



The Leadership of Primary School Principals on Religious Moderation in Multicultural Societies

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the role of primary school principals in religious moderation in a multicultural society. The primary education is the initial basis for students to know the basics of the level of education that will be directed in the future. Semarang has a fairly high religious heterogeneity, requiring schools to highly respect the existing diversity. This study uses a qualitative research approach. The data sources in this study are primary data sources and secondary data sources. The sources of secondary data in this study are reference books that support this study. The data collection techniques use observation techniques, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that the role of elementary school principals in religious moderation included five indicators; those are conservator, innovator, transmitter, transformer, and organizer.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as a pluralistic and multicultural nation in the context of managing the life of the nation and state still has an important national agenda that needs to be addressed and discussed wisely and appropriately. In Indonesia, there are some non-constructive and productive religious issues that still up. Sometimes, these issues have the potential to cause conflicts between and among religious communities. Hence, the potential for unproductive issues that occur in religious life must be minimized and even avoided so that it do not become large and can disrupt religious and national harmony. The identification of religious issues has many variants, both caused by factors of different schools, differences in understanding, as well as the result of different ways and methods of interpretation of religion (St. Aisyah BM; 2014).

Religious moderation is currently used as an effort to strengthen in maintaining inter-religious harmony in Indonesia. One of the efforts to strengthen religious moderation is to make it a national program contained in the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional / RPJMN). Religious moderation means thinking moderately and does not mean not being firm in one's religious beliefs or even having a defect in their faith (Akhmadi; 2019) being confident in the essence of the religious teachings they believe, which teach the principles of fairness and balance, but various truths as far as the interpretation of the religion adhered by each is concerned.

Religious moderation can be socialized through various aspects, one of them is education. Education is an important and integral part of realizing the moderate ideals promoted by the Indonesian government (Nisa, 2018). Education is a place for the formation of personality and the process of maturation for a student. Strengthening moderation also should be introduced early to students so that they are not easily influenced by radical religious thought

and close themselves to other religions. The primary school is one of the places for basic education, which according to Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 17 paragraph 1 states that basic education is the initial basis for students to know the basics of the level of education that will be directed in the future. Of course, it is the duty of a school principal to build a system according to the needs of the school community in shaping personality and maturity.

Semarang has a high religious heterogeneity, requiring schools to respect highly the existing diversity. The results of the BPS in 2020 show that in the city of Semarang 87.00% Muslim, 5.11% Catholic, 6.92% Protestant, 0.65% Buddhist, 0.07% Hindu, and 0.03% others. The heterogeneity of religion in Semarang is influenced by local customs and habits. A culture that has become an ancestral heritage, such as wara, is still carried out openly and sometimes involves multi-religious communities.

The research related to the leadership of primary school principals has been conducted by Maskur et al. (2018). The research's title is Contribution of Supervision of School Supervisor and School Quality Culture on Primary School's Managerial Competence. The effective schools also need leaders who are experts in implementing school-based management. This study finds out the contribution of school supervisors' supervision and school quality culture to the managerial competence of elementary school principals in Kendal Regency. The results showed that there was a significant influence of school quality culture on the managerial competence of principals.

The next research related to the leadership of school principals was conducted by Pathoni Arzadi et al., (2021) with the title "The Success of School Leadership Style in Improving Non-Academic Achievement of Students". The study examined the leadership styles of principals such as generous, stubborn and straightforward principals, convincing and others. Currently, educational institutions need a leadership style

that is transformative and able to see opportunities for change and development in modern era. These results showed that the leadership of the MA Darul Mahmudien principal was effective in improving students' non-academic achievement by taking various steps.

This gives the reason that researchers are interested in knowing the role of school principals in building religious moderation for school residents in elementary schools who are able to create harmony in social interactions and are able to maintain a balance that does not blame each other.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research approach. Milles and Hubberman (1992:2), qualitative research will get qualitative data that is very interesting, has a source from a broad description that is well-grounded, and contains an explanation of the processes that occur in the local environment.

The Research of data sources in this study are primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are data obtained directly from respondents or sources. Secondary data sources are sources of data obtained indirectly from the main source. Sources of secondary data in this study are reference books that support.

The data collection techniques used observation, interviews, and documentation techniques obtained from several documents and important notes from the school that became the object of research. The data analysis technique was carried out by the steps of data presentation, data reduction, and data inference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The role of school principals in building religious moderation in primary schools, has collected and explored various kinds of data needed together with research subjects. The subjects of this study were the principals of SD N 2 Sekaran and SDN NGIJO 01, and

classroom teachers from both schools. The respondents in this study were 1 student and 1 student's guardian from each school. The object of this research is the role of the principal in building religious moderation in elementary schools in Semarang.

The role of elementary school principals in instilling religious moderation

In building religious moderation in elementary schools in Semarang, the principal has several roles, namely:

a. Conservator

The basic role of a school principal is to become a conservator, given that religious moderation is a new thing for society. Principals are required to be able to understand in advance how religious moderation is. Religious moderation means not mixing up the understanding of each religion, but sticking to the religious beliefs of each.

Based on the results of the interview, it can be concluded that the principal's view is as a conservator, namely as a keeper of the value of moderation. The school principal in the city of Semarang interprets more as a frame of religious tolerance, in building the values of fairness, balance, simplicity, unity, and brother-hood that have become the identities of schools and their respective environments. This is in line with the value of moderation promoted by the Ministry of Religion.

Based on the results of interviews with elementary school principals in Semarang, stated that the principal as conservators has a big responsibility to themselves and demands to always remind teachers and students to recognize and implement religious moderation before entering class in the morning.

One student from each school can say that the Principal as a conservator conveys to the students to maintain the values of religious moderation.

b. Innovator

Innovation is an indicator that shows the development of a role or behavior, which should be a competency for each role actor. The principal has the role of being an innovator in the school environment. The results of interviews with principals of elementary schools in Semarang, show various kinds of innovations carried out by principals in each elementary school. One of the schools that gets a favorite image in the surrounding environment has many innovations in implementing religious moderation as well as strengthening religious and nationalism characters in schools. The innovations can be in the form of implementing Eid-Adha and spiritual guidance according to their respective religions for grades III, IV, V, and VI in cultivating spiritual values that will lead to the values that exist in religious moderation.

It can be concluded that each elementary school in Semarang has a different innovation. This difference in innovation still has the sole purpose of building religious moderation in schools. The geographical differences create significant differences in the implementation of religious moderation in each school. The main thing that school principals need to do is provide an understanding of what religious moderation is, and how to address the strengthening of the value of religious moderation to school residents.

c. Transmitter

Religious moderation has been familiar with school culture, but it also remains with the aim of straightening religious views. In order to protect themselves from the extremes of students in embracing their religion, and being able to make students adapt, by placing themselves wherever and however without eliminating the existence of the religion adopted in the practice of moderation.

The principal as a transmitter who behaves continues the essence of the value of religious moderation. The results of the interview show that there is actually no in-depth plan that must be prepared to build religious moderation that is echoed by the Ministry of

Religion. The program has run by itself and it is not a new thing.

The religious moderation is not a new thing in elementary schools, it needs strengthening in building religious moderation. This program must always be reminded or conveyed to all school members. This presentation on strengthening religious moderation was carried out in order to provide understanding to students at school. Hence, the implementation of strengthening the values of religious moderation can be applied and implemented easily by teachers and students.

d. Transformer

The principal as a transformer of religious moderation values through his incarnation as well as in his personality and behavior, in the process of interacting with students for educational purposes. The principal as a transformer must be able to convey the values of religious moderation to teachers and students through the figure of a school principal.

Being the main figure in the school, it plays an important role in guiding and educating school members to become intelligent people and have commendable character. Being a figure, the principal must also be able to give affection to every member of the school in order to be able to easily strengthen the relationship between the principal and the teacher and the principal and the students.

Being a figure that is able to build religious moderation is being able to provide learning opportunities for students of different religions. The results of interviews with teachers and students, the role of school principals has been exemplifying to school residents how to get along, translating the value of religious moderation which includes fairness, balance, simplicity, unity and brother-hood.

e. Organizer

The principal as an organizer who creates an educational process that can be accounted for, both formally (to those who appoint and assign) or informally (to the community). Organizing an educational activity is a very important role of the principal. The success in activities will be measured through

implementation and the output of these activities will be felt after organizing them.

Based on the results of interviews with school principals in Semarang. The organization of activities to build religious moderation only requires strengthening. Programs that support the strengthening of religious moderation have actually been well organized and well implemented.

It can be concluded that with diverse organizations the principal of primary schools performs their role in building diverse moderation. This organization is also influenced by the innovations made by each school principal.

The differences that occur in each school remain focused on building the value of religious moderation in their respective schools. The value of religious moderation maintains inter-religious harmony in schools, and also to continue to encourage school members to strengthen the quality of their faith and piety.

CONCLUSION

The role of primary school principals in religious moderation includes five indicators, namely conservator, innovator, transmitter, transformer, and organizer. Conservator as the maintainer of the moderation value system, the principal is responsible for the attitudes carried out in the school to be a role model. Innovators in building religious moderation, religious moderation does not only focus on students who are *Muslim*, but for students of other religions. Transmitter, the principal continues the values of religious moderation by being a guide and motivator for students to be able to understand religious moderation. Transformer, carried out by transferring values in the form of behavior, so that every school member is able to understand that the values instilled are also carried out by teachers and can be imitated by students. Organizer, as the head of the school is carried out to organize every activity that exists, especially those that are innovated such as multi-religious activities in schools.

Based on the conclusions that the researchers describe, the researchers propose several suggestions for consideration of enrichment and improvement in the quality of the development of religious moderation values in elementary schools, namely (1) the Head of the Semarang City Education Office is expected to be able to provide facilities that support the character education process such as a prayer room for schools. schools to provide convenience in the spiritual guidance of students in schools; (2) the Ministry of Religion of Semarang City to broadcast more widely related to religious moderation which must be disseminated throughout the realm of education in the city of Semarang; (3) Teachers in elementary schools should help (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) teachers familiarize students in daily activities both during class hours or outside class hours with the values of religious moderation.

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