Mainstreaming Religious Moderation Training on Muhammadiyah Perspective for Mubaligh Muhammadiyah in South Banguntapan

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Abstract. One of the crucial problems being faced by Muslim communities, both on a global and national scale, is the emergence of radical Islamic views and acts of violence (both physical and non-physical) in the name of religion. Rigid and immoderate religious thoughts and intolerant attitudes are considered to be the main causes for the emergence of this radicalism, both in the form of ideology/thoughts and in the form of acts of violence. In Indonesia, various efforts to prevent and counter radicalism have been carried out by many parties, both the government, especially through the Ministry of Religion, and also religious mass organizations, including the Muhammadiyah organization. Among the efforts that are being fought for to overcome this problem is the mainstreaming of religious moderation. Seeing the importance of the position of Mubaligh Muhammadiyah in the community as a conduit of information and knowledge about the ideology and understanding of Muhammadiyah religion with the character of wasathiyah and rahmatan lil ‘alamin to the grassroots, through this community service program, the author and the service team are trying to carry out training on mainstreaming religious moderation from a Muhammadiyah perspective for preachers in Banguntapan. This effort is important to prepare Muhammadiyah preachers who are capable of countering various attempts of radicalization. Apart from being an effort to counter radicalism, this community service activity is also an effort to establish religious harmony and social harmony both within and between religious communities. In practice, this service activity is held through training activities and FGD (Focus Group Discussion). As for the results of this community service activity, in addition to publication in the mass media, journal articles, and publication of activity videos on the YouTube platform, it is also hoped that it will be able to increase the understanding of Muslim society regarding religious moderation in the view of Muhammadiyah and awareness to ward off radicalism that can damage social order, national and religious life.

Keywords: religious moderation, radicalism, wasathiyah, Muhammadiyah

1 Introduction

One of the strategic issues set by the Banguntapan District, as written in the 2021 Performance Report, is increasing the capacity of human resources and infrastructure in the framework of administering government and public services [1]. This includes understanding religion, religious leaders, community leaders, and citizens in general. Globally, residents of Banguntapan District are classified as a religious and thick community with religious activities, with a total number of Muslim citizens as of the second semester of 2021 as many

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as 33,505 people [2]. The number of mosques and prayer rooms as places to carry out religious activities is spread throughout the region as many as 233 units [3]. In carrying out these religious activities, Muslim members are members of various organizations or religious groups such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and other mass organizations. Even so, the majority are members of the Muhammadiyah.

The South Banguntapan Muhammadiyah Branch Manager (PCM) is one of the 20 PCMs under the auspices of the Bantul Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership (PDM), which fosters 7 Muhammadiyah Regional Leaders (PRM) (PRM Potorono Utara, PRM Jambidan Timur, PRM Potorono Barat, PRM Tamanan, PRM Wirokerten, PRM Jambidan Barat, and PRM Nglaren) [4]. It played a significant role in the success of the target strategy above. As stated in the Commission I Document, Tabligh Section, Cadre Education, and Branch Development [5] of PCM South Banguntapan, through its Tabligh Assembly, has scheduled one of its activities to take inventory of preachers and coach them.

Muabaligh Muhammadiyah, as an extension of Muhammadiyah’s understanding of religion and ideology to the grassroots, occupies a strategic position. One of which is to provide enlightenment, planting, and guidance to Muhammadiyah members about how the mindset of Muhammadiyah sympathizers should be, namely moderate Islamic views (Islam wasathiyah)[6]. The process of religious moderation is fought for by Muhammadiyah because the Association founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan has a foundation in the form of a reformist, moderate ideology, a progressive view of Islam, potential human resources, charitable efforts, and his extensive network. For example, history proves that al-Maun’s theology and al-Ashr’s theology which are the main foundation of Muhammadiyah, are truly able to enlighten and make positive contributions to the nation’s civilization [7].

It is well known that one of the crucial problems faced by the Indonesian nation in the last period is the emergence of “radical Islam” or “Islamic radicalism” [8]. Especially after the September 11, 2001 tragedy, the event gave rise to an agreement that terrorism and radicalism [9], which were born from the womb of fundamentalism [10], are common enemies [11]. Seeing this phenomenon, religious moderation is the right step that can be taken to prevent radicalism which can eventually lead to extremism and terrorism [12]. The socialization and inculcation of religious moderation are also part of the state’s work program, especially through the Ministry of Religion [13]. Internally, within the Muhammadiyah organization, efforts to strengthen Muhammadiyah’s ideology and understanding of Wasathiyah Islam are also constantly being fought for. Haedar Nashir emphasized that the Indonesian nation consists of people with various backgrounds, be it religion, race, ethnicity, skin color, language and so on, so according to him, the ideas and efforts to practice Islamic moderation values in Indonesia are very appropriate and solutive. Among the values of “Islamic moderation” include the attitude of tawassut (taking the middle way), tasamuh (tolerance), and shura (deliberation). These three basic values are very important to be developed in order to realize a just, peaceful, safe and prosperous country that is blessed by God Almighty [14].

The mainstreaming of religious moderation is important to be carried out in the midst of Indonesia, which is plural and known for its diversity through the motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (different but one) and based on Pancasila values. Because if this diversity is not cared for properly, it has the potential to cause disintegration and become a threat to national unity [15]. For example, recently, in Indonesia, problems have been threatening national diversity in the form of violence in the name of religion. Starting from anarchic demonstrations, blasphemy to suicide bombings and disbanding and burning places of worship [16]. Until now, the religious condition in Banguntapan Village is generally going well [17]. Even so, it cannot be denied that there is the potential for friction between mass organizations and even between religious communities, but so far, it can still be minimized with a spirit of togetherness, tolerance and mutual respect for one another.
Based on the problems above, through a community service program organized by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, the author seeks to conduct community service on the topic of “Muhammadiyah Perspective Religious Moderation Mainstreaming Training for Mubaligh Muhammadiyah in South Banguntapan.” Mubaligh Muhammadiyah, who works directly with the community and lives with the community, is certainly expected to be able to become the vanguard in countering radicalism, terrorism, and extremism, as well as being able to apply and mainstream moderate Islam from the perspective of Muhammadiyah, as one of the pillars of progressive Islam [18]. Through this Community Partnership Program (PKM) activity, the author seeks to socialize religious thoughts initiated by Muhammadiyah as ideological boosters and counters to ward off radicalism, terrorism, and extremism through training activities attended by Muhammadiyah preachers.

This training was conducted to socialize and explain what religious moderation is from the Muhammadiyah perspective, which is characterized by washatiyah (middle, moderate), neither extreme right nor extreme left, and how to implement it in preaching and religious development in the South Banguntapan region through webinars and Focus Groups Discussion (FGD). In addition, by holding this training activity, it is hoped that it will be able to become an antithesis and answer to negative accusations against Islam and overcome the phenomenon of Islamophobia. Through this training, it can also be proof that Muslims themselves, especially within the internal body of the Muhammadiyah organization, also feel unrest. To eliminate this anxiety, it is important to carry out the mainstreaming of religious moderation among Muhammadiyah preachers. The FGDs conducted in this training are also one of the efforts to reformulate friendly Islamic da’wah and rahmatan lil ‘alamin, which are clean from elements of radicalism and internalization of moderate Islamic values or Islamic washatiyah in accordance with the ideology of Muhammadiyah. Muhammadiyah, in its track record of struggle, also carries the progressive and progressive concept of Wasathiyah Islam as an effort to strengthen Islamic moderation and break the chain of radicalism.

Community service, which is one of the Catur Dharma (Four missions) of Muhammadiyah Universities, was organized by a team of lecturers in collaboration with students and partners. In this case, it is the management of the South Banguntapan Branch, and the main target was Muhammadiyah preachers in the Banguntapan area. This community service contains aspects of education, da’wah, and also the internalization of moderate Islamic values from the Muhammadiyah perspective targeting Muhammadiyah preachers. It is hoped that it can provide concrete solutions in facing the challenges they realistically feel in the field in realizing a truly Islamic society [19], as envisioned by Muhammadiyah.

2 Methodology

To solve the problems as described above, the method of implementing community service that will be carried out by the author and the team of research from UMY and also in collaboration with partners from PCM South Banguntapan and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta is to organize training on the topic of religious moderation from the Muhammadiyah perspective as an effort to ward off radicalism targeting da’i or mubaligh Muhammadiyah in the Banguntapan environment. This community service activity was carried out with the following methodology:

First, is data collection. Data collection was carried out to provide initial information related to various conditions and religious understanding in the Muslim community of South Banguntapan, especially the preachers from Muhammadiyah as the target in the implementation of this service. Data were collected from observations, interviews, and documentation (recording data, archives, documents, and other relevant references)[20].

Second, Pre-test. The service team prepared a number of questions related to the topic of religious moderation in general and the concept of moderate Islam (wasathiyah) in the
Muhammadiyah’s perspective in particular. The question sheets were distributed to the participants and then collected back after completion. This pre-test was conducted to determine the extent of the participants’ pre-understanding or initial understanding of the training topics. In addition, this pre-test is also used as an evaluation of the effectiveness and success of the resource person in delivering the material.

Third, the lecturing method. The speaker delivered the material orally and directly to the participants on the topic of religious moderation from the perspective of Muhammadiyah using PowerPoint and modules (printouts of PowerPoint materials and modules were distributed to participants before the event). In the process of delivering the material, the speaker conducted an interactive lecture method with the participants. The hope is that participants will not only listen to what is conveyed by the speakers but will be able to understand and capture the information and knowledge that has been given well because discussions and question-and-answer methods accompany it to sharpen the understanding.

Fourth, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. After the lecturing session is over, the speaker, accompanied by the moderator, organizes the discussion with the participants. Through this FGD, the material delivered through lectures is expected to be deepened through discussions and descriptions of various concrete examples and experiences experienced and known by the participants. The FGD method is expected to be able to encourage participants to actively discuss solutions to problems faced, including those related to the material that has been provided so that they can be evaluated together. In this FGD, participants were more active in giving opinions and expressing their solutive thoughts.

Fifth, RTL (Follow-up Plan). After the discussion session between the speaker, the service team, partners, and participants, the next issue that needs to be implemented is the follow-up plan for this community service activity. In this RTL session, each party is committed to following up on the training activities so that there is a clear positive impact and contribution to the Muslim community, especially in the South Banguntapan area.

3 Results and Discussion

The results of the implementation of this community service include: 1) Facilitating the provision of information and insights to Muhammadiyah preachers around South Banguntapan around the material presented, such as related to radicalism, deradicalization, and religious moderation or wasathiyah Islam from the perspective of Muhammadiyah, as well as discussing the phenomenon of radicalism that is developing in society, so that various efforts to find solutions to these problems are thought of; (2) The participants of the training activities will understand the importance of preventing radicalism, terrorism and extremism from growing in education and organizational lines; (3) The participants of the training activities will jointly make religious moderation or wasathiyah Islam a concept that is applied in social life, especially in the process of education and da’wah; (4) The participants of the training activities can formulate strategies in an effort to counteract ideas and actions that contain elements of radicalism; (5) The participants of the training activities can understand the importance of religious moderation to be applied and become a reference concept in counteracting radicalism; and (6) The participants of the training activities agreed to jointly fight radicalism that develops in the scope of education and organizations.

The results and understanding were obtained after the resource person conveyed several important things, such as the role of civil society organizations, the involvement of religious organizations, the difference between moderation and extremism, the challenge of wasathiyah Islam, its concept, and its preaching in Muhammadiyah’s perspective. The training was attended by a total of 30 participants who were Muhammadiyah preachers and young Muhammadiyah cadres in South Banguntapan PCM. The outputs of this activity are news articles published in online media, videos of activities, and scientific publication.
manuscripts. The participants consisting of a number of da‘i Muhammadiyah have gained knowledge about religious moderation in Muhammadiyah’s perspective, which will later become provisions for going directly to the community. In this case, the participants were quite enthusiastic about participating in this service activity. Overall, this activity has been carried out well with indicators of implementation results and increased understanding and awareness among the generation of preachers about the importance of religious moderation. Here are some photos of this community service activity:

![Figure 1: training activity poster](image_url)
Figure 2: Photo with Muhammadiyah South Banguntapan Branch officials and some participants

Figure 3: Atmosphere during Training

4 Conclusions

The training activity on mainstreaming religious moderation from Muhammadiyah’s perspective for Muballigh Muhammadiyah in South Banguntapan has been organized well
and smoothly. The total number of participants was 30 participants consisting of da’i in the Banguntapan neighborhood. Based on the testimonies of the participants, they felt an increase in understanding and awareness regarding the importance of religious moderation and how the concept of Islam wasatiyah in Muhammadiyah’s perspective. From this training activity, it can be concluded that the participants were very interested in themes related to religious moderation or Islam wasatiyah in Muhammadiyah’s perspective. With the delivery of serious and focused material but still relaxed and deepened by discussion, participants can understand the concept of religious moderation well and how it is applied in religious life in the midst of a very plural nation. In addition, the Muhammadiyah preachers, of course, became more careful and vigilant against religious ideas and attitudes that lead to radicalism, terrorism, and extremism. Through this community service activity, the da’i of Muhammadiyah around Banguntapan came to understand that Muhammadiyah, which was founded by K.H. A. Dahlan from the beginning of its presence in the middle of the archipelago, has offered ideas on how to practice religion with a reformist, moderate ideology and a progressive view of Islam. However, some of the participants also said that access to understanding and authoritative information related to this is still difficult to obtain so that among the follow-up plans for this activity is to increase routine and in-depth scientific studies in the context of strengthening Muhammadiyah ideology on various fronts.

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