoko, 2009) that the learning design and the chosen strategy can be seen in the students’ responses upon understanding the materials presented. It is reflected in the arguments and the mindset of students when conducting discussions. Meanwhile, the implementation of the learning program can be seen through the results of the UTS and UAS, so significant results are obtained because it is carried out continuously. Learning evaluation should be carried out continuously and thoroughly to be effective and efficient so that educators get a complete picture of the learning process development and learning outcomes (Anwar, 2021).

Further, the non-academic evaluation is carried out by evaluating the real atmosphere of religious life around campus through joint forums, such as Religious Studies Forum (RSF) and Inter-religious Communication Forum (IRCF). According to (Widoyoko, 2009), the evaluation must involve the results of the learning program, so the religious moderation insertion in the courses can be seen from the attitude of students who reflect moderate attitudes, in not only the classroom but also the campus environment. With the creation of such an attitude, there has never been a conflict or friction in the name of religion and ethnicity among the academic community of UNMER Malang.

D. CONCLUSION

The understanding of religious moderation grown up at UNMER Malang leads more to the concept of tawassuth, taking the middle way once setting or taking an action to deal with differences and is more directed to a tolerant attitude. Meanwhile, religious moderation is implemented through 3 stages; (1) coordination meetings of lecturers in the religious study forum (RSA) to discuss lecture material, (2) Preparation of RPS or Rencana Pembelajaran Semester by including religious moderation material, (3) applying religious moderation. In each of these activities, religious values are inserted in the relevant courses even though they have not been explicitly packaged in the learning plans.

REFERENCE


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