

PEERS AS THE AGENT OF RELIGIOUS DERADICALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This article was an endeavor to describe the arena of the education which aim to deradicalization, especially among the youth by their peer group. In previous research, the concept of the youth peer group is rarely considered in the context of the radical religious movement. Otherwise, in many cases, the youth is the main target of the radicalism and they often conducted to the radical religious movement. Data collected based on several observations in experiments in the artificial scene of daily life. The youth found their way to give a sign of awareness of the radical religious movement. The peers become agents of religious deradicalization as their shared their world view of the diversity in their society. The sharing experiences then formed into the knowledge of being inclusive action as the agents to maintain the peaceful society in its diversities rather than the radicals who are causing the fracture of their community.

Keywords: peers, youth, deradicalization

INTRODUCTION

The radical religious movement was already a burning issue in much of the world by the end of the twentieth century. In late 2001, it quite unexpectedly hurtled to the top of the world threat list, driven there by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington and the subsequent launching of the global war on terrorism. The humiliating defeat of Baathist-ruled Iraq by American-led coalition forces in April 2003 seemed bound to keep it there. Notwithstanding strenuous efforts in this period by numerous national leaders and a host of intellectuals to draw a clear distinction between Islam as a major and humane world religion and Islam as a cloak for politically motivated terrorist violence, the temptation to dilute the distinction has faced increasingly less resistance. Indeed, there was some danger that a “clash of civilizations” of some sort was no longer mere abstraction (Limaye et al., 2004: 2).

According to Limaye (2004:2) there were also clear signs of marked increases in wariness among Americans toward Islam: the proportion of Americans who considered Islamic fundamentalism a critical threat to vital

American interests had jumped twenty-three points—from 38 percent to 61 percent—since 1998; four out of ten Americans declared the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to represent the “true teachings” of Islam—to a great degree (21 percent) or some degree (18 percent); and there was strong support (76 percent) for tightened restrictions on immigrants to the United States from Arab or Muslim lands.

Nevertheless, religious radicalism is not new in modern society. Throughout the history of the Indonesian nation, which is a radical religious movement also affected the life of the Indonesian people. Now, the radical movements triggered by opening the valves of democracy, which in turn became the new versions of religious radicalism in Indonesia (Bruinessen, 2002:117).

Radical movements mainly from Islamic groups has been there and accompany the journey of the Republic of Indonesia, as presented by Martin Van Bruinessen in his genealogies Of Islamic Radicalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia. The seeds of radicalism in the Islamic faction was initiated by the young people educated and make the campus as a center movement activities. Radicalism among the educated young people inspired by the Iranian Revolution in 1979 (Bruinessen, 2002: 117).

The new version of religious radicalism is demanding more attention because it was pioneered by a group of educated young scholars. This class recruited to join a group of other young and inculcate the doctrines of radical movements with the terminology of jihad. It is therefore not surprising that a survey conducted by the Institute of Islamic Studies and Peace (LAKIP) showed that 49% of students agreed to radical actions in the name of religions. It is assumed that the teachers of Islamic education of pupils are educated classes who support radicalism in the name of worship. From the teachers, the radical concept transmitted to the students (Munip, 2012: 160).

According to Munip (2012: 160), religious radicalism is not limited to students. Higher education has a tendency to support radical movements in the name of religion. From 2466 student respondents, a total of 1,594 respondents (65%) were agreed to sweep disobedience, a total of 446 respondents (18%) were actively involved in the activities of sweeping disobedience, 268 respondents

(11%) did not approve the activities sweeping disobedience, and 158 respondents (6%) did not give an answer. Furthermore, from the 2,170 respondents (88%) stated that the radical activities are to establish the orders of their religion (Munip, 2012: 160). The attitude of the student assumed was the result of transmission support for radicalism carried by teachers and lecturers (Yusar, 2015: 179).

YOUTH IN INDONESIA

Young people, in this case, is based on the age group. According to UNDP (1995; in Yusar, 2015: 183), the youth is the social category who aged in 13-24 years. Young people are divided into two groups, the teenager (between 13-19 years) and young adults (aged 20-24 years). At the phase, an individual human being experiencing the search for identity that is much higher intensity than beyond. At the time of self-discovery, young people absorb the views from outside and choose the values which suit for them, including radical religious ideologies.

Young people constitute a distinctive group in society. The youths are often different from other community groups, as a subculture. As a unique group, the youth develops the an interplay standards group between them and also construct many essential aspects of the existence of these groups which formed from the customs and values that have symbolic meaning for its members (Brake, 2013). Griffin (1997), conclude that being emblematic of the state of future society, youth has been touted as the face of a nation's changing economy, cultural and moral ideals, class relations, nationalism and occupational formations. They are also expected to be the solution to a country's ills, devising answers to critical social problems (Muhamad Fadhil Nurdin, 2015).

In the life of a teenager, they are more trusting friends than others around them, including their parents. Therefore, the information obtained from friends, generally more to be heard, considered, and is believed to be the foundation for a teenager's behavior. In the life of a teenager, it can be said that the youth peer group is an institution which has a big influence to shape lives of their members in present and in the future. A great influence not because their values are seen as

collective truth and always interchangeable in their interactions internally within the peer group (Yusar, 2015: 185)

The values that are exchanged within the scope of the peer friendships among young people are often linked to larger structures. In the context, the phenomenon of religious radicalism, the values that are exchanged is nothing other than an educational activity; namely, the exchange value to generate a consensus group. From this standpoint, according to Yusar (2015) the values of religious radicalism can be exchanged in one peer group. This condition will lead to members of the peers tends to be radical. On the other hand, the values of moderate Islam can be awakened by consensus can change the members become moderate. It is based on consensus generated within the peer friendships.

In the context of de-radicalization of religious education, the exchange of values and consensus constructed in one peers (Yusar, 2015). The individual members of the peers are facing the variety of different perspective and continuously negotiated in their everyday interactions. The values of moderates Islam also negotiated in a peer group. From this difference in perspective, each is aware of the differences and find a solution that is a consensus that mediates both the conflicting values. Essentially, the process occurs in the peers; if the difference is still sticking out, then the values of human morality be raised as rational arguments to decrease the tension and also to influence the radical thought.

THE DRIVERS

In the context of the drivers which forced the radical religious movement, it is quite similar to Vurmo et al. (2015) findings. In previous research, the religious radicalism in Albania was driven by three primary factors: social drivers, economic drivers, and cultural drivers. Along with Vurmo et al. (2015), in the context of religious radicalism in Indonesia, there are three main factors of radical religious movement forced by the young people in Indonesia. Same with Vurmo et al. (2015), the three main factors are the economic drivers, political drivers, and cultural drivers.

The first driver in the radical religious movement is economic drivers. Young people who involve in the radical religious movement are coming from the middle to lower class, educated, less intelligent skill, and knowledge, and categorized as the mediocre in academic achievements. The young people who are coming from the middle to lower class rural are more radical than the young people from urban. Limited access to the education and information made them less intelligent and more "dogmatic" rather than urban middle-class youth.

The political drivers are the second driver. Young people who involve in the radical religious movement categorized as the unstable sympathizer, have a lack of sense of nationality, perceive that the Islamic state in Indonesia as their objective. Conducted with the economic drivers, the less education, and information made them easily recruited by the agents of the religious radicals. In the same way, those young people categorized as a *taqlid* to their *imam* or *Murr Abi*.

The third drivers are cultural drivers. Young people who involved in the radical religious movement often have the feeling unfair in context between Islam and the West. They perceived that the West as a *kuffar* who rule the world and making Islam marginalized. The young people also perceive local tradition as a heretic action or *bid'ah*. They perceived that the pure Islam is the middle east culture represent the Islam. Their depressant of the culture beyond them has made the youth influenced by the radical religious movement.

YOUTH AND THE RELIGIOUS DERADICALIZATION

Young people spend their daily lives in an atmosphere of friendship peer. As expressed by Abercrombie and Warde (2000) on the characteristics of young people today, young people in Indonesia also have approximately the same characteristics, especially regarding social relations that occur between them within the scope of peer friendship. The peer friendships among the youths were not only in the school or campuses but also in the various social relations which conducted to the realm of youth peer friendships.

From the preliminary findings, the focus is on young people who come from the educated middle class because there are two conflicting views, which favor religious radicalism and against religious radicalism. This finding is crucial, because it opens up new categories, not all young people paying attention to the issue of religious radicalism. Young people from the educated middle class are the ones who pay attention to the issue of religious radicalism, both for and against religious radicalism.

From a series of observations, hearing, and simulations obtained fixed pattern relatively. In the atmosphere of the neighborhood clique, both high school students, and students occurs in the form of code sharing views and understanding on the issue of religious radicalism. A series of dialogues involving individual insights on the support or opposition of the movement of religious radicalism exchanged between them. Individuals place themselves in the opposite position to gain insights from the speaker. The process of dialogue in friendship peer interactions youth educated middle class is the exchange of experience and their perception of the world in which they live and meaningful for themselves respectively. Each defends their views and mutually negated the views of interlocutors.

From the observations, hearing, and simulations the persons who oppose understand and radical movements, despite maintaining his argument, tend to choose the attitude to listen to his interlocutor and caving. Conversely, individuals who understand and support radical movements tend to be fiery and want interlocutor to accept and understand his views in support of the radical movement. It is repetitive and form a fixed pattern of dialogue between individuals within a group of friends the same age.

The realm of knowledge of their worldview was formed from the dialogue were strengthened understanding of the diversity of views of individuals who is radicalized. On the other hand, these people strive to maintain the integrity of their clique, despite a conflict in which there are shades of belief or worldview. That is, the individuals opposing the religious movement, a process of maturation

itself to accept different perspectives. In another hand, individual who supporting radical movements were tend to intolerant.

In the first phase, there were such highly tensions or conflicts within individuals in peers. The individual member of the peers who have moderate view accept of differences and tends to tolerance. On the opposing sides, individual who supports the radical movement tends to intolerant and rejecting the differences. The moderates tend to express the rational argument rather than the radicals. In the context of changing attitudes, in the first phase, the attitude of the radicals was not changed yet.

The second phase points that there were a decreasing tensions or conflicts in the peer. The radicals began to show the reflective properties in the recesses of the spirit. In the context of the changing of attitude, the radicalism was changing their attitudes. On the other hand, no changes in attitude on the moderates. The multicultural approach of moderates then shared to the radical. The actors share their knowledge with a pluralistic world and the other side some actors have received the knowledge of the world that may have them ignored. Reflection occurs in the spiritual recesses of the supporting parties understand and radical movement that makes it more moderate.

The third phase points that there more decreasing the tension or conflict in peers. The radical then increasingly aware and have more tolerance rather than before. The moderates are consistently expressing the rational argument and share their knowledge to the radical. In this phase, the radical then become more moderate and the change their attitude. No attitude changes in the moderates.

The fourth phase points that the decreasing on tension or conflict in the peers were more and more to be ambient. The radical became more tolerance and started thinking of the moderate. They began to accept the different social life and culture as a reality in society beyond them. The moderate are consistently has no change anything in their thought or attitude. According to Yusar (2015), this signifies that the peers are the arena of the deradicalization education based on their common meaning and their shared worldview. That is, the multicultural –

bhinneka tunggal ika (unity in diversity) is the importance subject for Indonesian youth nowadays to learn.

The next phases point the changing of thought and attitude of the radicals. The sharing experiences and knowledge in the peer groups sphere were shaping the radicals into more moderate and tolerance with many different perspectives or cultural life and so on. The more they have shared their experiences and knowledge, the more changing in the thought and attitude of the individual who were as a radical.

From the data obtained showed that peer friendship is the de-radicalization of religious education arena that is dialogical by bringing together individuals who have different views on religious radicalism. It shows that in real life, the education of de-radicalization has been operating in an informal atmosphere constructed by young people in the micro-scale structure, at the level of individuals in small groups.

CONCLUSION

De-radicalization of religious education can be reached through a variety of ways, both formal and informal education. The power of the de-radicalization of religious education is on the influence of friendship in a relationship with a peer environment and informal atmosphere make the actors more fluid in the dialogue. In an environment of friendship is a process of education that is often overlooked in everyday life, namely education that span the realm of real life, a view of the world, and experiences of life experienced by the actors.

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