

## Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools Against Strengthening Democracy in Tabagsel, North Sumatra

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### Abstract

Religious moderation is present as a solution for understanding the extreme right and extreme left, especially regarding the massive movement of radicalism which, if allowed to continue, will lead to acts of terrorism. For this reason, it is necessary to carry out Focus Group Discussions which aim to have mutual dialogue and exchange of ideas between service teams and teaching staff at Islamic boarding schools so that educators become pioneers and partners of the government in spreading the notion of religious moderation. This service was carried out by two Islamic boarding schools in TABAGSEL, namely the Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School and the Mustafawiyah Mandailing Natal Islamic Boarding School. This service uses the PAR method with steps; Conducting a needs analysis for understanding moderation for teaching staff, namely Ustadz/Ustadzah at the Musthofawiyah Islamic Boarding School in Mandailing Natal district and Al-Anshor Islamic Boarding School in Padang Sidempuan City, by conducting Focus Group Discussions with STAIN Mandailing Natal lecturers. The purpose of carrying out this FGD is to find out the understanding of Ustadz/Ustadzah regarding religious moderation. Form participants and engage in mentoring that presents resource persons as sources of information. The results that can be received after carrying out the FGD are that the Ustadz/Ustadzah have often heard the word religious moderation. It's just that they don't know clearly about religious moderation in depth. The implementation of this community service was highly appreciated by both the FGD participants as well as the principals and foundations because it was considered to broaden the horizons of the teaching staff at the pesantren.

**Keywords:** Religious Moderation, Islamic Boarding School, Ustadz/Ustadzah

### INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is a new sub-theme that is constantly echoed by the Ministry of Religion through formal and informal institutions under the auspices of the Government. Religious moderation itself is present as a solution in handling radicalism and anti-democratic ideas. Because in religious moderation there are 7 indicators that can be used as a reference for religious behavior, namely: tolerance, national commitment, accommodating to local culture, non-violence, openness, and dialogue.

Religious openness and multiculturalism in Indonesia require a standard concept that regulates techniques to achieve harmony and peace for all adherents of religions. For this reason, religious moderation is presented to realize these ideals in order to eliminate extremism, radicalism, terrorism, and acts of violence originating from religious fanaticism.

The issue of radicalism that led to terrorism only appeared in Indonesia in 1998. North Sumatra itself has several records of terrorism that have occurred, including; Suicide bombing attempt at the church of St. Joseph in the area of dr. Mansyur Medan on August 28, 2016, in Sibolga there was a suicide bombing on March 12, 2019, the perpetrator named Abu Hamzah who is affiliated with JAD and ISIS, on November 13 2019 there was a suicide bombing carried out by a man with the initials RMN aged 24 which occurred in It is suspected that the Medan Police Headquarters is still in the same stream as Abu Hamzah The affiliation of the suicide bombers is synonymous with radicalism and tends to be anti-democratic.

The dissemination of ideas like this still exists even though the movement is massive. In 2016 there were 773 thousand websites that had been blocked by the Ministry of Communication and

Information whose contents were about the spread of radicalism. And of course, the main target and target is teenagers because teenagers are the highest consumers using the internet. The process used is very subtle, one of which is by using photographs or narratives originating from religion and politics so as to trigger attention and enthusiasm from teenagers. 3 Data obtained by the BNPT in 2017 shows that 52% of terrorists in prisons were in their teens and even some of them served as bomb makers Based on the above facts, a very serious attitude is needed in tackling the spread of radicalism that leads to terrorism.

The BNPT has launched a pattern of developing a pentahelix which in its application involves many government and community groups and relations in its application include religious leaders, traditional leaders, educational leaders, women leaders, media figures including academics and institutions. 5 One of them is Islamic boarding schools because the students in Islamic boarding schools the average age is in their teens, and this age is very vulnerable and becomes the target for the spread of radicalism.

Synergy in strengthening democracy and eradicating radicalism needs to include elements of religious moderation which contains four national consensuses namely; NKRI, Pancasila, UUD 1945, and Unity in Diversity. 6 Of course this is an important issue that must be handled very seriously and is a joint task for the community so that acts of radicalism can be quickly prevented so that it cannot spread widely. This prevention also requires contributions from several circles as well as Islamic boarding schools.

Islamic boarding schools that are considered to represent the religious style of Islamic boarding schools in the southern part of Tapanuli, namely the al-Anshor Islamic boarding school (Kota Padang sidimpuan) and the musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school (Mandailing Natal Regency). The example of Islamic boarding schools can be used as a source of analysis, to what extent Islamic boarding schools can have a good influence on the progress of Islam in instilling religious moderation and strengthening democracy which can be applied to these two Islamic boarding schools.

That is why it is necessary to hold intensive dialogue and focus group discussions so that there is an exchange of information and up-to-date data that can be of benefit to the Kyai and leaders at the al-Anshor Islamic boarding school (Kota Padang sidimpuan) and the musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school (Mandailing Natal District). These preventive actions are required to be able to instill awareness of the dangers of radicalism and foster a sense of love for the motherland as an early prevention effort from the development of the virus of radicalism, and this understanding can be transmitted to students at Islamic boarding schools.

#### **Purpose of Service**

- To help contribute to the Kyai and Ustadz in instilling the values of religious moderation for the students/women at the Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School and Musthafawiyah Panyabungan.
- Providing efforts and actions from Kyai and Ustadz in preventing the development of radicalism for the santi/wati at the Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School and Musthafawiyah Panyabungan.
- To apply nationalism to students in daily life at Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School.

#### **METHOD**

The method used in this service is PAR. The steps used in this method are; 1) Conduct a needs analysis on understanding moderation for Leaders, Kyai and Ustadz at the Musthofawiyah Islamic Boarding School in Mandailing Natal district and Al-Anshor Islamic Boarding School in Padang Sidempuan City, by conducting Focus Group Discussions with STAIN Mandailing Natal lecturers. This activity was carried out to: 1) Find out how far the leaders, Kyai and Ustadz of the Islamic boarding school understood the moderation of religion, FGDs were carried out intensively with the Kyai and Ustadz; 2) Form participants who are involved in mentoring. The service team involved is STAIN Mandailing Natal as a facilitator and resource person regarding

Religious Moderation; 3) Carry out mentoring activities for leaders, Kyai and Islamic boarding school Ustadz to provide an understanding of religious moderation; 4) Joint discussion and reflection on ongoing activities. This activity was carried out to further explore and understand the wishes and complaints of the leadership and Islamic boarding school teachers with service teams related to religious moderation; 5) Determine the follow-up direction of the service program that has been implemented.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **In Boarding School Mustafawiyah, Mandailing Natal**

The FGD at the Mustafawiyah Islamic boarding school was held on December 6, 2022, and was attended by 17 participants from the 20 invitations that have been attached. The community service implementing committee is Susanti Hasibuan MA. Hum as head of the service team, Zulfina M.Pd as Member, Yeny Batubara as Moderator, Irwan Effendi Hasibuan as student and organizing committee, Elismayanti Rambe M. Kom.I was the first resource person and Fadhlán Masykura was the second resource person. The event was held from 8 to 12 as the first session which was filled in by the first speaker, Elismayanti Rambe M. kom. I wish the theme "Strengthening Religious Moderation in Islamic Education Environment.

The material in this theme discusses the definition of religious moderation, the pillars of religious moderation, 4 state consensuses, the internalization of the understanding of religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools, and the contribution of Islamic boarding schools as government partners to prevent the spread of radicalization. The second session was held at 13.00 noon with guest speaker Fadlan Masykura who brought the theme "Understanding the Meaning of Religious Moderation and the Map of Radicalism in Indonesia. This theme explains what radicalism is, a map of radicalization in Indonesia, the identification of the extreme right and the extreme left, religious moderation as a solution to the notion of radicalism, and the contribution of Islamic boarding schools in preventing radicalization.

The initial event began with the delivery of remarks delivered by Susanti Hasibuan as the Head of Service. In her remarks, Susanti stated that "the purpose of implementing the community service at that time was as a form of implementing the Tridharma of Higher Education which consisted of teaching, researching and serving. This community service implementation event is funded by the Center for Research and Development of the Ministry of Religion, Litapdimas for the 2022 budget, with the hope that after the FGD is carried out it will add insight to Ustadz and Ustadzah educators. In addition, the Mustawaiyah Mandailing Natal Tabagsel Islamic boarding school will become a government partner in instilling the understanding of religious moderation for students and the community. After the service leader finished giving his opening remarks, the moderator gave directions to the committee to distribute the pre-test to all FGD participants.

The pre-test was filled in for 15 minutes and the moderator gave instructions for participants to fill out the pre-test based on their initial understanding regarding religious moderation because before the focus group discussion ended, the focus group discussion participants would fill out a post-test which contained the same questions but had received insight and material. from the resource persons whether the insights of the FGD participants had changed or not.

After the participants finished filling out the pre-test and then were collected again by the committee, the first presenter's presentation began at 12.00. the event took a break for prayer and lunch, then at 13.00 the program started again with a presentation from the second speaker, namely Mr. Fadhlán Masykura. After the series of events had been carried out, the event was closed with a prayer and the Focus Group Discussion event was over.

The issue of religious moderation is basically not a new thing because in 2010 the Mustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School conducted training on religious moderation organized by the Mustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School Alumni Association (KAMUS) and the participants

were Ustadz/ Ustdazah tsanawiyah and Aliya Mustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School. That is why the pesantren can be very open to Focus Group Discussion events which are organized by the service team.

### **In Bording School Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan**

The process of implementing community service in Padang Sidempuan begins with coordinating with 3 government agencies, the first being the Ministry of Religion. When the servant made a visit to the office of the Ministry of Religion, the service team consisted of Susanti Hasibuan MA. Hum as the head of the service team, Zulfina M. Pd as a member of the service, and Irwan Effendi as a research assistant student were welcomed by Mr. H. Nauli Sihotang as Head of the Fern Ministry of Religion. He provided direction and input on the process of implementing community service at the Al-Ansor Islamic Boarding School.

After the service team was finished, they went straight to the Kesbangpol agency regarding reporting and requests for permission to carry out community service, the team met with Mr. Fandi S. E as research permit section staff. After the team received a permit to carry out the team, they went straight to the Al-Ansor Islamic Boarding School, where the team was greeted by the ummi mamik always the head of MAS Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan, he stated that the team was allowed to carry out the FGD with a note that the implementation must be carried out on Sunday, the day the Islamic boarding school is off. Karen, if it is also carried out on normal days, will disrupt the teaching and learning process considering that the educators who will be used as FGD participants will be.

The Focus Group Discussion event at Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School was held on Sunday, December 2022, and was attended by 20 educators, both Ustadz and Ustadzah. Besides that, Susanti Hasibuan MA was also present. Hum as the head of the service and also as a speaker, Zulfina M.pd as a member of the service and also a moderator, student Irwan Efendi Hasibuan as the organizing committee, and also the second resource person, namely Puji Kurniawan MA.Hk. The event was divided into 2 sessions, the first session was filled by Puji Kurniawan MA.Hk with the material title "Deterring Radicalism through religious values and local culture".

The material explained; Potential differences in Indonesia, the roots of radicalism globally, the history of radicalism as a form of resistance, the history of radicalism in Indonesia, the radicalism of the old order era, the radicalism of the new order era, radicalism in schools, efforts to fortify radicalism, determination to make peace for Indonesia. As was the case with the FGD at the Mustafawiyah Islamic boarding school, at the Al-Ansor Islamic Boarding School the committee distributed pre-tests and post-tests as the first step to map the understanding of the FGD participants regarding religious moderation.

The pre-test was distributed in the first session before the resource person gave a presentation on the material. FGD participants were given the opportunity to complete a 15-minute pre-test. After the participants have finished filling out the pre-test, the moderator gives instructions to the committee to collect the pre-test answer sheets. During the presentation of the material, the participants were seen to be very enthusiastic and several times submitted responses and questions that the resource persons could answer and explain well. The first session of the program runs until 12.00 and is paused to eat and pray then the program starts again at 13.00. the committee invites participants to enjoy the dishes that have been prepared by the committee.

After the participants took a break for lunch and prayer, the program returned at 13.00 with the second resource person who was also the head of the service, namely Susanti Hasibuan MA. Hum presented material with the title "Strengthening Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools. The material in this theme discussed the definition of religious Moderation, the pillars of Religious moderation, 4 state consensuses, and identifying traces of the extreme right and extreme left in Indonesia. The resource person gave a presentation of material for 2 hours and the event was closed at 16.00.

## CONCLUSION

Islamic boarding schools have become a strategic area for disseminating the notion of religious moderation, especially in the Southern Tapanuli Regency (TABAGSEL) area. This is motivated by the fact that Tabagsel has many Islamic boarding schools and is considered the Veranda of Mecca of North Sumatra. Al-Ansor Padangsidempuan Islamic Boarding School, Padangsidempuan City and Mustafawiyah Mandailing Natal Islamic Boarding School are pesantren that can represent Islamic patterns among pesantren. In these two pesantren, in the process of implementing community service, they appreciate and welcome activities that serve to broaden the horizons of their teaching staff. Regarding the understanding of religious moderation, the FGD participants who came from educators admitted that they were familiar with the word religious moderation but did not understand the context as a whole. After participating in the FGD, the students committed to including elements of religious moderation in their learning methods.

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