



THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC COUNSELING IN THE FORMATION OF MODERATE RELIGION FOR TAMBORA PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe the role of Islamic extension in the formation of moderate religiosity for the people of Tambora. This qualitative study in the form of a video media observation study uses a descriptive approach. Indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia become the theory of analysis of the subject matter of the study. Research data were obtained through observation techniques. Meanwhile, the data were analyzed through the identification of main themes and main narratives presented in the video. This study concludes that there is a role of Islamic counseling in the dissemination of the value of forming moderate religiosity for the people of Tambora, such as the value of tolerance in conflict prevention, the religious value of an Islamic counselor, and the value of social concern for religion and culture around. The findings of this study confirm the strengthening of moderate Islamic religiosity can be internalized through the role of counseling in the community.

Keyword: Religion, Culture, Islamic, Extension, Tambora



A. Introduction

Issues related to religious diversity in society such as radicalism and intolerance are still major challenges in the life of religious communities. Through video content on Youtube entitled "Religion and Culture: Inclusive Stories from Tambora (Peduli Program)", there are three tribes, namely 70% of the majority of the population is Muslim, 25% is Hindu, and 5% is Christian. The main issue that became the starting point of the conflict was due to the geographical shape of the village in Tambora, which is located on the slopes of Mount Tambora. When the residents of Pancasila Hamlet, the majority of whom are Muslims, cleared the forest at the foot of Tambora for settlement expansion, they automatically began to use the spring for living purposes, which is located close to the temple complex used by Hindus for worship. Initially, the temple complex was reserved for Hindu employees by a company holding Forest Concession Rights (HPH). However, after the company was no longer in Tambora, the temple became abandoned and damaged.

The transmigration program in 1995 brought Hindus from Bali to the area near Tambora. They began to revive and rebuild the damaged Tambora Temple. In the second construction after the earthquake in 2007, this renovation and expansion led to conflict between Hindus and residents of Pancasila Hamlet, then triggered the radicalism of Muslims in the area near Tambora, namely Bima and Dompu. The conflict was compounded by the arbitrariness of the temple management in closing and pouring the springs with concrete, which caused the residents of Pancasila Hamlet to no longer be able to utilize the springs. This culminated in fears of pollution of the sanctity of the river water used by Muslim residents with Hindu worship services in the river, which in the end the temple management decided to close access to the water source. Muslims began to feel offended, which was then expressed by attacking Hindus.

Religious understanding and practice extremism, whether individuals or groups that have excessive and extreme religious understanding, thus exceeding the limits of the essence of religious teachings. This is often contrary to human values. The uniqueness of this inclusion also lies in how the role of religious and traditional leaders or counselors who work together to maintain harmony and overcome conflicts that may arise due to differences. Through this inclusion, Tambora people are not only able to maintain their local identity, but also enrich social life with universal human values.

Values such as respect for differences, anti-extremism attitudes, and efforts to build interfaith dialogue are integrated in the extension content to strengthen the spirit of unity and social integration. As was the case in Tambora, they lacked dialogue between religious representatives regarding the Muslims' displeasure in Pancasila Hamlet about the construction of concrete in the access to the spring, instead the Muslims decided to take violent steps against the Hindus. By

emphasizing the importance of reformism and conservatism, extension serves as a means to reduce prejudice and negative stereotypes between religious communities (Syahputra, 2024). With this approach, Islamic extension workers should educate religious people, especially Muslims, to apply moderate principles in every aspect of religious and social life, so as to create a more harmonious and sustainable society. On this basis, the initial argument fostered in this study mentions the role of Islamic instructors in conveying intolerance so that the dissatisfaction of religious communities is not vented by committing violence against people of different beliefs.

The purpose of this study is to describe the role of Islamic extension workers in the formation of moderate religiosity for the people of Tambora. The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to explore the values of religious moderation in the dynamics of Tambora community in accepting religious and cultural diversity (Muasmara et al., 2022). This approach involves media observation to gain a comprehensive understanding. In which the researcher will make careful observations of the content of the video, noting important points and issues discussed, as well as understanding the context and purpose of its delivery. The analysis technique applied is content analysis, which examines in detail the messages in the video and relates them to relevant concepts or theories. In this analysis, the researcher will identify the main themes and narratives presented in the video. Each theme is analyzed according to the approach used to reveal deeper meaning related to the purpose of the video. The results of this analysis are expected to provide new insights or strengthen understanding related to the topic raised, as well as explain its relevance in a broader context.

Previous research on intercultural tolerance in multicultural societies, especially in rural areas such as villages located on the slopes of this mountain tend to emphasize harmony and harmony where local residents are able to embrace differences in the role of local wisdom in maintaining diversity (Studies by Wahyuni and Fathurrahman). Meanwhile, the names of other researchers, Derry Ahmad Rizal and Akhmad Kharis, show that cultural and religious diversity, such as mutual cooperation and tolerance have become strong social glue in the multiethnic community in the village. Meanwhile, Muasmara R, et al used a qualitative descriptive approach in their research and aimed to explore the values of religious moderation in the dynamics of the Tambora community in accepting religious and cultural diversity involving direct interviews. Raising awareness in intercultural communication in multicultural communities by carrying out their respective religious rituals without disturbing the comfort of other religious rituals is indispensable in every interfaith life.

The distinctive aspect of this study focuses on finding out about the role of Islamic instructors by explaining moderate values to religious communities around Tambora. This study is expected to be the main parameter in religious moderation for all religious communities in Indonesia. In its understanding, this study can criticize the bad habits or inadequacies of the roles of religious instructors and religious leaders in Indonesia. In addition, this study is expected to change the behavior that initially received criticism from the religious community in Indonesia itself who saw religious instructors from various religions practicing intolerance of religious activities of other religions. Therefore, this study must be conducted.

B. Indicators of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

This study uses a theoretical framework of religious moderation consisting of four main indicators, namely national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation to local culture. These indicators were chosen because they are relevant to the context of the diversity of Indonesian society and can be used as a basis for analyzing moderate religious practices. Moreover, the role of religious instructors is a major contributing factor in teaching and learning moderate behavior in society.

First, national commitment. This indicator is a tangible manifestation of awareness of the importance of maintaining national unity and integrity amidst the diversity that exists in Indonesia. National commitment involves a sense of love for the homeland, loyalty to the country, and respect for state symbols and applicable laws. In the context of religious moderation, national commitment means that every citizen regardless of religious and cultural background has the responsibility to defend national values and maintain the stability of the country. This is important to avoid potential conflicts that can disrupt community harmony. In addition, national commitment also means supporting national development efforts that include the values of Pancasila and Unity in Diversity. In this case, national commitment can increase a sense of unity amidst differences, strengthen national identity, and form an inclusive and tolerant society. This attitude encourages individuals to put the interests of the nation above personal or group interests, so that religious moderation can go hand in hand with efforts to maintain national unity (Haloho et al., 2024).

Second, tolerance. This indicator is key in realizing religious moderation. Tolerance in the context of the diversity of Indonesian society means mutual respect and appreciation of differences in religious beliefs and practices. The existence of tolerance in religious moderation plays an important role in maintaining harmony between religious and cultural communities. Like the tolerance practiced by the people of Kampung Muslim, Tambora shows how religious values can coexist with local wisdom in fostering harmonious social

relations. This tolerant attitude allows for intercultural dialogue space, where Islamic values are adapted to the local context, without causing conflict or tension. With tolerance, people are able to maintain mutual respect, so that diversity is seen as a common wealth that strengthens social cohesion (Abror, 2020).

Third, non-violence. This indicator is a form of behavior that does not disturb the peace of other people or followers of other religions. Because there is no religious teaching that allows people to commit violence in any form. Likewise, Islam, which has teachings about peace between religious communities, is a common hope. Islam as a *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* religion emphasizes the importance of peace and security in the world. Islam rejects all forms of violence and teaches to always try to solve problems peacefully (Arina Alfiani & Ernah Dwi Cahyati, 2023). The concept of non-violence in Islam includes not only physical violence, but also verbal and psychological violence. In the Islamic perspective, violence harms not only its victims but also society and has a negative impact on the individuals who commit such violence. Therefore, Islam emphasizes the importance of fighting violence and always trying to solve problems peacefully through movements. Anti-violence movements in Islamic societies are often supported by activist groups, social institutions and individuals concerned about the welfare of society.

Fourth, accommodating local culture. This indicator emphasizes how religious values and local cultural traditions can integrate with each other to create social harmony in a plural society. Research in Kampung Muslim, Tambora illustrates how the local community manages diversity through an approach that combines Islamic teachings with local wisdom. In this case, the role of Islamic counseling becomes important to strengthen tolerance and cooperation across cultures and religions, and maintain social harmony. Religious values are translated into a social context that suits local traditions and customs, creating a space for dialogue between religious modernity and traditional cultural practices, thus promoting social cohesion and mutual respect. Thus, this accommodative approach not only preserves local traditions but also strengthens the role of religion as a system that fosters harmonious social life in a multicultural society.

Elaboration related to the four indicators above can be concluded, that there is success in designing various indicators, both as parameters and approaches from the government itself or citizens related to how the depiction of moderate religious life in order to live in the country of Indonesia by the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In this study, the four indicators above are used as a theory of analysis that will be used as "glasses" to recognize and examine the moderate value of religion that forms awareness of the importance of tolerance and mutual respect among Tambora people from different religious and cultural backgrounds (Ismail, 2017).

C. The Urgency of Moderate Religion for the Social Life of Muslims

The urgency of religious moderation is increasingly apparent when religious adherents so lightly label other religious adherents as atheists, agnostics, secularists, kafirs, heretics, and many more. A moderate person will consider or not intend to unleash verbal violence on those outside of our faith. Religion based on moderation will make room for a spiritual journey that is difficult to get entangled in superficial thinking. In particular, a moderate religion can also develop a person's ingenuity and independence to be more responsible when realizing religious teachings in the pluralistic reality of life among the social life of Muslims and other adherents.

Each religious believer has their own experiences and teachings, with full awareness that they do not justify each other's religions. For people who are moderate will respect other religions, this is because each religion has different teachings and special characteristics that distinguish it from other religions. The existence of differences between religions that do not prioritize religious identity, interact as a whole, and do not activate religious symbols means respecting these differences. Thus, harmony or tolerance between religious communities will be achieved if interactions between religious communities do not harm each other.

All religions must implement and outline two patterns of relationships, namely horizontal relationships and vertical relationships so that their adherents can realize goodness. Horizontal relations or patterns of relationships with the surrounding community, both social forms such as cooperation and individual patterns with individuals to establish a closer sense of brotherhood, or different relationships with other people of different races, cultures, or religions. Conversely, the vertical relationship, which is the relationship between man and his creator, is realized through daily worship as described in each religion (Hikmah & Chudzaifah, 2022).

As a form of attitude in responding to differences, tolerance is the main foundation in a democratic system, because democracy can only function when someone is able to hold back and accept other people's views. Therefore, the level of democratic maturity of a nation can be measured by its level of tolerance. The higher the tolerance for differences, the more democratic the nation is, and vice versa. Tolerance is not only related to religious beliefs, but also includes differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, and others.

The main focus is on religious tolerance, that is, inter- and intra-religious tolerance, both in social and political contexts. This does not mean that tolerance beyond religious issues is not important, but this book focuses on religious moderation with religious tolerance at its center. Through inter-religious interaction, we can see attitudes towards people of other religions, openness to dialogue, cooperation, the establishment of places of worship, and experiences in dealing with people of different religions. Intra-religious tolerance is useful for

dealing with minority sects that are considered deviant from the mainstream of the religion.

Meanwhile, radicalism in the context of religious moderation is defined as an ideology or understanding that seeks to change social and political systems by means of violence or extremism in the name of religion, whether verbal, physical or mental violence. The essence of radicalism is the actions or attitudes of individuals or groups that use violence to achieve the desired change. Radical groups generally want rapid and drastic changes, and are against the existing social order. Radicalism is often associated with terrorism, as radical groups will do everything they can to terrorize those with different views. Although often associated with certain religions, radicalism is not limited to one religion, but can arise in all religions (Saifuddin, 2019).

In the Islamic perspective, efforts to create peace also serve to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. Muslims and believers are brothers, as explained in the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 10. On this basis, peace efforts contribute to maintaining and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood. However, differences are often a trigger for conflict, where people tend to accept only their own group and ignore or denigrate those considered different. In Islam, there are teachings that emphasize values to strengthen the sense of brotherhood, such as karamah insaniyah (respect for human dignity), ta'awun insani (mutual help), tasamuh (tolerance), hurriyyah (freedom), fadhilah (goodness), 'is (justice), al-mu'amalah bil misli (equal treatment), wafa' bil 'ahdi (keeping promises), and mawaddah (love).

Another benefit of peace efforts from an Islamic perspective is to uphold justice. Conflicts and wars only benefit certain parties with vested interests, while civilians are often victimized and marginalized. Wars also destroy property and take lives. Thus, it is clear that there is injustice in people's lives. Therefore, it is important to continue to strive for peace, because only through peace can justice be served.

D. Strengthening Moderate Islamic Religion in Extension Content

According to Mr. Wibowo Prasetyo (special staff of the Minister of Religious Affairs for Media and Communication) in his presentation on the Development of Religious Moderation for Religious Counselors in the Digital Age in Blora, he said that strengthening a moderate religion must be done synergistically. The academic community of the PTKIN campus can work together with extension workers through the Moderation House. The delivery of peaceful and tolerant religious messages from the locomotive of the religious moderation movement is due to effective synergy, this is very relevant to be used as a counter-narrative forum for rigid religious understanding. The dissemination of religious moderation can reach a wider community and especially the millennial generation by utilizing the digital

space of information technology. The key that dominates religious narratives is the struggle for digital space, namely social media (Khoeron, 2022).

1. The Role of Tolerance Value as Mediation in Conflict Prevention

Tolerance is often considered essential to prevent conflict. However, many issues prevent it from being applied in a multicultural society, such as different opinions on what tolerance is. Tolerance is considered by some groups as a passive attitude that abandons religious principles, thus causing resistance. In addition, tolerance is sometimes regarded as mere rhetoric without any real use which causes conflicts to continue to arise due to a lack of genuine understanding and respect for each other. Tolerance is defined as an active effort to understand differences without compromising personal principles and allowing equal group discussion, thus helping to prevent conflict. It is crucial to teach the values of tolerance to every member of society, from families to formal institutions. With the aim of eliminating negative biases and stereotypes, tolerance can be a strong foundation for building social cohesion and preventing conflict (Subagyo, 2020).

In terms of religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue, religious leaders have a significant role in fostering morals, which is a strategic step to create harmony and resolve conflicts in society. Religious leaders also play a role in encouraging positive religious behavior and maintaining social harmony. They can utilize interfaith dialogue to spread a deeper understanding of the importance of tolerance, by overcoming misunderstandings, and emphasizes the values of equality in the midst of differences in beliefs (Malau, 2023). The uniqueness of interfaith dialog lies in its role as an effective means of mediation and communication to prevent conflict between religions. It creates mutual respect and strengthens harmony in society. The sub-findings of this research show that information disclosure through tolerance-based dialog is able to build more harmonious relationships between religious groups. This theory emphasizes that activities that support social order, such as fostering tolerance and interfaith dialogue, are the main factors in creating a harmonious society. Important parts of the social system, such as values, norms and socialization processes play a role in supporting peaceful and sustainable community integration (Gus, 2018).

Tolerance is essential for overcoming and preventing conflict in a pluralistic society. Tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect for differences, including differences in religion, race, culture or worldview that can help reduce the likelihood of tension between groups. In conflict prevention, tolerance serves as a tool to build trust between different parties, resulting in more harmonious relationships and reducing the risk of misunderstandings that can lead to violence. Tolerance helps prevent conflict and promotes peaceful resolution by allowing everyone to understand each other and compromise for the common good.

Etymologically, the term mediation comes from the Latin “mediare” which literally means “to be in the middle.” This meaning directly refers to the role played by a third party known as a mediator in the mediation process. As a mediator, the third party is tasked with taking a neutral position to mediate and help resolve the dispute between the disputing parties. The meaning of “being in the middle” also implies that a mediator must be able to maintain a balance by not favoring one of the parties, and must demonstrate neutrality consistently throughout the dispute resolution process. This neutral and impartial attitude is very important so that the mediator can maintain and protect the interests of both parties to the dispute fairly and equally. Thus, the mediator is expected to be able to create a sense of trust from both parties which is an important basis in efforts to resolve disputes peacefully and satisfactorily for all parties involved (Syahrizal Abbas, 2009).

In the context of religious tolerance, there are two different types: passive religious tolerance and active religious tolerance. Passive religious tolerance means accepting religious diversity as a reality without involving oneself further. In terms of religious tolerance and interfaith dialog, religious leaders have a significant role in fostering morals, which is a strategic step to create harmony and resolve conflicts in society. Tolerance is very important to overcome and prevent conflict in a pluralistic society. Tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect for differences, including differences in religion, race, culture, or outlook on life that can help reduce the possibility of tension between groups.

2. The Role of Religious Values of an Islamic Extension Worker as a Model of Islamic Personality

The religious condition of the people on the slopes of the mountain varies, depending on the geographical location and local culture. Generally, the slope communities on Mount Tambora have religious practices related to mountain life, such as rituals or Pujawali Pura Udaya Parwata Tambora whose purpose is to invoke Tirta Suci (holy water) from the top of the mountain as a symbolic request for natural peace and prosperity for the entire Hindu universe. The role of religious educators in increasing the religious value of the community is to understand the rules required in the educator's self-belief first. Then, only then can an instructor learn about other religions. Especially for Muslim religious instructors, they must understand and practice the rules that are commanded and prohibited by Allah.

Islamic instructors must have an attractive personality, as well as a high sense of dedication in their duties. Likewise, human values are very important as an Islamic instructor carries out his concern for religious communities despite different beliefs. An instructor who is moderate with religious diversity will be seen as a person who has a high sense of love for peace, knowing in depth about other religions that will not undermine the faith while having a strong grip on faith.

A great scholar, Ibn Al-Muqaffa, pointed out the role of an effective instructor, namely, whoever wants to become an imam whose soul is upright and become an imam in society, then he must start educating himself by straightening his own behavior and speech first. Educating others through behavior will be more successful than educating with the tongue. Educating oneself is more deserving of honor and virtue than educating others.

There are at least four tasks assigned to Islamic extension workers, including providing religious guidance, namely activities related to religious knowledge. In the case of Tambora, Muslims in Pancasila Hamlet should be given knowledge to be patient and not arbitrarily commit violence against other religions, because that will be the point of other religions' perspective on Islam to be bad. In addition, extension workers provide religious counseling to the Islamic community. Not only in matters of worship, the community also needs knowledge that is often a mistake. For example, Muslim residents in Pancasila Hamlet are confused about solving the problem of water sources that are used as places of worship by Hindus, because the river is often used as water for ablution by Muslim residents. Extension workers should be able to find solutions related to the problems that occur.

In addition, extension workers should participate in development with religion. Extension workers should syncretize development programs. For example, upholding human rights by expressing community dissatisfaction with the actions of Hindus who block water sources to perform rituals. The submission should be reinforced with solid arguments. And finally, extension workers provide religious counseling or direction, namely by providing solutions to problems that arise using alternative solutions based on religious values and norms (Chiko Aldi Julianto, 2024). In conclusion, a counselor who has religious values and understands social values will provide good guidance and examples, not only to fellow Muslims, but also to people of different religions.

In conclusion, an Islamic instructor is someone who has an important role in improving the religiosity of people on the mountainside. There are several methods that can be implemented by extension workers so that the community begins to know and explore more about Islam and how to moderate with non-Muslim communities (Khomsati & Darmaningrum, 2023).

3. The Role of the Value of Social Concern About Neighboring Religions and Cultures as a Peace Measure

The reality is that the value of social care can sometimes exacerbate conflict between religious and cultural groups. An overly idealistic or even paternalistic view of other groups often creates a sense of superiority and inequality, even though social care aims to create peace. Stereotypes or misunderstandings stemming from ignorance hinder efforts to understand and care for other groups.

Therefore, the value of social care can be a good step. However, to avoid conflicts between groups, its implementation should be done with a more critical and sensitive approach to the social context (Iqbal, 2014).

The value of social care is a value based on attitudes and behaviors that are attentive and compassionate to the conditions in their social environment and provide assistance to anyone in need. This is a form of implementation of human awareness as social beings who cannot live alone. Humans need other people to fulfill their needs so that there is interdependence between one individual and another. As a social being, of course, humans will feel the suffering and difficulties of others so that there is a desire to provide help and assistance to people in difficulty (Devis Sapittri, 2021).

The interaction between religious values and local culture can create stronger communities. Where religion functions as a social glue that can foster solidarity and create peace, and can help individuals understand the importance of caring for others. Thus, strengthening the value of social care through religious and cultural activities is an effective strategy to build a more peaceful and civilized society. In addition, the complexity in society continues to grow over time. However, the dynamics that occur often do not meet the expectations that exist in the context of sovereignty and welfare for people who pay less attention to development policies. Therefore, the sovereignty of a nation can reflect the hope to develop towards progress and prosperity. Which the community must play an active role in realizing these expectations. This is also emphasized by Riyanto and Kawalenko, who state that the community has a crucial role in achieving national welfare.

The character of social care can be interpreted as attitudes and actions that show concern for the needs and welfare of others and the surrounding environment. Some indicators of the character of social care include: (1) Desire to help those in need, (2) Sensitivity to the feelings of others, (3) Respect for the work of others, (4) Love for humans and other living things, (5) Avoid hurting other people's feelings, (6) Treat others politely, (7) Tolerance of differences, (8) Not taking advantage of others, (9) Ability to work together, (10) Peaceful in dealing with problems. The character of social care can be learned and improved through various media such as movies, religious education, and social activities. By having a good social care character, people can support each other and build a more harmonious environment (Rizki Muhammad Ramdhan et al., 2023).

The conclusion is that if someone cares about their surroundings, their social environment will definitely be wide and automatically no conflicts or major problems will occur. Social care is not about interfering in other people's business, but rather about helping to solve problems faced by others with the aim of kindness and peace. Our study is in line with the words of Riyanto and Kawalenko, that society has a crucial role in achieving the welfare of the nation. What this

means is that someone who has the value of social concern is bound to achieve peace in religious moderation.

E. Conclusion

Referring to the subject matter of this research, it is concluded that the role of Islamic counseling in Tambora society is very significant in managing religious and cultural diversity and preventing conflicts due to differences in beliefs. First, the value of national commitment in creating social harmony. This can be seen from the extension efforts that instill a sense of love for the country and respect for diversity as part of the national identity. Second, the value of tolerance in building mutual respect between religious communities. This is reflected in the emphasis on interfaith dialog that aims to reduce prejudice and negative stereotypes, and encourage inclusive attitudes in social life. Third, the value of non-violence in resolving religious conflicts. This value is realized through counseling that educates the public about the importance of a peaceful approach in addressing differences. Fourth, the value of accommodation to local culture in the formation of a moderate personality. This can be seen from the integration of local traditions and customs in the Islamic extension program, thus reflecting respect for local wisdom.

The theoretical implications of the findings of this study suggest that religious moderation can be internalized through Islamic extension activities, especially in the context of a multicultural society like Indonesia. The limitations of this study are the narrow geographical coverage and limited research population, so the results may not fully represent the broader context of society. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve more diverse communities and utilize quantitative methods to strengthen the qualitative findings. In addition, it is important to develop extension programs that are more adaptive and responsive to community needs in order to promote more effective and inclusive interfaith dialogue.

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