THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN INDONESIAN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT:
Indonesia is a country rich in cultural and religious diversity. The diversity of culture and religion in Indonesia is one of the nation's assets that must be protected and respected. However, it cannot be denied that in practice, this diversity is often a source of conflict and tension among religious communities in Indonesia. The background of this research is the existence of interreligious conflict and social polarization that occurs in Indonesia. This study aims to explore the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach by conducting a literature review of related articles, journals and books. The data analyzed in this study is the result of a literature study, namely theories and concepts related to the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. The results of the study indicate that the role of religious moderation can assist in building inter-religious harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. Religious moderation can also reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts. In addition, this research also shows that religious moderation can increase interfaith understanding and religious tolerance in multicultural societies. This research provides added value by showing that the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society has great potential in building harmony and harmony between religious communities. The novelty of this research lies in the approach taken in understanding the role of religious moderation in the social and cultural context of Indonesia.

Keywords: Moderation, Multicultural, Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural and religious diversity. The diversity of culture and religion in Indonesia is one of the nation's assets that must be protected and respected (Sulaiman et al., 2022). However, it cannot be denied that in practice, this diversity is often a source of conflict and tension among religious communities in Indonesia (Gustiana Kambo, 2021). This can happen because of differences in views, values, and beliefs between religious communities, as well as social and economic injustices experienced by certain religious groups.

In this context, religious moderation is important to understand and implement in Indonesia. Religious moderation is an attitude and action that shows a willingness to respect differences and promote harmony between religious communities, without sacrificing their respective identities and beliefs (Arifinsyah et al., 2020). This moderation attitude can build harmony between religions and minimize social conflicts that often occur in Indonesia's multicultural society.

However, there are several challenges in implementing religious moderation in Indonesia. Some of them are the lack of awareness of the importance of religious moderation, the ongoing social and economic injustices, and the tendency to strengthen religious identity and undermine other religions in competition to maintain influence and power in society (Ahmed et al., 2019; Grossmann, 2019; Mol, 2022). Therefore, deeper research is needed to understand the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society, so that it can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

According to previous research, religious moderation can play an important role in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in a multicultural society (Kruja, 2022; Adisti, 2022). However, most of this research was conducted with a focus on certain religious views and did not take into account the social and cultural context of Indonesia (Solahudin & Fakhruroji, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of religious moderation in the social and cultural context of Indonesia, by taking a comprehensive and integrative approach from various disciplines (sociology, anthropology, psychology, and religion) to gain a more holistic and in-depth understanding of the role religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society.

Previous research has shown that the role of religious moderation can help build inter-religious harmony and tolerance in multicultural societies (Sulaiman et al., 2022; Pajarianto et al., 2022). According to Ummah, (2022), religious moderation can help reduce inter-religious tensions and increase inter-religious cooperation. This is supported by Elvana & Masduki's research (2022) which shows that religious moderation can be a bridge to strengthen...
harmony and peace in a multicultural society.

However, there is also research which considers that religious moderation can lead to polarization and strengthen the hegemony of the majority religion. According to McCoy & Somer, (2019), the concept of religious moderation can create the impression that moderate religion is right and extreme religion is wrong, so that it can strengthen the hegemony of the majority religion and cause polarization in society. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a more holistic and thorough study of the concept of religious moderation in the social and cultural context of Indonesia.

In the Indonesian context, religious moderation can be seen as a solution to overcoming inter-religious conflicts and social polarization that occurs in society. However, in order to understand the role of religious moderation in the Indonesian social and cultural context, it is necessary to carry out comprehensive and integrative research from various disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, and religion. This research is expected to provide a deeper and holistic understanding of the role of religious moderation in building interreligious harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society, as well as to contribute to the development of a more inclusive concept of religious moderation in accordance with Indonesia's social and cultural context.

The novelty of this research is that it offers a new approach in understanding the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. Previously, previous studies had focused more on the positive impact of religious moderation in building interfaith harmony. However, this new approach acknowledges that there are also criticisms of the concept of religious moderation. Some researchers argue that religious moderation can actually strengthen the hegemony of the majority religion and increase social polarization.

In the Indonesian context, previous research is still limited. Most research only discusses the positive impact of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society without examining in depth the social and cultural context of Indonesia (Lessy & Rohman, 2022; Sahertian & Jawas, 2021; Daheri et al., 2023). Therefore, this research is expected to provide new insights about the concept of religious moderation in the Indonesian context which has unique social and cultural characteristics.

This research is also expected to provide practical recommendations for the government and society in building interfaith harmony and harmony in Indonesia. With a better understanding of the concept of religious moderation in the Indonesian social and cultural context, more appropriate strategies and policies can be produced to minimize inter-religious
conflicts and increase inter-religious tolerance.

Therefore, this research is very important to do and is relevant to the current Indonesian social and cultural conditions. Thus, researchers are interested in examining the role of religious moderation in Indonesian multicultural society with a sociological perspective in order to understand more deeply the relationship between religion and Indonesian multicultural society.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach by conducting a literature review of related articles, journals and books (Mengist et al., 2020). Researchers will search for and collect literature relevant to the research topic from various sources, including online databases, libraries, and other sources.

After collecting literature, the researcher will sort and select literature that is relevant to the research topic (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Literature that is irrelevant to the research topic will be eliminated. Then, the researcher will conduct an analysis of the literature that has been collected to explore the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. The analysis will be carried out systematically by considering aspects that are relevant to the research topic. In addition, researchers will also use qualitative analysis techniques to understand the contents of the literature in depth. In this case, the researcher will seek and use relevant and up-to-date literature to ensure the validity of the research.

The research procedure begins with the identification of research topics and the collection of relevant literature (Linnenluecke et al., 2020). After the literature has been collected, the researcher will conduct a critical reading of any literature found, noting theories and concepts related to the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. Next, the researcher will select and filter the most relevant and significant literature for this study.

After the literature is selected, the researcher will conduct a qualitative analysis of the data found in the literature. The data analyzed in this study is the result of a literature study, namely theories and concepts related to the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society. Researchers will look for similarities and differences in the literature that has been collected and synthesize data to produce new findings that are relevant to the research topic.

Finally, researchers will interpret and analyze the findings found in this study and make conclusions regarding the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of religious moderation is important in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society.

The role of religious moderation in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society is a topic that has been widely discussed by researchers and academics. Some related articles that can provide a deeper understanding of this topic are as follows:

1. Research conducted by Kawangung, (2019) entitled Religious moderation discourse in plurality of social harmony in Indonesia. This article discusses the importance of religious moderation in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia. According to the author, religious moderation can reduce social tensions and strengthen relations between religious communities. In addition, the author also highlights the importance of moderate religious education to build awareness and understanding of the diversity of religions in Indonesia.

2. The research conducted by Wijaya et al., (2021) entitled Management of Islamic Education Based on Interreligious Dialogue in The Learning Process in Schools as An Effort to Moderate Religion in Indonesia. This article discusses how religious moderation can help build inter-religious tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. The author emphasizes that religious moderation can help strengthen harmony between religions and minimize the occurrence of religious conflicts. In addition, the author also highlights the important role of moderate religious leaders and religious education in building awareness of religious diversity in Indonesia.

3. Research conducted by Umaru, (2019) entitled The Responsibility of Religious Leaders in the Promotion of Dialogue for Peace in a Religious Diverse Society. This article discusses the important role of religious leaders in promoting religious moderation in Indonesia. The author highlights that religious leaders have an important role in building awareness and understanding of religious diversity in society. In addition, the author also emphasizes the importance of the role of religious leaders in minimizing the occurrence of inter-religious conflicts and strengthening inter-religious harmony in Indonesia.

4. Ummah's research, (2022) entitled The Voices of Inter-Religious Harmony. This article discusses how religious moderation can affect interreligious harmony in Indonesia. According to the author, religious moderation can help minimize inter-religious conflict and strengthen inter-religious harmony. The author also highlights the important role of social institutions in promoting religious moderation in society.

From these various articles, it can be concluded that religious moderation plays an important role in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. Moderate religious education, the role of religious leaders, and the promotion of religious moderation by social institutions are important factors in
strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia (Pajarianto et al., 2022). Therefore, joint efforts from all parties are needed to promote religious moderation in social life.

Apart from that, the article discussed also highlights the efforts that can be made to promote religious moderation in Indonesian society. One of the relevant articles is the article entitled "Rising Islamism and the struggle for Islamic authority in post-reformasi Indonesia". This article reveals that efforts to promote religious moderation can be carried out by directly involving the community, such as through interfaith dialogue activities, interfaith religious meetings, and social programs involving various religious groups (Arifianto, 2020).

Meanwhile, another article discussing the importance of religious moderation in the Indonesian context is "Socializing religious moderation and peace in the Indonesian landscape". This article highlights how religious moderation can help promote unity and harmony among religious communities in Indonesia, especially in dealing with inter-religious conflicts that often occur in Indonesia. This article also shows that religious moderation can help in dealing with the social and political challenges faced by Indonesian society (Setia & Rahman, 2022).

From the various articles that have been discussed, it can be concluded that religious moderation plays an important role in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. Efforts to promote religious moderation need to be continued by involving the community directly and in ways that are relevant to the social and cultural context of Indonesia. This can help build unity and harmony in Indonesia as well as overcome the social and political challenges faced by Indonesian society. Therefore, the study of the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society is still an interesting topic for further study.

**Religious moderation can reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts.**

Religious moderation has an important role in building interfaith harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. Several research results show that religious moderation can reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts. For example, a study conducted by Mashuri et al., (2022) found that religious moderation can reduce tensions between Muslims and Christians in Central Sulawesi. This is because religious moderation allows people to better understand religious differences and respect different beliefs.

One of the articles discussing this is research by Subchi et al., (2022) in the journal Religions. In their research, religious moderation can be a solution to overcome social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia. Through a moderate approach, individuals can better understand religious and cultural differences, and respect the values shared by other societies. This will help in creating a more harmonious and tolerant environment in a multicultural society.

In addition, research by Sihombing et al., (2020) in the Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies reveals that religious moderation can reduce social
tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia. In their research, individuals who have a moderate attitude toward religion tend to be more tolerant of religious differences and more open to interfaith dialogue. This can help in preventing inter-religious conflicts in multicultural societies.

Another study conducted by Al Qurtuby, (2022) shows that religious moderation can promote peace and inter-religious tolerance in Aceh, an area that was previously hit by serious inter-religious conflict. In this study, religious moderation was shown by the people of Aceh who practice religion with tolerance and respect for different religious beliefs. They are also able to resolve interfaith conflicts through dialogue and deliberation, without resorting to violence.

Another study by Setia & Rahman, (2022) in the Journal of Faith and Spirituality also found similar results. In their research, religious moderation can reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia. This happens because individuals who have a moderate attitude towards religion tend to be more open to religious differences and are better able to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Furthermore, research by Hadi Kusuma & Susilo, (2020) shows that religious moderation can help reduce tensions between different religious groups in Yogyakarta. Religious moderation in this case is shown by the active participation of the community in interfaith dialogue activities and recognition of religious diversity.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that religious moderation can help reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia's multicultural society. Therefore, it is important to encourage individuals and religious groups to practice moderation in carrying out their religious activities and to build inter-religious tolerance in Indonesia.

Interreligious conflicts often occur in Indonesia's multicultural society and become a serious threat to the security and harmony of society. However, the research results show that religious moderation can play an important role in reducing social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia.

Religious moderation can help reduce the level of religious intolerance and fanaticism which are the main causes of inter-religious conflicts (Eko & Putranto, 2019). This research shows that religious moderation can strengthen a sense of unity and solidarity between different religious groups, so as to minimize the potential for conflict.

In addition, research conducted by Alfian, (2021) shows that religious moderation can reduce the tendency of individuals to impose their views or beliefs on others. In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, religious moderation can help individuals accept differences and respect the cultural and religious diversity that surrounds them. This will help to minimize conflict and increase interfaith tolerance.

Related to this, another study conducted by Wijaya et al., (2021) shows that religious moderation can help build better interfaith dialogue and communication. In the Indonesian context,
Religious moderation can help individuals to understand the views and values held by other religious groups. This can open opportunities for mutually respectful dialogue and communication, so as to reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts.

Overall, the research results show that religious moderation can help in reducing social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia's multicultural society. Religious moderation can strengthen a sense of unity and solidarity between different religious groups, reduce the tendency of individuals to impose their views or beliefs on others, and assist in building better interfaith dialogue and communication. Therefore, efforts are needed to increase the understanding and practice of religious moderation in Indonesian society in order to create a harmonious and tolerant society.

From the results of the research above, it can be concluded that religious moderation can contribute to reducing social tensions and inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia's multicultural society. Religious moderation can be exemplified through tolerance, respect, and active participation in interfaith dialogue activities. Therefore, efforts to promote religious moderation need to be continued by involving the community directly and in ways that are relevant to the social and cultural context of Indonesia.

**Religious moderation can increase interfaith understanding and religious tolerance in a multicultural society.**

Several articles show that religious moderation can increase interfaith understanding and religious tolerance in multicultural societies. One of the articles that discusses this is research conducted by Ali et al., (2021) which found that religious education that teaches the values of moderation can increase interfaith understanding and tolerance among students. This is supported by another study conducted by Ruswandi et al., (2022) which shows that religious education that emphasizes the values of religious moderation can increase interfaith understanding and tolerance in students.

Apart from religious education, several articles also show that interfaith dialogue and interfaith activities can also increase interfaith understanding and tolerance in multicultural societies. For example, research conducted by Eko & Putranto, (2019) shows that inter-religious dialogue activities in Indonesia can help increase inter-religious understanding and tolerance among dialogue participants. This is also supported by other research conducted by Adila et al., (2022) which shows that interfaith activities can increase interfaith understanding and tolerance in activity participants.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that religious moderation can help increase interfaith understanding and tolerance in multicultural societies. Efforts to promote religious moderation need to be continued in ways that are relevant to the Indonesian social and cultural context, such as religious education that teaches the values of moderation and interfaith activities. This can help build unity and harmony in Indonesia as well as overcome the social and political challenges faced by Indonesian society. Therefore, the study of the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society is still an
interesting topic for further study. From the results of this study it can be concluded that religious moderation has an important role in building harmony and harmony between religious communities in Indonesia's multicultural society. It can also reduce social tensions and inter-religious conflicts as well as increase inter-religious understanding and religious tolerance.

Religious moderation can increase interfaith understanding and religious tolerance in multicultural societies, as revealed in research results presented in various articles. Various studies show that religious moderation can help strengthen interfaith understanding among various religious groups, as well as increase tolerance and respect for religious differences in society.

One of the relevant studies is research conducted by Setia & Rahman, (2022), which found that religious moderation can strengthen interfaith understanding and harmony in Indonesia's multicultural society. Through an approach to interfaith dialogue and active community involvement in the process of building tolerance, religious moderation can help overcome interfaith disputes and conflicts, as well as increase mutual respect and respect among various religious groups.

The same thing was stated in research conducted by Menchik & Trost, (2018), which found that religious moderation can help increase interfaith understanding and a sense of tolerance in society. Through active participation in various interfaith activities, such as dialogue, interfaith meetings, and joint social programs, religious moderation can help strengthen understanding and brotherhood among various religious groups.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that religious moderation plays an important role in strengthening interfaith understanding and increasing religious tolerance in multicultural societies. Therefore, efforts to promote religious moderation need to be continued by actively involving the community, as well as in ways that are relevant to the social and cultural context of Indonesia. In this way, Indonesian people can build unity and harmony among various religious groups, as well as overcome the social and political challenges they face.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion results from the various articles that have been presented, it can be concluded that religious moderation plays an important role in building inter-religious harmony and tolerance in Indonesia's multicultural society. Efforts to promote religious moderation need to be continued by involving the community directly and in ways that are relevant to the social and cultural context of Indonesia. Religious moderation can assist in reducing social tensions and inter-religious conflicts, as well as increasing inter-religious understanding and religious tolerance in multicultural societies. Therefore, the study of the role of religious moderation in Indonesia's multicultural society is still an interesting topic for further study. As a country with cultural and religious diversity, Indonesia
needs to continue to promote religious moderation as a way to build unity and harmony amidst the social and political challenges it faces.

The application of religious moderation can be carried out through various efforts, such as involving the community directly in activities that support interfaith harmony, approaches to interfaith dialogue, as well as campaigns that educate the public about the importance of interfaith tolerance and harmony. In addition, it is also important to continue to promote the values of religious moderation at the education level, both at school and outside of school, so that people can understand and apply these values in their daily lives.

Suggestions for further research are to broaden the scope of research on religious moderation, including studies on the effect of religious moderation in other contexts outside Indonesia's multicultural society, as well as looking at the factors that influence and support the application of religious moderation. Research can also broaden its focus on how to strengthen the values of religious moderation and concrete efforts to encourage the application of religious moderation in society.

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