
Analyzing the Strategy for Promoting Religious Moderation Values Among Activists of the Campus Islamic *Da'wah* Association in Malang City

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Abstract

The idea of religious moderation has received a lot of attention from academics lately; in 2019, the Indonesian Ministry of Religion released a book bearing a similar title. But the concept of religious moderation has generated mixed responses; some even think that those who practice it are not truly practicing their religion or are not honest in their views. An organization called Campus Da'wah Association (LDK) aims to spread Islam and is almost always present in universities. With this broadcasting responsibility, LDK will probably realize this vision. On the other hand, LDK is more often associated with extremist organizations that have a more conservative understanding of Islam. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to discover what the activists at the Campus Da'wah Institute think about religious moderation. This research uses a case study design in conjunction with a qualitative technique. The research object is the general chairman and the chairman of the cadre division of the Campus Da'wah Association. After that, the researcher used documentation, observation, and interviews. The techniques offered by Miles and Huberman were used by researchers to analyze data. In addition to data validity regulations, researchers employed triangulation techniques. The outcomes of the study show how strongly LDK officials adhere to religious moderation. They are ready to help put the concept of religious moderation into practice both personally and professionally. Numerous attempts have been made to implement projects that align with this ideology. They regret it, though, when some disparage other groups that have different viewpoints and think theirs is the most rational and accurate.

Keywords: *Activist, LDK, promote, religious moderation, strategy*

Abstrak

Konsep moderasi beragama menjadi pembahasan yang hangat diperbincangkan beberapa tahun terakhir ini, bahkan kementerian agama RI telah mengeluarkan buku yang berjudul Moderasi Beragama pada tahun 2019. Namun, konsep moderasi beragama memiliki tanggapan yang beragam, bahkan beberapa masyarakat beranggapan bahwa mereka yang menerapkan moderasi beragama tidak teguh pendiriannya, tidak serius, atau tidak sungguh-sungguh dalam mengamalkan ajaran agamanya. LDK yang hampir selalu ada di setiap perguruan tinggi merupakan organisasi yang bergerak dalam peran syiar Islam. Dengan peran syiar tersebut, LDK sangat memungkinkan untuk mewujudkan konsep tersebut. Namun, LDK lebih sering dikaitkan dengan gerakan radikal yang memiliki pemahaman Islam yang lebih condong ke ekstrim kanan. Untuk itu, penelitian ini hendak mengetahui persepsi para aktivis mahasiswa Lembaga Dakwah Kampus tentang Moderasi Beragama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi kasus. Objek penelitian kepada ketua umum dan ketua bidang kaderisasi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus.

Selanjutnya peneliti menggunakan wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi untuk melakukan pengambilan data. Sedangkan untuk melakukan analisis data, peneliti menggunakan teknik yang dihadirkan oleh Miles dan Huberman. Serta teknik keabsahan data, peneliti menggunakan teknik triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para pengurus LDK sangat mendukung konsep moderasi beragama. Mereka siap berpartisipasi dalam mewujudkan konsep moderasi beragama dalam kehidupan pribadi dan berorganisasi. Beberapa aktivitas telah dilakukan untuk mewujudkan kegiatan yang sejalan dengan konsep tersebut. Namun, mereka menyayangkan bila terdapat beberapa oknum yang menganggap paling benar dan paling moderat dan menyalahkan kelompok lain yang berbeda dengan pandangan mereka.

Kata Kunci: Aktivistis, LDK, Pembinaan, Moderasi Beragama, Strategi

INTRODUCTION

Diverse distinctions are intended to foster cooperation in order to increase work completion and meet all of humankind's demands. As mentioned in QS Al Hujuraat verse 13, Allah has declared that He formed humanity from groups of men and women, nations, and tribes so that they might get to know one another. Sayyid Quthb provides another explanation for this verse, stating that rather than inciting conflict and hostility between people, Allah created these disparities to foster unity and a better understanding of one another (Quthb, 2004).

Conflicts of viewpoint in every facet of human existence are a historical phenomenon that has arisen and will persist, even among Muslims (Quraish Shihab, 2001). Several scholars are available to offer various viewpoints on comprehending religion (Jones, 2020). For example, four eminent scholars are consulted in the discipline of Islamic jurisprudence in order to comprehend Islamic doctrines.

There is always room for disagreement. Amin Abdullah lists six very sensitive points in religious life that can lead to conflict and bloodshed. *The first* is dogma or differences in one's own beliefs and those of a person or group. *The second* is ritual (*certain activities performed*), which is the continuation of accepted religious traditions (Mahmudin et al., 2021). *Third*, text, namely the comprehension of texts that are intrinsically linked to a particular interest. *Fourth*, the establishment of religious leaders' power via their doctrines, breeds zealot followers. *Fifth*, narrating tales about long-standing resentments that may eventually give rise to dormant disputes. *Sixth*, religious establishments that disregard historical, social, factual, psychological, and sociological components (Hadikusuma, 2015).

The results of the 2019 KUB survey show that the 2019 KUB Index is at 73.83 nationally from a score range of 1-100. If detailed, then for the tolerance indicator figures: 72.37; Equality; 73.72, and Cooperation; 75.40. If you look at the Band category, the figure of 73.83 shows that the condition of religious harmony is in the High category (Balitbang Diklat Kemenag RI, 2019).

The Ministry of Religion published a book on religious moderation in October 2019 in an effort to raise the degree of religious peace. The goal of this work is to clarify the what, why, and how of moderation in religion. What does

moderation in religion mean? Why does it matter? And how are they going to put it into practice? (Kementrian Agama RI, 2019)

Three topics are explained in the book. The first section provides a conceptual explanation of religious moderation, covering its definition, fundamental ideals and principles, sources of inspiration found in different religions' traditions, and its signs (Ummami et al., 2023). The backdrop and sociocultural context of religious moderation's significance, together with instances of its application in society, are covered in the second section (Salik, 2019). The third section includes a road map of the actions that must be taken to strengthen and implement religious moderation. There is a fair, balanced, accommodating, inclusive, and tolerant explanation of the three sections (Kementrian Agama RI, 2019).

This idea is not novel, as well as as the explanation of it in QS al-Baqarah: 143 of the Qur'an proves. One of the attitudes taught in Islam, known as *at-tawassuth*, or a midway attitude that is moderate and does not lean left or right, is explained in this verse (Hakim, 2017). Haedar Nashir cited this verse as inspiration when he said, "*This basic capital needs to be our strength to construct Indonesia and moderate Indonesianness, in a reasonable way, during his professorial inauguration. We act moderately, not radically, even when confronted by radicals*" (Nashir, 2019) The statement ends with an appeal for all Muslims to adopt a reasonable outlook. One must always present a reasonable attitude when dealing with any situation. Because a radical issue won't be resolved if a radical solution is also applied (Tix & Frazier, 1998). Thus, the suggestion made is to apply it moderately.

As the religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, Islam teaches that offering advise should be done wisely (*bii al-hikmah*). This is because Islam is a religion that promotes peace. Every Muslim action should reflect the grace and tranquilly of Islam, but notably the act of preaching or offering counsel.

Moderate preachers do not hold extreme views on the moral or religious spectrum, neither to the left nor the right. Not only must Muslims define moderate Islam, but the West cannot be the ultimate judge of what constitutes moderate Islam

(Alawiyah, 2016). Muslims cannot keep up with the West, particularly since the concept of "moderate preaching" has taken on significant importance. Moderate preaching is characterized by at least three qualities: tolerance, balance, and fairness.

One of the student organizations in higher education that works to spread Islam and da'wah is Campus Da'wah Institution. The important interest in maintaining da'wah and Islamic propagation on campus is the reason LDK is present (Mutu et al., 2005). They carry out various forms of advice inspired by the *Ikhwanul Muslimin* Movement in Egypt, all to preach and promote Islam (Muthohirin, 2014).

The existence of LDK is nearly constant among Indonesian universities. private universities in addition to governmental universities. They possess the drive to establish da'wah centers in all universities. Their methodology and ethos persuade the university to provide approval for the establishment of campus da'wah organizations. LDK has contributed to the teaching and preaching of Islam to students at several Indonesian universities. According to Maskab Mutu et al., LDK UKMK Al Qalam has done a wonderful job of helping students at USN Kolaka build their character (Mutu et al., 2005). The program, which had been implemented with good results, was the reason for the success.

This is further supported by Lukis Alam, who said that LDK's establishment will assist universities in constructing a more humanistic da'wah model while also fostering knowledge and personality development. To address this, he also recommended that this campus da'wah organisation establish a community da'wah environment that still achieves the desired results as a component of Islamic education (Alam, 2016).

Inevitably, the idea presented should align with the values of the government and the organizations in charge of it, since the institution is dedicated to promoting Islam. The Islam depicted is a moderate kind of Islam that can be applied to daily life. Drawing from the aforementioned, the investigator aims to ascertain the Campus Da'wah Institution's perspective on the notion of Religious Moderation.

METHODS

This study relied on a case study methodology in conjunction with qualitative research because the researcher has gathered data directly from situations that arise in the field. The managers of the Campus *Da'wah* Association (LDK) of the State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as well as a few of its members, are the study's subjects. Moreover, documentation, observations, and interviews are used in data collection methods. Administrators, including the general chairman, the head of the cadre division, and five members, were interviewed. The process of observing every LDK activity that has been conducted over the past six months is known as observation. Regarding documentation, it might take the shape of work programs, various organizational documents such as AD/ART, and other necessary documents (Sugiyono, 2008).

This method for collecting data is obtained from the designated object as well as from other parties and the documentation that points towards the object. The researcher next performs data analysis, which is done in four steps, starting with data collection after acquiring the necessary data (Abdullah Kamal, 2019). While the observation was done to directly see the implementation and outcomes of the implementation carried out by the two study objects, the data obtained came from interview results with the object and numerous aspects linked to the object.

In the following phase, known as data reduction, researchers will sift and choose data that aligns with the study's focus and objectives, ensuring that the information gathered is relevant to the study and meets its goals. Presenting the data that has been condensed into a single unit is the third step for researchers. The fourth step involves concluding. To do this, researchers will carefully examine the evidence that has been provided.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Particularly in varied and multireligious cultures, religious moderation has grown in significance in modern discourses (Muthohirin et al., 2022). Promoting religious moderation principles has become essential as countries and communities work to promote harmony and understanding among various religious groups. This

is because it helps to prevent extremism and advance peaceful coexistence (Nabila et al., 2023). It is especially important to emphasize religious moderation in Indonesia, a nation renowned for its wide range of religious practices. The pluralistic culture that has defined the nation's history emphasizes how crucial it is to create an atmosphere that allows people of different religions to live in harmony with one another (Rahmat, 2018).

Indonesia is the 14th largest country and the largest archipelagic country in the world, with an area of 1,904,570 km². It also has the sixth most islands in the world, with a total of 17,504 islands (Firdaus & Andriyani, 2021). Furthermore, Indonesia is the world's fourth most populated country, with a population of 277,749,853 people in 2022, and the world's largest Muslim population, with about 238,875,159 adherents, or approximately 86.9%. Indonesia is a multiracial, multiethnic, and multicultural country, similar to the United States (Dienaputra, 2023).

Indonesian society is pluralistic empirically. A plural society, according to Furnival's study, which Dikdik cited, is one in which two or more social orders coexist side by side without merging into a single governmental entity (Dikdik Baehaqi Arif, 2013). This pluralistic Indonesian society can be defined by two terms: diversity (heterogeneity) and plurality (Sari, 2022). As the opposite of singularity, plurality denotes the existence of a situation that is made up of plurality rather than singularity. This indicates that there are a variety of social subgroups within "Indonesian society" that are incompatible with one another. This is confirmed by the fact that Indonesia is home to at least 500 different ethnic groups. Their culture is the same (Sofiana et al., 2022). Conversely, heterogeneity, which is the opposite of homogeneity, denotes a state's ability to have disparities among its constituent parts.

LDK officials are especially concerned about the range of conditions in Indonesian society since they understand that every student on campus has a unique cultural background, set of beliefs, and understandings. Because of this, LDK spreads Islam among students more flexibly and cooperatively. LDK thinks it's critical to comprehend and apply the idea of religious moderation in light of these

varied distinctions. When it comes to religious moderation, they look for common ground rather than highlighting existing divisions.

Every Muslim is expected to practice Islamic moderation for three reasons. The first purpose of religion is to maintain human dignity as a noble creation of God, protects oneself, one's faith, and one's country to foster safety and harmony. Second, human thought continued to expand with the revelation of religion, and this was also the case with the ideas of professors, religious leaders, and other individuals articulated in books and lectures. Third, maintaining one's Indonesian identity through moderation is a cultural tactic (Kementrian Agama RI, 2019).

Religious moderation is considered a middle concept, which is described as a moderate human perspective on religion, which entails comprehending and applying religious teachings without leaning too much to the left or right (Nuridin, 2021). Hashim Kamali asserts that moderation is a key component of Islam and that it has numerous implications for Islam across a wide range of issues. According to Kamali, moral principles of moderation are important for maintaining the integrity and good reputation of communities and countries as well as for the lives of individuals (Kamali, 2015).

The LDK management concurs, expressing remorse for the mindset that forces understanding to conform to what is understood rather than acknowledging variances. In addition, the administration has identified the cadres who possess the appropriate level of understanding and attitudes among the numerous LDK members, realizing that not all of them share the same concept (Islam, 2019). There is a separation that, at the very least, charts the cadres who are amenable to diversity and respond to it in a civil way. Other members, on the other hand, feel that some actions are incompatible with their beliefs and opt to be difficult. Finally, there is the third group, which decides to follow the other two viewpoints in silence.

Since LDK is an organization dedicated to spreading Islam, it is morally required to comprehend and practice moderate preaching. Preaching is an art; one must adapt when offering counsel and invitations (Setiawan, 2022). This is so because preaching is directed towards people, and people have diverse personalities. Preachers must adapt to the social, environmental, and cultural norms

of their communities because every place has a unique character (Mukhlis, 2020). As an ideology that promotes peace or *rahmatan li'l- 'ālamīn*, Islam teaches that offering counsel should be done wisely or *bi'l-ḥikmah* (Helmy et al., 2021). Every Muslim action, particularly while offering counsel or preaching, should reflect the grace and serenity of Islam.

Considering from a more general perspective, da'wah can be understood as an endeavour to motivate people to follow moral guidance (religion), calling them to do good deeds and refraining from evil deeds, in order to find satisfaction in this life as well as the next (Jan, 2008). In words and acts, good da'wah is practiced moderately rather than excessively. The Arabic term for moderate, or *al-wasatiyyah*, is derived from the word *wasat*. *Ummatan Wasatan* is the word from which this phrase is derived and explained (Mohd Shukri Hanafi, 2014). Moderate da'wah is characterized by at least three qualities: tolerance, balance, and fairness.

Tolerance

Tolerance is a key component of the faith brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which advocates for world peace. If tolerance is lacking in society, peace will never prevail. Actually, there won't be any peace in a society where there is no tolerance. Tolerating certain actions and viewpoints held by the minority is what it means to be tolerant (Afwadzi & Miski, 2021). On the other hand, the minority acknowledges and honors certain of the majority's views and practices. Regarding theology, tolerance is unwavering; nevertheless, in social affairs, it is malleable. Respecting one another instead of blending religions is what tolerance is all about. Thus, the foundational idea of this religion of peace is tolerance (Fadzil, 2011).

As it sacrifices the interests of society, moderate da'wah thinking is far from an overly social mindset by forsaking individual interests. It is a halfway ground between liberal philosophy and the unrestricted freedom that every individual can enjoy. A pragmatic approach that contains no idealism at all and idealist philosophical circles that are nearly completely disconnected from reality are poles apart from moderate da'wah thinking (Rahman, 2018).

According to Taha Jabir al Alwani, moderate Muslims are receptive to and accepting of all or most Western principles that are significant and have a bearing on politics, economics, education, and day-to-day living. Moderate da'wah, on the other hand, will always be able to preserve its uniqueness without losing it to any civilization. Any idea can be adopted by moderate da'wah thinking, and as long as it doesn't conflict with explicit teachings, the content can grow (Rahman, 2018).

Muslims who identify as moderates are individuals who are open to discussion and accommodation with non-Muslims and those who hold contrasting opinions about the Qur'an and hadith. Due to the fact that there are constantly varying interpretations of Islamic law and its roots (Jan, 2008). Because of this, every Muslim will encounter variances in their daily lives. Therefore, a Muslim should engage in communication and make concessions rather than criticizing or even disparaging others who have different beliefs. Variations in this perspective are attributed to *furū'īyah*, or branches.

Mapping the traits and comprehension of the members to be followed up on in the management-prepared coaching is how LDK implements the organizational management process. Various resources and activities have been produced with the intention of fostering the soul of a moderate Muslim, even if there is currently no formal curriculum to reinforce the concept of Islamic moderation. In carrying out their preaching efforts, LDK activists embody the spirit of civility and strong brotherhood.

Balance

To reach out to the truth, moderate preachers balance the use of *manqūl* or holy texts and *ma'qūl* or reason (Jarman Arroisi et al., 2023). While extreme Muslims cling to sacred scriptures rather than reason, liberal Muslims strive to evolve by allowing reason to have the greatest role in understanding religion. Thus, without exaggeration, moderate preaching is grounded in sacred texts that provide context and discussion. (Ghazali, 2016).

whereas moderate da'wah thinking disagrees with the attitude of excessive taqlid in order to close the door of ijtihad to contemporary issues that never occurred

to previous scholars, it also never performs *tajdid* and *ijtihad* in matters that are fundamental and clear in religion and are *qat'i* issues. As a result, *ijtihad* in the modern day can influence Muslims to interpret religious texts more liberally, claims Ali A. Mazrui (Mazrui, 2008).

It is essential to carefully understand religion from the perspective of the *naqli* aspect, which is impossible if one's language abilities are inadequate, particularly when it comes to learning the grammar and elocution patterns of Arabic. Therefore, between liberalism or *al-tafrīt* and radicalism or *al-ifrāt*, lies moderate da'wah thought. The use of *naqli* and '*aqli*' arguments balances this line of thinking (Rahman, 2018).

Spiritual, intellectual, and bodily qualities are the main focus of a balanced viewpoint. In order to maintain the equilibrium of the potential that Allah has bestowed, the heart, mind, and body are always reinforced (Mohd Akib et al., 2023). Achieving a balance between knowledge and actions is crucial, enabling the management to introduce new religious concepts to the congregation and explain them in technical terms. This demonstrates how a solid grasp of religion can help an organization, but if the congregation is the organization's primary priority, the organization's actions may become shallow.

Justice

In Islam, justice encompasses all facets of life, not only those related to leadership and the law. To be fair, one must strike a balance between surplus and deficit. Applying equality and striking a balance between rights and obligations is what is meant by fairness (Alimuddin et al., 2014). Obedience should not be used as an excuse to diminish human rights. A just person maintains a straight gait and applies the same standard of measurement consistently—that is, without taking shortcuts. It is because of this equality that a just person does not support the opposing party. Human equality is justice in Islam. (Fatima Al Matar, 2015).

Between fanatics and belittling, a just attitude stands; it gathers the mind of a *faqih* and a pious heart; it can adjust between imposed obligations and life's realities; it can distinguish between expectations placed on special individuals and

experiences had by regular people; and it can comprehend that while open and regular situations have their own laws, emergency situations also have their own set of laws. It does not remove the lines separating haram and halal in an attempt to simplify matters. It does not, however, burden or complicate matters in an attempt to be cautious. (Qardhawi, 2017).

According to Islamic belief, each and every human being must treat others, the environment, and themselves fairly. The foundation for achieving justice for others is our own justice. But after Allah SWT has restored the environment, it is forbidden for any individual or business to cause more harm to it (Surat al-Nahl: 90). This does not imply that Muslims are forbidden from using natural resources (Alimudin et al., 2014). Therefore, it is possible to understand moderate preaching as an attempt to change Islamic principles to ones that are fair, impartial, and tolerant.

In order to maximise the efficacy of advocating for religious moderation, the LDK ought to contemplate embracing a more comprehensive strategy that incorporates educational, outreach, and internal tactics. This entails deepening collaborations with other institutions, looking for creative sources of funding, and consistently assessing and modifying programs in response to user input and new demands. Involving a larger portion of the community and student body in moderation activities can also contribute to the development of a more welcoming and encouraging atmosphere.

CONCLUSION

It is a challenging yet crucial endeavor to encourage religious moderation among Campus Islamic Da'wah Association activists in Malang City. Effective tactics, according to the report, include incorporating the ideas of moderation into educational initiatives, reaching out to the community, and developing an inclusive workplace atmosphere. To guarantee the success of these initiatives, obstacles including resource constraints and reluctance to change must be overcome.

According to this survey responses, the Campus Dakwah Association (LDK) has a favorable opinion on the idea of religious moderation. To achieve

peace and fraternity, this idea must be properly used throughout society. It is believed that this idea can lessen conflict and provide more favorable circumstances given the wide range of diversity in society.

While da'wah is a broadcasting organization, da'wah uses the idea of religious moderation to make itself more moderate. Three values—tolerance, balance, and fairness—are central to moderate preaching. By using courteous language in their sermons and modeling strong brotherhood, LDK activists employ these three ideals as the cornerstone of their da'wah efforts.

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