



Implementation of Religious Moderation Values in Early Childhood through Islamic Religious Education

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Abstract

RA TAAM Adinda is an educational institution that prioritizes religious values in early childhood education, with one of its main focuses being the value of religious moderation. This research aims to analyze the process of implementing religious moderation values in early childhood at RA TAAM Adinda and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors. This study employs a qualitative approach in the form of a case study, with research subjects including educators, students, and parents. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. The results of the study show that the implementation of religious moderation values in early childhood through Islamic education at RA TAAM Adinda is carried out through the processes of planning, execution, and evaluation. Planning is influenced by incorporating religious moderation values into the school curriculum, annual, semester, weekly programs, and daily learning programs. The implementation of religious moderation values is integrated into learning activities, role modeling, and daily habits. The evaluation process follows the learning evaluation through observation results, student work, performance, conversations, and assignments. Supporting factors for implementing religious moderation values include the presence of these values in the curriculum, the school's motivation to achieve high-quality graduates, and adequate facilities and infrastructure. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include the diverse characteristics of children, the lack of student focus in receiving the material, and environmental influences.

Keywords : Early Childhood, Islamic Religious Education, Religious Moderation

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INTRODUCTION

The problems faced by the Indonesian nation are getting more and more complicated compared to previous periods (Musrifah, 2018). Almost all aspects of life, including religion, education, politics, law, social, culture, and economy, face various problems. As one of the fundamental aspects, education is also inseparable from these problems (Sabri, 2020). This situation is further exacerbated by the decline in the nation's moral values which is very worrying. In addition to the frequent fights, riots, and brawls between students and

students which are disturbing, the issue of religious moderation also still requires serious attention. (Wahidah & Maristyawati, 2023) .

Religious moderation is an important principle in maintaining harmony in religious life in a pluralistic society (Hidayati, 2020) . Religious moderation is not interpreted as an effort to weaken or reduce a person's belief in their religion, but rather as a form of religious attitude that is fair, balanced, and not extreme (Ritonga, 2021) . A fair attitude is reflected in the ability to be objective and not easily judge other people's differences in views or beliefs. Balance is seen in the way of carrying out religious teachings proportionally, without being excessive or lacking in carrying out obligations or in behaving towards differences (Jaenullah, Ferdian Utama, 2022) . Meanwhile, a non-extreme attitude means distancing oneself from fanaticism, violence, or intolerant attitudes that can damage social harmony (Rahman, Ruswandi, & Erihadiana, 2021) . Thus, religious moderation is a reflection of a deep and wise understanding of religious teachings, which emphasizes the values of peace, tolerance, and respect for differences. This moderate attitude is important to be instilled from an early age so that children grow into religious, open individuals who are able to live side by side harmoniously in a pluralistic society (Ramli, 2022) . In the context of pluralistic Indonesia, instilling the values of religious moderation from an early age is an urgent need so that future generations grow as tolerant, open individuals who uphold humanitarian values (Politics et al., 2024) .

Early childhood education is an important foundation in the formation of character and life values (Mu'arifah, Yusuf, Utama, Setiawan, & Dea, 2024) . This period is a period of early childhood development known as the golden age, namely the age range of 0 to 6 years. At this stage, children experience very rapid growth and development, both physically, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually (Sari, 2023) . Children's brains develop very quickly and are able to absorb various information, experiences, and values introduced by their surroundings. This is why this period is considered the most appropriate time to instill moral and spiritual foundations, such as the values of honesty, compassion, empathy, and introduction to the concept of God, worship, and religious teachings (Utama & Dea, 2023) . If these values are instilled in the right way and in accordance with the child's development, a strong character will be formed and become the foundation of the child's behavior in the future. Therefore, education at this time has a strategic role in forming a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has good morals and moderate spiritual understanding. Islamic religious education applied to early childhood has an important role in instilling the values of religious moderation, such as tolerance, respect for differences, and love of peace (Kamaruddin, Zulham, Utama, & Fadilah, 2023) .

This is evident from the existence of intolerant attitudes and behavior in religious and social life. There are still pockets of intolerance, vulnerability to communal conflict, and radical elements that need to be continuously improved, including the problem of religious intolerance and, more broadly, harmony or harmony between religious communities. (Kompas, 2013). The future of tolerance in Indonesia is still far from ideal. (Kholid, 2013) Various studies and studies show that symptoms of intolerance still exist in society, including among students and pupils. For example, the results of the Indonesian Survey Circle survey showed that 31% of students have an intolerant attitude. (Etikasari, 2018; Ma'arif, 2019).

If this condition is not addressed immediately, the young generation of Indonesia has the potential to become the target of propaganda agents who oppose religious moderation. In fact, the young generation should be the successors of the nation's struggle in continuing the development of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* written on the Garuda Pancasila symbol. In 2030, the young generation of Indonesia is expected to be able to take advantage of the demographic bonus positively, considering their very large numbers. Ideally, all elements of society need to take an important role in solving these various problems. One important role can be played by

teachers and parents, especially in early childhood education institutions. Early age is a golden age to build a good character foundation, especially related to religious moderation or an anti-violence attitude in religion (Kristianto, Susetyo, Utama, Fitriono, & Jannah, 2023). With a strong character foundation, the young generation is expected to have good character, especially in terms of religious moderation and tolerance.

RA Taman Asuh Anak Muslim Adinda is an early childhood education institution located in Kepatih Village, Menganti District, Gresik Regency. In this institution, character education is the main priority in the learning process. Materials on morals and religion are not only delivered in theory, but also taught practically, so that the expected values can be embedded well in students, especially the value of religious moderation. Based on this background, the research question that arises is: how is the implementation of the value of religious moderation in early childhood through Islamic Religious Education at RA TAAM Adinda Kepatih Menganti Gresik. This study aims to examine how the implementation of the values of religious moderation is applied to early childhood through Islamic religious education, as well as to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation process.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe in depth the implementation of religious moderation values in early childhood through Islamic Religious Education learning at RA TAAM Adinda, Kepatih Village, Menganti District, Gresik Regency. This approach was chosen so that researchers can understand the meaning, process, and context of the application of moderation values in early childhood education environments as a whole. The subjects in this study consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers, school principals, and children involved in the learning process. The informant selection technique was carried out by purposive sampling, namely by selecting informants who were considered to have knowledge and direct involvement with the focus of the research. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to directly observe learning practices and interactions that reflect moderation values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation. Interviews were conducted with teachers and school principals to obtain information regarding the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning that integrates religious moderation values. Documentation in the form of RPPH, activity books, and visual documentation of activities were used as supporting data (Rukajat, 2018). The data obtained were analyzed using interactive analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman which include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. To ensure the validity of the data, source and technique triangulation techniques were used. With this method, it is hoped that the study can provide a complete understanding of the application of religious moderation values in learning at RA TAAM Adinda, as well as being a reference for similar educational institutions in instilling moderate Islamic values in children from an early age.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Religious Moderation Values Through Islamic Religious Education for Early Childhood at RA TAAM Adinda Kepatih Menganti Gresik

The results of the study revealed that the implementation of religious moderation values in early childhood through Islamic religious education at RA TAAM Adinda involves the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. The following is a more detailed explanation of the implementation of religious moderation values in early childhood through Islamic religious education at RA TAAM Adinda Kepatih Menganti Gresik:

a. Planning

Based on observations and interviews, it was found that the implementation of religious moderation values in RA TAAM Adinda for early childhood involves the development of a syllabus, Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH), Weekly Learning Implementation Plan (RPPM), Semester Program (PROMES), and Annual Program (PROTA). This is in accordance with the statement of the principal of RA TAAM Adinda who stated that learning in this institution involves RPPH, RPPM, PROMES, and PROTA.

b. Implementation

1. Opening Activities: The opening activities at RA TAAM Adinda began with congregational dhuha prayers and reciting Asmaul Husana. Furthermore, the opening was completed by singing religious songs, prayers, reading short letters, and selected hadiths, according to the statement of one of the teachers at this institution. All of these activities teach children about religious moderation.
2. Core Activities: In the core section, students are taught materials according to the schedule that has been set. They are invited to pay attention, ask questions, seek information, express ideas, and communicate. The teacher guides them according to the RPPH. One of the materials taught to students is about the attitude of religious moderation.
3. Closing Activities: After the core activities, the teacher closes by reviewing the material that has been taught, sharing a short story with a moral message, and providing information about the next meeting's activities. Then, students are invited to pray together before going home.

c. Evaluation

Learning evaluation is an integral part of teaching and learning activities. This evaluation aims to measure the effectiveness of the learning process and its results, using observation methods, assignments (projects), performance (performance), questions and answers, and work results (products), according to teacher interviews at RA TAAM Adinda.

One method used to implement the value of religious moderation is the habituation method. Through this method, students are trained to develop positive characters in everyday life, such as eating and drinking with the right hand, greeting, reading prayers, being honest, helping each other, and respecting friends that reflect an attitude of moderation in religion. The form of implementation of the values of tolerance and mutual respect, for example, can be seen from the teacher's efforts to accustom children not to tease each other, share toys, and accept differences in background habits in their respective homes. Teachers actively direct children to respect their friends, and tell Islamic stories that contain messages about compassion and brotherhood. The values of mutual cooperation and cooperation are instilled through group activities such as tidying up toys together, washing hands in turns, and making artwork in groups. This encourages children to learn to live together, not be selfish, and help each other.

Meanwhile, the values of peace and anti-violence are manifested in conflict resolution strategies between children. When a dispute occurs, the teacher does not immediately punish, but invites the children to have a dialogue to express their feelings, then guides them to apologize and make peace. This process is a concrete means of learning moderate attitudes that are relevant and easy to understand for early childhood. In addition, the value of balance between worship and social life is also introduced through joint prayer activities, ablution practices, and introduction to prayer combined with an emphasis on politeness and good character. Religious learning at RA TAAM Adinda is not dogmatic, but is packaged with an approach of playing, singing, and storytelling. This method has proven effective in conveying Islamic values in a fun and non-patronizing way. Children show enthusiasm and

are able to imitate the positive attitudes taught. Teachers also use simple language that is easy for children to understand in explaining moral and spiritual concepts.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that Islamic Religious Education at RA TAAM Adinda has played an important role in instilling the values of religious moderation in early childhood. This implementation is an important foundation in forming the character of children who are tolerant, open, and able to live peacefully amidst diversity. Instilling moderate values from an early age is a strategic step to build a future generation that is able to maintain harmony in a multicultural society.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Moderation Values Through Islamic Religious Education for Early Childhood at RA TAAM Adinda Kepatihan Menganti Gresik

The process of implementing the value of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education learning at RA TAAM Adinda is influenced by various factors, both those that support and those that hinder the learning process. These factors play an important role in determining the extent to which values such as tolerance, love of peace, balance, and anti-extremism can be instilled in early childhood.

In terms of supporting factors, one of the main aspects is the competence of teachers in conveying Islamic teachings in a child-friendly and communicative manner. Teachers at RA TAAM Adinda have quite good pedagogical skills in integrating the values of moderation into religious learning activities through a thematic approach, Islamic stories, games, and songs. Teachers are also able to provide concrete examples in everyday attitudes that reflect the values of tolerance and compassion. In addition, early childhood children have a natural ability to imitate, especially in terms of worship movements such as ablution and prayer. This is a strong capital in instilling religious values from an early age. Other support comes from the availability of interesting and age-appropriate illustrated Islamic story books, which can help teachers convey moral and spiritual messages effectively. A conducive and religious school environment also strengthens the process of internalizing these moderate values.

However, there are a number of inhibiting factors that also affect the smooth implementation of religious moderation values. One of them is the lack of focus and concentration of children during the learning process, which is normal considering the characteristics of early childhood development which is still easily distracted. In addition, the limited number of educators causes the ratio of teachers to students to be unbalanced, making it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention and reinforcement of values to each child. Limited facilities and infrastructure, such as narrow classrooms, minimal educational props, and the unavailability of relevant audio-visual learning media, are also obstacles in delivering interesting and contextual learning. Another factor that is no less important is the difference in family background. Some children come from family environments with minimal understanding of religion or have not even provided a sufficient basis for religious education at home. This causes inconsistencies between education at school and habits in the home environment, so that the values instilled in school are not always reinforced outside the learning environment. As a result, teachers have to work extra hard to shape children's character as a whole.

By understanding these supporting and inhibiting factors, the strategy for implementing moderate religious values in early childhood must be designed adaptively and sustainably. There needs to be strong cooperation between teachers, parents, and schools so that the instillation of moderate Islamic values can run more optimally and sustainably, and become an important foundation in the formation of children's character from an early age.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education at RA TAAM Adinda Kepatihan Menganti Gresik runs effectively through an approach that is in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood development. Moderation values such as tolerance, mutual respect, love of peace, mutual cooperation, and balance between worship and social are taught in an integrated manner in learning activities and in daily routines in the school environment. Teachers have a very important role in conveying these values through fun methods, such as storytelling, playing, singing, and habituation. Supporting factors for the success of this implementation include teacher competence, children's ability to imitate positive behavior, the availability of age-appropriate Islamic books, and a conducive and religious school environment. However, there are also several obstacles, such as the lack of focus of children in learning, the limited number of educators, the lack of learning facilities and media, and differences in the background of religious understanding in the families of students. Thus, education in religious moderation values from an early age is very important as a foundation for the formation of children's characters who are tolerant, open, and able to live peacefully in diversity. Synergy is needed between teachers, parents, and the environment to create a religious learning process that is not only oriented towards cognitive aspects, but also forms attitudes and behaviors that reflect the teachings of Islam which are rahmatan lil 'alamin.

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