

IMPLEMENTING THE VALUE OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH LEARNING BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM AT THE PANGLIMA SEMESTA KINDERGARTEN IN MEDAN

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Abstract: This research aims to examine the application of the value of religious moderation in early childhood as an effort to form balanced character and morality. In the context of globalization and cultural plurality, children are faced with various influences that can shape their thinking and behavior patterns. Therefore, this research focuses on implementing the value of religious moderation as a basis for guiding children to understand and appreciate religious teachings wisely based on learning based on local wisdom. This research method is qualitative involving observation and interviews. Data analysis by condensing data, displaying data and drawing conclusions. The research results show that the application of the value of religious moderation makes a positive contribution to children's character development. Children show a better understanding of religious values and are able to apply them in everyday life. In addition, the role of teachers and parents as role models in practicing the value of religious moderation is a key factor in the success of this implementation. The findings of this research provide practical implications for educators, parents and policy makers to improve approaches to religious education at the early age level. By strengthening the value of religious moderation with learning based on local wisdom, it is hoped that children can grow into individuals who are responsible, tolerant, and have a deep understanding of religious diversity in society and love Indonesian culture.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Local Wisdom, Early Childhood

Introduction

Indonesia is a country with plural conditions and many differences in terms of ethnicity, class, race and religion, which is facing the threat of disintegration. The disintegration of the Indonesian nation stems largely from liberal and dangerous ideologies included in Islamic teachings. Liberal ideology from the west which demands freedom, which threatens eastern morals and culture. Finally, there was a discourse on Islam that was liberal, free and uncontrolled. On the other hand, extremism is growing in Indonesian society due to transnational (cross-national or cross-national) Islamic teachings. The ideology of this movement no longer relies on the nation-state concept, but rather the concept of the people. These two issues received special attention from the Indonesian government. To fight these two major currents, the Indonesian government is discussing moderate Islam. (Khoirul Mudawinun Nisa', 2018)

Looking at the current developing phenomenon, it will certainly raise various questions such as how is it possible in Indonesia that radicalism has a place in the archipelago and developed in such a way. In fact, since its initial arrival in Indonesia, Islam has appeared friendly. Islam was spread peacefully, there was no coercion on the residents of a region to embrace Islam. Even in certain cases, Islam is accepted after dialogue, even for a long time, with figures or traditional leaders of certain regions. In fact, what is very interesting is that when Islam arrived, regardless of the culture it brought with it, whether Arabic, Gujarati or Indian, that culture was not imposed on the local population. Even at a certain level, Islam can dialogue with local culture. Sometimes Islam gently rejects it because it goes against the creed, but it is widely accepted and accommodated because in principle it does not conflict with the basic values of Islamic teachings at all. (Babun Suharto, 2019)

The diversity in Indonesia, which is very religious, gives rise to a desire to foster a vision and solution that can create harmony and peace in carrying out religious life, namely by prioritizing religious moderation, and not being trapped by extremism, intolerance and acts of violence. (Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, 2019) Islamic moderation is a view or attitude that always tries to take a middle position between two opposing and excessive attitudes so that one of the two attitudes in question does not dominate a person's thoughts and attitudes. (Santoso, 2023)

As a means of introducing and instilling an understanding of moderation, and the values contained in moderation and making the nation's life smarter, education plays a very important role. As according to Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 3 which states that national education functions as a means to develop abilities and educate the life of a dignified nation in order to educate students in the life of the nation, aimed at developing the potential of students to become human beings who believe and are devoted to God. The Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, creative, independent and a democratic and responsible citizen.

Education is a very important aspect for humans. To introduce and instill an understanding of moderation, and the values contained in moderation and to make the nation's life smarter, it is necessary to get used to it from an early age. Because children are the next generation of the nation, they are the foundation and hope of their parents and the future. Therefore, they need to be prepared from the start so that in the future they will become quality human resources (HR) and be able to participate actively in national development. This is done as early as possible by involving young children in the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) program. (Fitri & Syafri, 2020)

Early childhood education is a comprehensive process of fostering the growth and development of children aged birth to six years, which includes physical and non-physical aspects, by providing stimulation for physical, spiritual (moral and spiritual) motoric, intellectual, emotional and social development. appropriate so that children can grow and develop optimally. Early childhood education has a big influence on their lives in the future. (Mhd. Habibu Rahman, 2020) How children think and behave, have the ability to face the world with confidence, can motivate themselves to become better, everything depends on the stimulation and guidance provided by parents and teachers.

Based on observations by researchers at the Panglima Semesta Kindergarten in Medan, there are interesting things done by teachers at the Kindergarten in the process of implementing the value of religious moderation in a friendly and polite manner using learning based on the local culture of the Medan community in general. In the current era of development, it is very necessary to apply the values of religious moderation in early childhood in order to produce a good generation and become a moderate generation. If these values of moderation are not introduced to children from an early age, then this will have an impact on the child's life. Adult children will be easily influenced and adopt liberal and extreme ideas which can threaten the unity of the Indonesian nation, and also the character of children.

The researcher's interest in Panglima Semesta Kindergarten, which carries the concept of learning based on local wisdom in applying the values of religious moderation to early childhood, is something simple but full of meaning. This is proven by the children's interest in participating in a fun learning process that is directly in contact with the daily local activities carried out by each child. Based on children's interest in participating in the learning process, it makes it easier for teachers to apply the value of religious moderation to young children.

Literature Review

Several studies that highlight religious moderation in early childhood include (Yuliana et al., 2022), (Mudzakkir, 2021), (Nisak, 2022) all stating that strengthening religious moderation needs to be taught to children from an early age so that children are able to have the qualities moderate nature. Strengthening religious moderation as an effort to ward off radicalism by instilling national commitment through introducing the values of diversity, strengthening tolerance by respecting friends and other people and respecting different religious beliefs. Teaching gentleness and creating child-friendly schools. As well as preserving local culture, PAUD institutions have an important role in strengthening religious moderation in children. There needs to be involvement of schools, parents and the environment in strengthening religious moderation in early childhood.

Regarding learning based on local wisdom, several researchers who have studied it include (Musi, 2019), (Lestarinigrum et al., 2023) both of these studies state that local wisdom is a product of each culture as a human civilization in developing knowledge and revolutions resulting from thought. do not ignore the values of differences. Local wisdom is not exclusive to a national and state ecosystem, but is unique to each community in Indonesia. Learning based on local wisdom needs to be introduced to the nation's children from an early age.

The research conducted by researchers highlights how kindergarten teachers apply the value of religious moderation to young children with a learning approach based on local wisdom that adapts to the development and culture of children at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten. This research was conducted as an effort to examine strategies for implementing the value of religious moderation in early childhood which intersects with the local wisdom possessed by students.

Method

This research was designed to understand and review the application of religious moderation values by teachers to early childhood with local wisdom-based learning at the Panglima Semesta Medan Kindergarten. This research began with an in-depth observation process regarding the value of religious moderation applied by teachers to young children. Next, the researchers also observed children's responses to the application of religious moderation values given by teachers to children using local wisdom-based learning. Next, researchers also conducted interviews with parents and guardians of students about parents' responses regarding the results of implementing religious moderation values in early childhood. After the data is collected, the researcher analyzes the data by condensing the data, displaying the data and verifying the data or drawing conclusions. This research was carried out for 3 months from November 2023 to January 2024 at TK Panglima Semesta Medan. The researcher was assisted by 2 research members who participated in data collection at the research location.

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of observations, it illustrates the value of religious moderation applied by teachers to young children at the Panglima Semesta Medan Kindergarten, starting with the principles established, namely justice, kindness and tolerance. As for this principle, teachers practice and lead by example by giving examples in applying attitudes towards the principles of religious moderation to children so that the values of religious moderation are instilled in children. The results of the researcher's observations show that regarding the principles of justice, teachers at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten are able to respond to cases in accordance with their objective conditions, be fair and realize their rights and obligations proportionally. Meanwhile, in terms of the principle of goodness, religious moderation has principles that give birth to and produce goodness for the benefit of the world, so that it does not cause divisions between fellow humans. Furthermore, in the principle of wisdom, religious moderation contains wisdom that can reduce and avoid wrong and evil, and can bring goodness and benefit to the people. And prevent damage. This religious moderation teaches children to look after and respect each other.

Panglima Semesta Kindergarten in implementing the value of religious moderation in early childhood focuses more on character learning based on local wisdom, this is in accordance with the opinion of the head of the Kindergarten who states that for early childhood it is character education that is very important, if they grow up in an environment of harmony, tolerance. If they grow up in an environment full of hate speech, violence, intolerance, this will have an impact on their current and future thoughts and behavior. Character is not only related to matters of right and wrong, but how to instill habits about good things in life, so that students have high awareness and understanding as well as concern and commitment to implementing policies in everyday life.

Furthermore, the teacher at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten added that character learning based on local wisdom adapts to the culture of the students. The students at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten consist of 15 children, all of whom are ethnic Javanese. So that the local wisdom that is introduced to students is Javanese wisdom. The research results showed that the teacher inserted material regarding local wisdom and communicated using Javanese during the lesson. Javanese language education itself aims to ensure that students can speak Javanese according to their language. Learning Javanese is the main learning to incorporate local wisdom into it. The teacher explains various local wisdoms in each material. This learning is also used as a means of learning for children to speak Javanese, introducing uploads as Javanese, and forming children's character, especially the value of religious moderation in children based on uploads. The learning that teachers apply to students at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten carries a fun and enjoyable concept, introducing the values of tolerance and empathy towards others built on simple learning patterns involving children's daily activities. Based on the researchers' observations, the child's response was very good, and looked happy. Parents also welcome the learning implemented by teachers, making their children open-minded and tolerant of others.

Furthermore, getting used to the school culture at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten is a necessity that every teacher must carry out. This was emphasized by the head of the Kindergarten who stated that every teacher must cultivate and get used to learning that is friendly and carries the concept of fun locality. What was conveyed by the head of Panglima Semesta Kindergarten is in line with the results of research conducted by (Hairani, 2023) that teachers as role models must always be able to guide young children through various efforts to apply the values of religious moderation in their lives until they grow up as adults simple and fun.

In an effort to implement the values of religious moderation in the Panglima Semesta Kindergarten, based on researchers' observations, this was done through habituation and various methods used by teachers, who have an important role in implementing the values of religious moderation in children. The teacher's role in implementing the values of religious moderation is to apply them simply to children. As far as possible, this application can be understood,

comprehended and can be implemented and applied by children not only when the child is at school but also when the child is in the play environment. The application of religious moderation values is carried out through habituation and learning processes. Habituation starts with the children getting used to saying hello to every other child. Saying greetings is adjusted to suit the diversity that exists in kindergarten so that children always say good morning. Apart from that, children are also taught to pray and respect friends who pray differently. Efforts to implement these habits are made so that children can respect each other during the teaching and learning process. This habitual attitude must have been shown first by the teacher. Teachers at Panglima Semesta Kindergarten first apply the values of Bergama moderation to their fellow colleagues in Kindergarten, this is in line with the diverse and diverse teachers, staff and principals of the school. Instinctively, children will imitate this and set an example in everyday life.

Apart from educating children, the application of the values of religious moderation is also carried out through learning methods that are interesting to children, from singing, telling stories, asking questions, carrying out activities in groups and holding outing classes. Through singing, the teacher teaches and invites children to sing along with national songs that contain the spirit of nationalism so that children can know that Indonesia has many special features, one of which is beautiful diversity and differences. Singing is often a method that is done repeatedly, apart from making it easier for children to memorize songs, it can also make it easier for children to understand what various modes of moderation are. Then there is also the storytelling method, in this method the teacher tells a lot or talks about the beauty of tolerance, with communicative storytelling and interaction with the children. When the teacher is telling the story, the children become interested and can easily understand what the values of Moderation mean. Apart from that, the teacher also explain differences in beliefs in a simple way to children so that they can understand them more easily. The values of religious moderation are packaged well so that they can be conveyed to children, the values of religious moderation such as justice, balance, kindness, wisdom, istiqomah and tolerance.

Apart from singing and telling stories, the application of the values of religious moderation is also carried out through the question and answer method. This method is carried out with children so that children can easily understand what differences and diversity exist. The questions given by the teacher and vice versa those given by the children are guided as much as possible according to the themes and sub-themes in the kindergarten curriculum. During the Q&A, the teacher will ask several questions which can then stimulate children, such as knowing the religions in Indonesia, places of worship and attitudes of prayer from each different religion. Apart from using the method of singing, telling stories and asking questions in implementing the values of religious moderation, Panglima Semesta Kindergarten also uses the method of playing in groups. This effort is made to foster a sense of togetherness in children from an early age, and so that they understand differences not as something that can divide them but rather as differences that make them complement each other. From playing in groups, children can help each other without discrimination and play - without choosing where to play based on a group or religion.

Islamic moderation directs people to respond to differences between themselves and other people, whether related to belief, ethnicity, race and culture, to be more tolerant. In this way, harmony between fellow humans becomes more possible. As we all know, Islam is a religion that brings mercy to the universe or rahmah li al'alamin. Being a person who is wise in responding to every existing difference without conflicting about it is one of the things that is based on the revelation of Allah SWT. So that the common benefit of humanity can be maintained as expected. Religious moderation can be interpreted as being balanced, in the middle, not excessive, not using extreme theological legitimacy, claiming to be the most correct, neutral and not affiliated with a particular political party. The diversity that exists within the Indonesian nation has been bound up

in one motto, namely *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. This motto is one of the factors that strengthens the unity and unity of Indonesian society as a whole. However, in this case, religious moderation is still required as an absolute necessity. A motto will only be a symbol if it is not accompanied by a supporting attitude or point of view.

The diversity of the Indonesian nation is not something created by human hands, but is a destiny given by Allah SWT to the Indonesian nation. This rich diversity is reflected in the existence of hundreds of tribes, languages, and thousands of islands and others. The diversity of the Indonesian nation is not to be bargained for but to be accepted and maintained in order to create unity and a peaceful Indonesian nation.

It is very important to implement the value of religious moderation from an early age. What TK Panglima Semesta does is the embodiment of instructions from the government which brings the concept of religious moderation to a religious nation. Religious moderation applied to young children is carried out in accordance with the development of young children who are still active in playing, so that the stimulus given is a pleasant stimulus. This opinion is in accordance with research results from (Masliyana, 2023), (Dadan Suryana, 2016) that the instilling of the values that have been taught to children at RA is not forced so that children are able to master everything, because everything must be gradual and follow the child's development. Therefore, in its application, RA focuses more on habituation and example. Teachers can explain each of the values that children have implemented, so that children can more easily understand and internalize them.

Kindergarten teachers implement the value of religious moderation in early childhood through learning based on local wisdom, not only to facilitate the delivery process and understanding of early childhood, but also to introduce local culture to early childhood. As argued by (Nurkhasyanah et al., 2021) that introducing local Indonesian culture is an effort to preserve the culture that exists in Indonesia. Instilling a love of Indonesian culture in young children is a form of maintaining and loving the Indonesian nation.

Applying the value of religious moderation to young children requires varied methods to adapt to children's development. The method of singing and telling stories according to existing local wisdom has proven to be very good and easily accepted by children. The singing method is an effective method. This is in accordance with the opinion of (Mukit, 2018) that introducing any concept will be easy for young children if it is accompanied by movement and singing. Basically, young children like active and fun activities. The storytelling method is also an appropriate method in efforts to introduce the value of religious moderation with existing local wisdom stories. This is in line with the opinion of (Sumarti & Mujahidin, 2021) that the storytelling method makes it easy for children to listen and imagine in developing their love for the nation.

Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that teachers have a very important role in implementing the values of religious moderation in early childhood. At Panglima Semesta Kindergarten, the method used by educators or teachers to implement the values of religious moderation in schools is by applying how respect each other during the teaching and learning process at school, apart from that the teacher also explains the different procedures for practicing worship in a simple way to children so that it is easier for them to understand. Panglima Semesta Kindergarten introduces the value of religious moderation with lessons that promote students' local wisdom. Learning based on local wisdom is implemented as an effort to strengthen children's values of religious moderation and as an effort to preserve Indonesian culture.

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