



Strategies for Instilling Religious Moderation Through Traditional Games for Elementary School Children

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v8i1.7139			
Received: 12 Apr 2023	Revised: 25 May 2023	Approved: 14 June 2023	Available Online: 25 June 2023

Abstrak

Penanaman moderasi beragama perlu dilakukan mengingat semakin ekstremnya perbedaan sehingga perlu adanya pembentukan sikap yang mampu menghadapi hal demikian. Moderasi beragama perlu diimplementasikan kepada anak Madrasah Ibtidaiyah dikarenakan mereka sangat rentan terhadap perilaku menyimpang. Upaya yang dilakukan oleh pendidik guna menanamkan nilai-nilai moderasi melalui beberapa strategi yang telah dirancang. Strategi tersebut tidak lain merupakan cara jitu untuk memberikan stimulus tentang moderasi beragama, mulai dari strategi tradisional atau konvensional, strategi bebas, strategi reflektif, hingga strategi transinteralisasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi penanaman mengenai moderasi beragama dan mengetahui implikasi penanaman moderasi beragama melalui permainan tradisional engklek pada anak Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif lapangan dengan cara menganalisis data yang diperoleh dari hasil observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi selama penelitian berlangsung di sebuah lembaga pendidikan tingkat dasar yaitu MI Sullam Taufiq. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan moderasi beragama yang dimiliki oleh peserta didik melalui pembelajaran dengan penerapan permainan tradisional engklek lebih konkrit sehingga mempermudah pemahaman dan penerapan terkait moderasi beragama pada peserta didik.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Permainan Tradisional, Peserta Didik

Abstract

The cultivation of religious moderation needs to be done considering the increasingly extreme differences. It is necessary to develop an attitude for dealing with the differences. Religious moderation needs to be implemented for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students because

they are very vulnerable to deviant behavior. Efforts have been made by educators to instill moderation values through several strategies that have been designed. This strategy is a surefire way to provide a stimulus for religious moderation, starting from traditional or conventional strategies, free strategies, reflective strategies, and transinternalization strategies. This study aims to describe the inculcation strategy regarding religious moderation and find out the implications of instilling religious moderation through traditional hopscotch games for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah children. The method used in this research is qualitative, which involves analyzing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation during the study at an elementary-level educational institution, namely MI Sullam Taufiq. The results of this study indicate that the development of religious moderation of the students through learning with the application of traditional crank games is more concrete. It facilitates the understanding and application of religious moderation in students.

Keywords: *Religious Moderation, Traditional Games, Elementary Students*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country characterized by its rich diversity of ethnicities, cultures, tribes, languages, beliefs, and religions. The sheer number of tribes, languages, and local beliefs in Indonesia is estimated to be in the hundreds or even thousands. Undoubtedly, achieving harmony in such a diverse society poses significant challenges for the nation. The coexistence of differences and diversity often gives rise to horizontal, social, and religious conflicts that can lead to divisions (Jamaluddin, 2022). Consequently, one viable solution to preserve this diversity is to promote harmony and peace in religious life through mutual understanding and tolerance, with a focus on religious moderation (Parhan et al., 2022).

Religious moderation encompasses a perspective, behavior, and attitude that strive to maintain a balanced and fair approach within religion. It emphasizes the importance of openness, adaptability, and integration with diverse communities, rejecting isolation and closed-mindedness (Zainal Abidin, 2021). Understanding religious moderation goes beyond a textual interpretation; in the context of Indonesia, it pertains to the moderation of the interpretation and practice of religion. This moderate attitude is crucial and beneficial in social life, as reflected in the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Hanafi et al., 2022).

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is the national motto of Indonesia, written on the state symbol *Pancasila*, signifying the unity of the Indonesian people despite their differences. Maintaining cohesiveness in a diverse country is difficult (Hadi & Anggraeni, 2021). The rise of radical elements in society, both offline and in cyberspace, poses a significant threat,

particularly when it infiltrates the educational environment and disrupts the education system. Addressing this problem firmly becomes crucial, with a specific focus on elementary school students (Utami et al., 2023).

The elementary school age is a vulnerable period for children, making them susceptible to deviant behavior. They often engage in activities they perceive as fun, without realizing that they may be engaging in deviant behavior. For instance, they may consume "prank" content, laughingly imitate it with their friends, oblivious to the potential harm caused to others. If such excessive behavior persists in elementary school children, there is a concern that radicalism may become deeply ingrained as they mature into adulthood. Therefore, efforts to prevent this need to begin during elementary school through the internalization of character education (Ali Ahmad, 2023).

Efforts to promote religious moderation within the realm of basic education have been explored in several studies and journal articles. Firstly, Anjeli Aliya Purnama Sari conducted research focused on applying the values of religious moderation in early childhood education through Islamic religious education. The findings indicate that this application involves recognizing and respecting the differences between religions in Indonesia (Anjeli Aliya Purnama Sari, 2021). Secondly, Muhammad Nur Rofik and M. Misbah conducted research on the implementation of a religious moderation program launched by the Ministry of Religion of Banyumas Regency in school environments. The study identified the factors that support or hinder the fostering of religious moderation values in elementary and secondary education (DIKDAS). The results demonstrated successful implementation, leading to a significant level of harmony and tolerance among students, enabling them to overcome various challenges and conflicts (Muhammad Nur Rofik, 2021). Lastly, Muhammad Syaikhul Alim and Achmad Munib conducted research on the actualization of religious moderation education in madrasas. The study revealed that the development of curriculum, formulation of vision and mission statements, and implementation of programs played a significant role in internalizing religious moderation values within madrasas (Alim & Munib, 2021).

The three aforementioned studies primarily focus on cultivating moderation values in elementary school students. Although these researchers explore the strategy of instilling religious moderation through traditional games in elementary school children, their focus lies in examining the implications and strategies associated with inculcating religious moderation values through traditional games. Consequently, the researchers are

motivated to further investigate the implementation of instilling religious moderation through a traditional game known as engklek in Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah settings.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a field study, employing a descriptive qualitative approach. Such a research procedure aims to gather descriptive data, including written or spoken words from individuals, observable behavior, and general descriptions of phenomena in the field (Chong & Plonsky, 2021). The selected research location for this study is MI Sullam Taufiq, situated on Jalan Mandurorejo, Kajen, Pekalongan Regency.

The primary data for this study was collected from class teachers and students, utilizing research instruments and interview sheets administered to the teachers. Secondary data, on the other hand, was obtained from various sources such as teaching modules, books, journals, and other relevant literary materials supporting the research theme. The researcher opted for this type of research to obtain comprehensive and accurate findings regarding the implementation of religious moderation through traditional educational games for elementary school children.

The data collection in this study employed various methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation. The researchers observed the implementation of the educational traditional game, specifically the crank game. Interviews were conducted with class teachers to gather their insights. Additionally, the documentation method was used to acquire data related to the school and learning preparation documents, particularly those pertaining to religious moderation. Once the data was collected, the researcher performed data analysis using several techniques.

The techniques utilized in data analysis included data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involved the researcher selecting relevant data from the observations, interviews, and documentation, which were then processed to facilitate data presentation. The next step involved presenting the collected and reduced data in a narrative form. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the presented data, forming the researcher's argument (Scribbr, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategy for Planting Religious Moderation Through Traditional Games

Religious moderation is understood as religious behavior that prioritizes harmony between one's own religious experience and respect for other people's religious experiences, so as to reduce extreme and fanatical attitudes. The values of religious moderation are not only focused on religious moderation agents but also students by providing an understanding of the value of religious moderation in learning with various methods. Learning for students does not only require perfunctory methods; it also must be in accordance with their needs and be able to be implemented in social life so that it can attract their interest in learning new things (Masturin, 2023).

Madrasas are a strategic medium in the process of internalizing the values of religious moderation. Besides, there are students whose age makes it easy to receive stimulation, where their curiosity starts to grow and develop. The educational climate in madrasas is also an important factor in the success of the internalization process. Madrasahs, which have long taught and implemented moral education and spiritual values for students, are seen as consistent and even strengthen the emergence of an attitude of religious moderation (Rohman et al., 2022).

The attitude of religious moderation in students does not come by itself but through the learning process, both through learning from subjects that teach about religious moderation and habituation in attitudes and behavior in madrasas, as well as through the example of educators and all elements in the madrasah environment. For this reason, a strategy is needed for internalizing the values of religious moderation so that students know, think, understand, live, and ultimately apply the values of religious moderation in everyday life (Martanti, 2020). One example is the efforts made by MI educator Sullam Taufiq to apply four strategies, namely traditional or conventional strategies, independent strategies, reflective strategies, and transinternalization strategies, with the main key being character habituation in children's daily lives while at school. These strategies are carried out in stages.

The first strategy employed by MI Sullam Taufiq educators is the traditional or conventional approach. This involves directly imparting values through lectures that discuss moderate attitudes and behaviors in religion, as well as incorporating these concepts into various subjects taught to the students. Educators at MI Sullam Taufiq provide guidance on appropriate and inappropriate attitudes and behaviors.

The second strategy is the free strategy, which initially introduces the concept of religious moderation to students and then encourages them to apply these attitudes and behaviors based on their understanding. Educators allow students more flexibility in their conduct. However, the success of this strategy relies on students fully comprehending the concept of moderation, enabling them to make informed judgments about what is appropriate and what is not.

The third strategy is the reflective strategy, which aims to raise students' awareness, perspectives, and understanding of religious moderation through the practice of playing hopscotch at MI Sullam Taufiq. This approach encourages students to reflect on their comprehension and awareness of the concept of moderation through their daily attitudes and behaviors. The hopscotch game is designed to instill religious moderation and aligns with four indicators of moderation: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and adaptation to local culture. Through the traditional hopscotch game, children have the opportunity to learn about national commitments, which reflect the commitment of the Indonesian people as expressed in the values of Pancasila. These values are integrated into the game, such as praying before playing, taking turns, maintaining good manners by refraining from mocking others who cannot play well, fostering harmony and unity during the game, and ensuring fairness by providing equal opportunities to play. The game also promotes tolerance, non-violence, and other important values. Children learn not to discriminate against their friends, play together harmoniously, avoid bullying, help one another, and follow the rules of the game. By playing this traditional game, local cultural heritage is preserved and passed down.

The fourth strategy is the transinternalization strategy, which involves fostering deep and interactive communication between educators and students at MI Sullam Taufiq regarding moderate attitudes in religion. Teachers provide examples of moderate attitudes and behaviors for students to emulate. Consistency between words and actions is crucial for teachers to maintain, ensuring that their personal conduct aligns with the principles they convey to students. If inconsistencies arise, students may lose trust in the teachers' message. The success of these four strategies depends on the foresight of teachers and parents in adapting them to the students' needs and their ability to grasp the concept of religious moderation. Therefore, it is important for teachers and parents to collaborate closely in implementing these strategies.

Implications of Cultivating Religious Moderation through Traditional Games

It is crucial to acknowledge that religious moderation is not a new concept for the Indonesian people. Indonesian society possesses a deep-rooted social and cultural capital, with a long-standing tradition of tolerance, brotherhood, and respect for diversity. These foundational values form the bedrock and philosophy of Indonesian society, underpinning the principle of religious moderation. Hence, it is evident that religious moderation is intrinsically linked to fostering unity through a spirit of tolerance, an ancestral heritage of the Indonesian nation. Therefore, religious moderation must become the mainstream approach in building a harmonious social and religious life in Indonesia (Akhmadi, 2019). Establishing religious moderation as the mainstream requires persistent effort, as it is not an easy endeavor. It necessitates the collective commitment of all segments of society. Moreover, it should be integrated into Indonesia's medium- and long-term development plans, ensuring that the implemented programs receive widespread support from the Indonesian population (Saumantri, 2022).

The implementation of such programs can commence at the formal education level, focusing on the profound implications of instilling religious moderation from early childhood education, particularly at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah (MI) or Elementary School (SD) level. As the Arabic proverb suggests, "Learning in childhood is like carving on stone," highlighting the significance of early education and its lasting impact into adulthood (Umah et al., 2022). The positive implications of cultivating religious moderation are exemplified by MI Sullam Taufiq, which actively supports community programs aimed at nurturing religious moderation. The school introduces children to the concept and practice of religious moderation through various character-building stimuli that align with the prevailing norms in Indonesia. MI Sullam Taufiq's commitment to these efforts demonstrates its dedication to promoting religious moderation in the community.

Quoting the opinion of one of the teachers at MI Sullam Taufiq, it is important to teach moderation in religion from an early age. In today's technologically advanced era, where parents may struggle to properly control the content their children are exposed to, instilling religious moderation becomes crucial in preserving their good character. Therefore, educators at MI Sullam Taufiq consistently encourage parents to collaborate in cultivating religious moderation in children, both at school and at home. Roma Aristiyanto, who has been teaching the third grade at MI Sullam Taufiq for approximately

two semesters, has witnessed the positive character development of his students in Class III A (17 children) and Class III B (17 children). This progress did not occur overnight; it is the result of joint efforts by educators and parents at MI Sullam Taufiq to instill religious moderation in the children. Educators continuously strive to introduce innovative approaches in cultivating religious moderation.

In an interview with an MI educator, Sullam Taufiq, it was stated, "Children show greater enthusiasm for learning through play, such as when playing hopscotch. They better grasp the indicators of religious moderation because they enjoy this learning strategy." Therefore, in the future, educators plan to further enhance their creativity in developing strategies for instilling various forms of moderation, particularly reflective strategies, as children tend to favor games as a means of learning.

Roma Aristiyanto highlighted the effectiveness of the hopscotch game in nurturing religious moderation. Through a single game, educators can integrate all the indicators of religious moderation. Moreover, the crank game is not only entertaining but also educational, as it can be incorporated into various subjects without requiring extensive resources. Children can create and play this game anywhere. The crank game offers a variety of options, including mountain engklek, airplane engklek, propeller engklek, and many more. These diverse game types help develop children's mindset to embrace new challenges and ensure that the values of religious moderation remain integral.

CONCLUSION

The values of religious moderation are not only important for religious moderation agents but also for students, as they provide an understanding of the significance of religious moderation in the learning process through various methods. These values of religious moderation are integrated into the learning process and taught through different subjects.

The development of the attitude of religious moderation in students does not occur spontaneously; rather, it is cultivated through the learning process, which includes instruction on religious moderation, habituation to moderate attitudes and behavior in madrasas, and the exemplary role of educators and the overall madrasah environment. Therefore, a strategy is required to internalize the values of religious moderation, enabling students to comprehend, reflect upon, understand, adopt, and ultimately apply these values in their everyday lives. One such strategy is the utilization of the traditional engklek

game, as it allows children to grasp the context of religious moderation values and directly apply them within the framework of this traditional game.

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