

LIMITATION FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXCESSIVE RELIGIOUS MODERATION

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ABSTRACT

Religious moderation is urgent to be implemented in Indonesia because Indonesia is a diverse country in unity. However, the fact is that there are practices of excessive religious moderation that tend to be extreme. So to restore the meaning of religious moderation that Wasathiyyah is in the middle as mandated by Allah SWT. in the Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, it is necessary to limit the practice of religious moderation. So we need a concrete solution to this problem. So this research has several objectives: (1) Describe excessive religious moderation practices, (2) Analyze efforts to limit excessive religious moderation practices. This research is a type of qualitative research. So the research method used is a normative approach that collects data using literature studies from some of the literature used. The results and discussion of this study is that the excessive practice of religious moderation is the intention of carrying out religious practices with the aim of moderation not being strict but too loose so that it tends to give rise to a new pole of liberal extremism that leads to polytheism. For example, General "D"'s controversial statement and Gus Samsudin's medical practices. The efforts to limit the practice of excessive religious moderation are carried out by studying and understanding the 4 (four) indicators or limitations of religious moderation by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, namely a strong national commitment, being tolerant properly, being non-violent, and accommodating to local culture. So that the practice of religious moderation can be carried out properly and not excessively, which tends to be extreme. Finally, it is necessary to reformulate the proper practice of religious moderation by the guidance of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. So that new extreme poles that are radical or liberal do not arise.

Keywords: Religious moderation

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is urgent and important to be carried out and implemented in Indonesia because Indonesia is a very diverse or plural nation with various ethnicities, languages, cultures, and religions so extreme religious ways that not emerge (Chudzaifah & Hikmah, 2022). Even though most Indonesian people are Muslims, religious moderation must still be applied both in interreligious life and in life among fellow Muslims who have various interpretations of Islam. So that Indonesian society remains one unit and not divided.

Based on the perspective of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, moderation is important to implement in Indonesia. First, to restore religious practices so that they are following their essence, which functions to maintain human dignity without any elements of coercion and violence. Then the second is to protect human civilization so that it doesn't become extinct due to conflicts with a religious background. And the third is as a cultural strategy for the community to care for the integrity and unity of Indonesia (Indonesia, 2019).

Moderation in English comes from the word 'moderation', which means promoting balance in terms of beliefs, morals, and character when treating other people as individuals and dealing with state institutions. Meanwhile, moderation in Arabic comes from the word *wasathiyah* which means choosing a middle-ground position between various extreme choices (Indonesia, 2019). So that religious moderation is a middle way amid the diversity of religions or *madzhab* in Indonesia by promoting tolerance in differences and openness to accept diversity (Akhmadi, 2019).

On the other hand, it is basically Allah Swt. and the Prophet Muhammad saw. has forbidden humans to do any excessive deeds. Excessive or extremist attitudes mean actions or actions that cross the line or, in Shari'a terminology, can also be called *ghuluw* attitudes. In the Qur'an itself, the extreme attitude or *ghuluw* has been mentioned in Surah Al-Maidah verse 77, which Ibn Kathir interprets that the *ghuluw* attitude that hit the community was mainly in matters of faith (Afroni, 2016). Then it is strengthened again that Allah Swt. actually has made humans as *ummatan wasathan* as in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 (Budiono, 2021).

But sadly, the Indonesian people have not implemented the implementation or application of religious moderation. Based on research by the Ministry of Religion's Research and Development Agency and Education and Training regarding the Dynamics of Religious Moderation in Indonesia, from 6 cities where the research was conducted, there were still two cities or around 33% of the people that had not implemented religious moderation properly and tended to be excessive or extreme. Like the persecution of the Shia and Ahmadiyah communities in Makassar (Fitriyana, et al.,

2020). Things like this are not under the 4 (four) principles and limitations of religious moderation as issued by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, namely national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation of local culture (Indonesia, 2019).

Based on these problems, it is urgent and important to research the limitations of excessive religious moderation practices. So this research has several objectives aims, namely to: (1) describe excessive religious moderation practices, (2) analyze efforts to limit excessive religious moderation practices.

2) METHODS

As for this research is a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research produces descriptive data about people through written or spoken words and observed behavior (Salim & Syahrum, 2012). Then this study also used a research method with a normative approach. Normative research studies documents in written regulations or other written literature, so it can also be said to be library research (Muhaimin, 2020). In this study, the objects of study were Islamic texts from the Qur'an and the book Moderation of Religion by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia as the primary sources, as well as various other supporting literature such as journal articles and official websites. So that from these various data sources, valid data and information can be obtained regarding excessive religious moderation practices and their limitations on them.

The main theory used as an analytical knife in this study is 4 (four) indicators or limits on the practice of religious moderation issued by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. The choice of this theory is based on two reasons, namely formal and material reasons. The formal reason is that religious moderation is currently an essential aspect of the "mantra" of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, as conveyed by the Minister of Religion at the 2019 national working meeting (Zakiyah, 2020). Then the material reason is that according to the Head of the Indonesian Religious Education and Religious Education Technical Staff, Imam Safe'i, that there is still a misunderstanding about the notion of religious moderation so that the importance of four indicators of religious moderation in society (Haq, 2022).

3) RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Practice of Excessive Religious Moderation

Moderation is taken from Arabic, namely from the word *wasath* or *wasathiyyah* with the subject being a person named *wasith*. Etymologically it can be interpreted as fair, main, choice, best, balanced. Meanwhile, in terms of terminology, it is defined as a commendable characteristic that protects a person from extreme tendencies. This definition is then matched with the term from English moderation, which means moderate attitude and not an exaggeration with the subject of the moderator as a mediator or intermediary (Zamimah, 2018). Moderate attitudes or moderation in Islam can be classified into four areas: moderate in matters of faith, moderate in matters of worship, moderate in matters of moral character, and moderate in matters of tasyri' (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019).

Religion is related to human beliefs about supernatural powers manifested in various forms and activities with various symbols (Anwar, Manuputty, & Wahyuni, 2019). So being religious means adhering to or embracing religion as a system and principle of belief in God with devotional teachings and obligations related to that belief (Nurdin, 2021). Indonesia's "official" religious context is Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholic Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism (Gaspersz & Souisa, 2019).

Religious moderation is a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle always acts fairly, and is not extreme in religion, either the extreme right (radical) or the extreme left (liberal) (Indonesia, 2019). In Christianity, religious moderation is a perspective to mediate the extremities of the interpretation of Christian teachings understood by some of its adherents. In Catholicism, the term moderate is defined as an open attitude toward fundamentalists and traditionalists. In Hinduism, the important point of religious moderation is the moral attitude that maintains harmonious and affectionate relations between human beings. In Buddhism, religious moderation is seen from the Enlightenment of the Buddha, which comes from Sidharta Gautama with four prasetya. As well as in Confucianism, various moderation is known as *junzi*, which means having faith and being noble by looking at life with *yin yang*, which means a moderate attitude, not extreme (Sutrisno, 2019).

As for religious moderation, if it is understood in the context of Islam, namely *Wasatiyah* Islam or moderate Islam, namely Islam of the middle way that is far from violence, loves peace, tolerant,

maintains good noble values, accepts every action and renewal for the benefit. and accept every fatwa due to geographical, social and cultural conditions (Hasan, 2021). When referring to the Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, the following wasathan words are found:

"Similarly, We have made you (Muslims) a middle nation so that you may be witnesses of human (actions) and that the Prophet (Prophet Muhammad) may be witnesses of your (actions). We don't determine the Qiblah (Baitulmaqdis) to which you (formerly) oriented, except so that We know (in reality) who is following the Messenger and who is turning back. In fact (removing the Qiblah) is very heavy, except for those who have been guided by Allah. Allah will not waste your faith. Truly Allah is Most Gracious, Most Merciful to mankind."

Based on the interpretation of Prof. Quraish Shihab in his Tafsir Al-Misbah, Allah made Muslims as a people who are *wasathan*, namely moderate and exemplary, with a middle position that does not side with left or right so that they can be fair (Shihab, 2000). So every human being must try to apply moderation in his life as quoted in the verse. This is also in line with the words of the Prophet Muhammad. who encourages his people always to choose the middle way, which is believed to be the best way (Irama & Channa AW, 2021). As he said below which reads:

"The best of affairs is the middle way."

So it is clear and real that taking the middle way, not being too extreme right or too extreme left, is essential and urgent to be applied in the religious attitudes of Muslims. Religious moderation, the main issue, will eventually try to be rolled out. This is because various government regulations issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs have consistently carried out discourse mainstreaming movements and the implementation of religious moderation, according to which in addition to be consistently obedient in carrying out the religious teachings of their own, people shall respect other

religious groups. So, religious moderation is a middle ground in religious diversity in Indonesia (Irhami, Ruslan, & Syahputra, 2021).

However, the concept of religious moderation was criticized by the Ulama who are members of the Islamic Boarding School Communication Forum (FKPM), namely that Western-style moderation is unacceptable because it is not in accordance with Eastern culture and Islamic values, tends to be liberal, secular, and has an unacceptable meaning of tolerance. So indeed the implementation of religious moderation in Indonesia has not been fully implemented correctly. As was stated at the beginning of the article out of the six cities that were conducted in the study, there were still two cities or around 33% of the people, that had not implemented religious moderation properly and tended to be excessive or extreme. Like the persecution of the Shia and Ahmadiyah communities in Makassar (Fitriyana, et al., 2020). Then General "D"'s controversial statement in a podcast, namely saying "Tuhan bukan orang Arab" and Gus Samsudin's viral shamanic practices have also become a problem with excessive religious moderation in Indonesia. So that in the end, religious moderation, which is positioned in the middle, if applied excessively and easily, it tends to lead to a liberal attitude that belongs to the extreme left category and can even become a little shirk.

Limiting the Practice of Excessive Religious Moderation

Various practices of religious moderation that are not yet aligned or can be said to be excessive and tend to create new extreme poles must be given a solution so that it continues to be carried out properly. So the effort that can be done is through the limitation of excessive religious moderation practices. This limitation is based on 4 (four) indicators or limits on religious moderation issued by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture (Indonesia, 2019).

First, national commitment which is a person's perspective, attitude, and religious practice that has an impact on loyalty to the basic consensus of nationality, especially related to the acceptance of Pancasila as the state ideology, his attitude towards ideological challenges that are contrary to Pancasila, and nationalism(Indonesia, 2019). As the word of Allah Swt. in the Qur'an Surah Al-Qashash verse 85 as follows:

"Indeed, (Allah) who obliges you (Muhammad) to (implement the laws) of the Qur'an, will really return you to your place of return. Say (Muhammad), "My Lord knows those who bring guidance and those who are in clear error."

The explanation regarding the meaning of a strong national commitment or patriotic nationalism in the verse above is that Allah Swt. had promised to return the Prophet Muhammad saw. to where it came from. Precisely in the meaning of the word namely homeland. If you examine history, the question arises as to why Allah Swt. promised to return the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. to his homeland, namely in Makkah. This is true because of the love and commitment to nationality of the Prophet Muhammad. to his homeland, Mecca (Zemakhsyari & Fadlillah, 2018). So this is a strong foundation that indeed Islam does not have a homeland, but Muslims do have a homeland and must have a strong commitment to nationalism to love their homeland, as did the Prophet Muhammad (Azman, 2017).

When it is associated with the problems stated in the FKPM Forum in Tegalsari regarding the existence of Western-style religious moderation that is not following Eastern, Islamic and Indonesian culture (Admin, 2021). The limitation given, of course, is the application of national commitment in carrying out religious moderation. This means that practicing religious teachings is the same as carrying out obligations as citizens and vice versa so that it will automatically fend off various excessive religious moderation practices that tend to be liberal because of the Indonesian Pancasila ideology which is in harmony with Islamic values. (Indonesia, 2019).

Second, tolerance which is an attitude to give space and not interfere with the rights of other people to have beliefs, express beliefs, and convey opinions, even though this is different from what we believe(Indonesia, 2019). But tolerance also doesn't mean that it is obligatory to believe or do what other religious people believe and do because the context of tolerance is limited to appreciating and respecting. As the word of Allah SWT. in the Qur'an Surah Yunus verses 99-100 follows:

"And if your Lord had willed, everyone on earth would have believed entirely. But do you (want to) force people so that they become believers? And no one will believe except by Allah's permission, and Allah will punish those who do not understand."

When referring to Tafsir Al-Misbah by Professor Quraish Shihab that this verse implies that one's faith cannot be forced because Allah Swt. himself doesn't force someone to believe and no one believes except with the permission of Allah Swt (Huda, Amalia, & Utami, 2019). So that the interpretation of the verse leads humans to have the right attitude of tolerance and doesn't force other people to have faith like him. Likewise, tolerance should not be too excessive because tolerance is not liberating at will and requires rules and limitations in the concept (Rosyidi, 2019).

The problem that arises is the controversial statement of General "D" which states that "Tuhan bukan orang Arab" in the context of praying which is conveyed on Deddy Corbuzier's Podcast (Abdurrahman, 2021). So that the statement arose allegations of blasphemy. Basically his intention to state this was to realize religious moderation in the midst of Indonesia's diversity. According to the MUI Fatwa Commission KH Asrorun Niam, it is permissible to pray in each other's language except for the obligatory prayer in Arabic in *salat* (Fahlevi, 2022). So if it is analyzed that indeed the indicator of religious moderation in the form of tolerance must certainly be realized but must still be limited both in terms of words and deeds because these statements seem to tend towards the practice of polytheism, namely equating Allah Swt. as God like humans who have nations. This is where the importance of limiting tolerance so that true and appropriate religious moderation is realized.

Third, an attitude of non-violence means an attitude not to make changes to the social and political system by using violent or extreme means in the name of religion both verbal, physical and mental violence(Indonesia, 2019). The other definition of non-violence is anti-radicalism that means not agree with a stream that wants to exist changes to a condition or aspects in society fundamental to the roots (Nasrulloh, 2019). As Allah Swt. has said in the Qur'an Surah Al-Anbiya verse 107 as follows:

"And We did not send you, but to (be) a mercy to the worlds."

Based on the perspective of Tafsir Al Maraghi, this verse implies Islamic teachings brought by the Prophet Muhammad, it is a teaching that contains benefits both in this world and in the hereafter so that it rejects and avoids all existing forms of violence (Rubini, 2018). This verse is also a guideline for Muslims to have a moderate religion because the vision of Islam is full of peace, brotherhood and tolerance or not using violence (Jamaluddin, 2021).

Then look at the cases in the field, namely that there were attempts to persecute the Shia and Ahmadiyah communities in Makassar, which was supported by the local government, making this a form of excessive moderation in religion (Fitriyana, et al., 2020). In fact, several Islamic mass organizations are not in accordance with the understanding of Islam in Indonesia or you could say radical mass organizations. But of course the response to it must still be in the way of rahmatan lil 'aalamiin or with compassion and non-violence in accordance with religious moderation. The attitude of violence must of course be limited because violence and conflicts with religious backgrounds are a big threat to divide a nation(Nisa, 2021).

Fourth, an accommodative attitude towards local culture is willing to accept religious practices that accommodate local culture and local traditions (Indonesia, 2019). As one of the following *Qaidah* Assasiyah:

اَلْعَادَةُ مُحَكَّمَةٌ

Which means: "Customs are established as law (Azhari, 2015)."

The meaning of the gaidah is that custom and 'urf in the form of words or actions that are general or specific in nature can be used as a basis for establishing Islamic law when there are no detailed texts. Even Imam as-Suyuthi stated that many Islamic laws are based on this rule such as the age of puberty, determining the age of menstruation, the length of the period of purity and menstruation, the length of the postpartum period, and so on (Azhari, 2015).

The problem of the practice of excessive religious moderation is in the form of excessive accommodation towards local culture. As is the phenomenon of a shaman with a magic trick known as Gus Samsudin in Blitar. According to the Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) for Religious Affairs, KH Ahmad Fahrur Rozi, the public is urged not to easily believe in sorcerers like that and to forbid considering shamans to be like *kiai* (Triono, 2022). So it can be concluded that religious moderation is important to do with accommodation and a cultural approach to local wisdom with a note that it does not go beyond the boundaries of aqidah and sharia which actually leads to global cultural hegemony (Aksa, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is that religious moderation is an urgent and important religious practice in Indonesia which is full of diversity because it takes a peaceful middle way. However, in practice it is still not appropriate and even excessive and tends to go to extremes. So to overcome this, limitations on the practice of religious moderation are carried out based on 4 indicators of religious moderation issued by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, namely national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture. So that the practice of religious moderation can be carried out properly and not excessively which tends to be extreme. Finally, it is necessary to reformulate the proper practice of religious moderation in accordance with the guidance of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. So that new extreme poles that are radical or liberal do not arise.

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