



THE PRINCIPLES OF MODERATION IN ISLAM

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Abstract

The title in this paper is the Principles of Moderation in Islam. Moderation is one of the main values developed by Islam. This is one of the objectives of sharia in the life of Muslims. Ibn Ashur said that moderation is the first and most important goal of the Sharia, this raises a problem formulation, namely What are the Principles of Moderation in Islam?. The method in this study is library research using qualitative data types, both primary, secondary and, tertiary data relating to the problem studied about the Moderation Principles in Islam, with the aim of this study analyzing the Principles of Religious Moderation in Islam. The results of this study is the Moderation Principle in Islam is based on the meanings of tolerance, simplicity, and justice. The importance of moderation symbolizes a position between the two groups, the excessive (ifrat) and disparaging person (tafrit). The concept of moderation has many manifestations related to the way Muslims treat other Muslims, as well as they treat non-Muslims according to four indicators of religious moderation as measured in practice for every individual in Indonesia, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodates local culture.

Kata Kunci : Principles, Moderation, Islam.

A. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of several phenomena in this country such as the issue of terrorism, Islamophobia, excessive demonstrations, discrimination against one group and religion blasphemer, finally made the government realize that Indonesia is a large country that has hundreds of tribes and languages. To maintain this sovereignty, various ways are required, one of which is through providing an understanding education about the application of moderation in daily life. (Makky & Erihadiana, 2022). Religious moderation which is currently being developed by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia needs to be supported, because it is a solution for the increasing religious extremism.

Religious moderation is a step ahead of the mainstream approach to deradicalization, because it wants to make "improvements from within": (Arif, 2020). etymologically, the word moderation in the Great Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) contains two meanings, namely "reduction of violence" and "avoidance of extremes".

Broadly, moderation also means an activity to conduct a review so as not to deviate from the applicable rules. Through religious moderation, religious people are not considered as "sources of problems", but as "students" whose religious understanding needs to be softened. Without having to shout about religious radicalism, religious moderation wants to invite religious people to be moderate in religious practice. (Arif, 2020). Moderate attitude in religion, always choose the middle way, will be easier to realize if someone has adequate breadth of religious knowledge he can be wise, resist temptation so he can be sincere without being burdened, and unselfish with his own interpretation of the truth and willing to admit interpretation of the truth of others, and willing to express his views based on science.

In another formulation, it can be said that there are three conditions for the fulfillment of a moderate attitude in religion, namely: having extensive knowledge, being able to control emotions not to exceed limits, and always being careful. Simply, the formulation of the three conditions for religious moderation can be expressed in three words, namely: having knowledge, being virtuous, and being careful. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 20). Religious moderation requires religious people not to isolate themselves, not to be exclusive (closed), but inclusive (open), to merge, to adapt, to get along with various communities, and to always learn in addition to teaching lessons. Thus, religious moderation will encourage each religious community to be moderate in responding to diversity, including religious diversity and religious interpretation, and always to be fair and balanced so that they can live in a mutual agreement. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 22).

The phenomenon of extremism is a bitter experience for Indonesia. A number of acts of terrorism have even claimed hundreds of innocent lives. Religious extremism accompanied by violence gives a gloomy image to religious messages that are peaceful to the universe. This is also very concerning when viewed in the frame of nationality which is naturally plural. The rise of acts of terrorism using violence, such as suicide bombing, makes *jihad* as a justification based on Theology (Saihu, 2021) radicalism and terrorism behavior in the name of Islam, globally and nationally put Muslims as the ones to blame, even though Islam itself has never taught such extreme things. (Sari, 2012).

Moderation is not only taught by Islam, but also other religions. Furthermore, moderation is a virtue that encourages the creation of social harmony and balance in personal, family and community life to wider human relations. Every religion must have moderate principles in it, as well as Islam. Islam contains moderate teachings ~~in it~~, which is often known as Islamic Moderation. In its teaching structure, Islam always combines the two opposing extremities. For example, Islamic teachings not only contain esoteric issues of divinity, but also other matters concerning humanity with their implications in daily life. (Yazid in Adya et al., 2020).

Moderation of Islam (*wasathiyah*) has recently been emphasized as the mainstream of Islam in Indonesia. This mainstream idea, aside from being a solution to various problems of religion and global civilization, is also the right time for the

moderate generation to take more assertive steps. If radical, extremist, and puritan groups speak loudly with acts of violence, then moderate Muslims must speak louder with peaceful actions. (El-Fadl in Saihu, 2021). Therefore, it is interesting for the author to explain further with the formulation of the problem, How are the Moderation Principles in Islam?.

B. METHOD

This type of research is library research. Library research is research conducted by collecting data from various literatures, both from libraries and other places. The type of data in this study is qualitative data, in the form of descriptions aimed at all existing problems that are explanatory in nature related to the problem. The data required in this study are documents related to the problems in the research, through secondary and tertiary data sources related to the Moderation Principles in Islam. Data collection techniques are data collection methods that depend on the type and source of the data required. The data collection technique used in this research is through literature study, document study techniques, namely by tracing data, reading, reviewing, and analyzing the literature that raises the problems to be discussed.

Data analysis is the process of parsing data. The collected data is examined, researched, described and presents all existing problems explicitly and clearly to ensure their truth, and categorizes the data to be compared with existing theories, the data obtained, analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques (describe and present all existing problems). Then the explanations are concluded deductively, through explaining a conclusion from general statements to be more specific, so that the presentation of the research results can be understood easily. To deliver a complete and focused understanding, in this discussion of The Principles of Moderation in Islam, the author presents a systematic arrangement consisting of Introduction, Research Methods, Discussion, and finally Conclusions.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of Islam

Islam has many characteristics that distinguish it from other religions. The most prominent characteristics of Islam are *tawassuth* (middle way), *tawazun* (balanced), *I'tidal* (firmly straight), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *musawwah* (equality). *wasathiyah* (moderate) (Muhajir in Azhari, 2020).

a. *Wasathiyah* (take the middle way)

Wasathiyah teaching, means one of the characteristics and essence of religious teachings. The word has, at least, three meanings, namely: first means middle; second means fair; and third means the best. These three meanings do not mean that they stand alone or not interrelated because the attitude of being in the middle often reflects the attitude of fairness and the best choice. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 25)

The word *al-wasathiyyah* (الواسطية) is rooted in the words *al-wasath* (with the س (sin)) both of which are *mashdar* (infinitive) of the verb *wasatha*. In addition, the word

wasathiyyah is also synonymous with the word *al-iqtishad* with the subject pattern *al-muqtashid*. However, in application the word *wasathiyyah* is more popularly used to indicate a plenary thinking paradigm, especially with regard to religious attitudes in Islam. (Makky & Erihadiana, 2022).

Wasathiyyah is a view that takes the middle way by not excessive in religion and not reducing religious teachings, this middle way—means an understanding that combines the text of religious teachings and the context of community conditions. (Hasan, 2021). So that, *wasathiyyah* is a view or behavior that always tries to take a middle position from two opposite behaviors and goes too far so that one of the two behaviors that are interpreted does not dominate in one's mind and behavior.

As Khaled Abou el Fadh argues in *The Great Theft*, if "moderation" is an understanding that takes the middle path, it is an understanding that is neither extreme right nor extreme left. (Zuhiri in Hasan, 2021). An understandable example in daily life is the word "referee". It is the profession of someone who mediates a game, who is required to always do justice and decide what is best for the parties. Another example, generosity is good, because it is in the middle between wastefulness and stinginess. Courage is also good because it is in the middle between fear and recklessness, and so on. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 25).

The concept of *wasathiyyah* in some Islamic literature is interpreted in various ways by the experts. According to *al-Salabi* the word *wasathiyyah* has many meanings. First, from the root *wasath*, in the form of *dzaraf*, which means *baina* (between). Second, from the root *wasatha*, which contains many meanings, including: (1) in the form of an *isim* that contains a meaning between two ends, (2) in the form of a meaningful character (*khiyar*) chosen, especially, the best; (3) *wasath* which means *al'adl* or fair; (4) *wasath* can also mean something that is between the good (*jayid*) and the bad (*radi*). (Al-Salabi in Saihu, 2021).

b. *Al-'Adl* and *Tawazun* (Balanced / Fair)

Tawazun is a balance view not out of line that has been set. If traced the term *tawazun* is rooted from the word *mizan* which means scales. Fair and balanced in viewing, responding, and practicing all the concepts that are paired above. In the KBBI, the word "fair" is defined as: 1) impartial/impartial; 2) side with the truth; and 3) appropriate/not arbitrary. The word "referee" which refers to someone who leads a match, can be interpreted in this sense, namely someone who is not partial, but rather sided with the truth. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 19).

Tawazun can be understood in the context of moderation is to behave fairly, balanced and impartial coupled with honesty so that it does not shift from the predetermined line. Because injustice is a way of destroying the balance and suitability of the nets of the universe that has been set by Allah The Almighty. (Hasan, 2021). Those who have a balanced attitude are firm, but not harsh because they always side with justice, only that their alignment does not take the rights of others to the detriment. Balance can be considered as a form of perspective to do something in

moderation, neither too much nor too little, neither conservative nor liberal. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 19).

Mohammad Hashim Kamali (2015) explains that the principle of balance and justice in the concept of moderation (*wasathiyah*) means that in religion, one should not be extreme in his views, but must always seek common ground. For Kamali, *wasathiyah* is an important aspect of Islam that is often forgotten by his followers, even though *wasathiyah* is the essence of Islamic teachings. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 20)

c. *I'tidal* (straight and firm)

The term *I'tidal* derives from the Arabic word, fair, meaning equal. In the KBBI (the Great Indonesian Dictionary), fair means impartial, not arbitrary. *I'tidal* is a view that puts something in its place, divides it according to its portion, and carries out rights and fulfills obligations (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in Hasan, 2021). As a Muslim, we are expected to be fair in any case and ordered to always behave with *ikhshan* to all human beings. Since justice is the noble value of religious teachings, it is highly unlikely to achieve public welfare without it (Hasan, 2021).

d. *Tasamuh* (Tolerance)

Tasamuh comes from the Arabic word, *samhun*, which means to facilitate. Meanwhile, according to the Great Indonesian Dictionary, tolerance means being respectful, allowing something different or conflicting with one's own stance.

According to Friedrich Heiler, *Tasāmuḥ* (Tolerance) is the attitude of someone who recognizes the existence of religious plurality and respects the adherents of those religions (Yuda in Samsudin, 2021). According to Islam, religious tolerance is to respect or tolerate without crossing the boundaries of the religious rules and practices. Islam explains that *Tasāmuḥ* leads to an open attitude and willing to acknowledge the existence of various kinds of differences, both in terms of ethnicity, skin color, language, customs, culture, language, and religion. These all are nature and sunnatullah that have become God's decree (Samsudin, 2021).

So, it can be concluded that tolerance is a behavior that respects the stance of others. However, respecting does not necessarily mean correcting or agreeing to follow and justify one's beliefs and practices. In terms of religion, tolerance is not allowed in the realm of faith and divinity because the procedures for worship must be in accordance with the rituals and their respective places. Moderation views that every religion is true according to the beliefs of its respective adherents but justifies that not all religions are true and the same. Tolerance should only be applied in the social and humanitarian spheres to maintain harmony and unity (Hasan, 2021)

e. *Musawah* (Equation)

Musawah means equality. Islam has never discriminated against humans, culture, and rank because everything has been determined by the creator of humans, thus, no rights to change decisions that have been made. Islam has moderated it in a way that creatures on earth which have differences can respect and love each other. Islam has been moderate but sometimes humans fall into extremism (Hasan, 2021).

Islam has always been moderate in addressing every issue because differences are a necessity that Allah has ordained. (Adya et al., 2020).

In the reality of life, humans cannot avoid contradicting things. Therefore, *al-Wasathiyah Islamiyyah* appreciates the elements of *rabbaniyyah* (divinity) and *Insaniyyah* (humanity), *n* (revelation) and reason (reason), and between *maslahah ammah* (al-jamaaiyyah) and individual *maslahah* (al-fardiyyah). Because of the moderation of Islam as a religion, none of the elements or essences mentioned above are harmed. (Yusuf Al Qardawi in Amin, 2014).

2. Principles of Moderation

The basic principle of moderation is fair and balanced. One of the basic principles in religious moderation is to always maintain a balance between two things. For example, the balance between reason and revelation, physical and spiritual, rights and obligations, individual interests and communal benefit, necessity and volunteerism, religious texts and the ijihad of religious leaders, ideals and reality, and a balance between the past and the future.

In the KBBI (the Great Indonesian Dictionary), the word fair means:

- a. Not biased / impartial.
- b. Side with the truth.
- c. Should not arbitrary.

The second principle, balance, is a term to describe a perspective, attitude, and commitment to always think about justice, humanity, and equality. The tendency to be balanced does not mean having no opinion.

There are five basic principles of Islamic moderation that must be understood and implemented in a moderate Islamic life, they are as follows:

- a. The principle of justice (*Al-adl*)

It is agreed by classical and modern commentators that the real meaning of moderate or *wasathan* is justice and goodness. Even the Prophet SAW interpreted *al-wasath* in Surah Al-Baqarah: 143 with justice (HR. Bukhari). Therefore, there is no moderation without justice and no justice without moderation, and the more moderate an attitude towards the environment and people, the more just and good their lives will be. (Sari, 2012)

- b. The Principle of Goodness (*Al-Khairiyah*)

Moderation is a moral virtue. If an attitude does not bring goodness and benefit, then it can be ascertained that the attitude is not moderate, while on the contrary, extreme, radical, and liberal attitudes will give birth violent extremism to himself and others. (Sari, 2012)

- c. The Principle of Wisdom (*Al-Hikmah*)

Islamic moderation, besides having the principles of justice and goodness, also has wisdom in all its forms and dimensions of teaching. There is no Islamic teaching that does not contain wisdom and there is no *shari'a* that contradicts wisdom. Ibn Qayyim said: "Indeed, the main building of sharia, is standing on the wisdom and benefit of the servant, both in the life of this world and in the hereafter, it is justice in its entirety,

mercy in its entirety, benefit entirely and wisdom in its entirety. Every problem that comes from justice to injustice, from mercy to vice versa, from goodness (*maslahat*) to damage (*mafsadat*) and from wisdom to futility is not sharia, even though trying to include *takwil* (Sari, 2012).

d. Consistent Principle (*Al-Istiqomah*)

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyah divides *istiqomah* or consistency in 5 dimensions:

- 1) Consistency to unite Allah through wishes, words, deeds, and intentions, which is called sincerity.
- 2) Consistently ensure the implementation of all charities in accordance with sharia to avoid heresy, which is called *muqollid*.
- 3) Consistent in the spirit of charity that according to the ability, demonstrating the obedience to God.
- 4) Consistent in moderation in every charity, avoiding excessive and reducing (extreme right and extreme left).
- 5) Be consistent within the limits set by *sharia* and not be tempted by lust.

e. The Principle of Balance (*At-Tawazun*)

One of the basic principles of *wasatiyyah* is balance (*At-Tawazun* which also has the meaning of fair or "*At-Ta'adul*"). The *At-Tawazun* principle also requires moderation in viewing spiritual and its values, so that there is no gap between spiritual and material. Although Islam is full of spiritual teachings and faith but it does not ignore the material things, such as: wealth, eating and drinking, sleeping, and getting married.

The Indonesian Ministry of Religion has mainstreamed the religious moderation program as an effort to encourage the development of religious moderation in the lives of religious people. What is meant by religious moderation here is moderate religious understanding and practice, which takes the "middle way" between the extreme right and the extreme left. The extreme right refers to conservative, literal, and radical religious beliefs (Arif, 2020).

Religious moderation, which emphasizes the practice of religion in the middle way, can be a solution both to strengthen efforts to internalize religious spiritual moral values, and to create a religious life that is non-violent. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 52).

3. Indicators of Religious Moderation

Moderation and moderate attitude in religion always contest the values that exist on the right and left. Therefore, measuring religious moderation must be able to describe how the contestation and struggle for values to occur. A moderate will try to compromise both sides. He could move to the left using his rationales but would not stay in an extreme position. He swings to the right to guide the text, while still understanding the context (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 42). There are 4 indicators of religious moderation to measure the moderation practiced by individuals in Indonesia, and how much vulnerability they have. The indicators are: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 42).

a. National commitment

National commitment is a very important indicator to see the extent of a person's perspective, attitude, and religious practice having an impact on loyalty to the basic national consensus, especially to the acceptance of Pancasila as the state ideology, and his attitude towards ideological challenges that are contrary to Pancasila, and nationalism. Furthermore, the acceptance of the principles of the nation as contained in the 1945 Constitution and its regulations is also the behavior that constitutes the national comment. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 43).

b. Tolerance

Tolerance is always accompanied by respect, accepting different people as part of us, and positive thinking. As an attitude in dealing with differences, tolerance is the most important foundation in democracy, because democracy can only work when a person is able to hold his opinion and then accept the opinions of others. Therefore, the maturity of a nation's democracy, among other things, can be measured by the extent of the nation's tolerance. The higher the tolerance for differences, the more democratic the nation tends to be, and vice versa. The aspect of tolerance is not only related to religious beliefs, but also can be related to differences in race, gender, differences in sexual orientation, ethnicity, and culture (Religion, 2019: 44).

c. Anti Violence

Radicalism, or violence, in the context of religious moderation is understood as an ideology (idea) and understanding that wants to make changes to the social and political system by using violent or extreme means in the name of religion, both verbal, physical and mental violence. The essence of acts of radicalism are the attitudes and actions of a particular person or group who use violent means to bring about the desired change.

Radical groups generally want these changes in a short time and drastically and are contrary to the prevailing social system. Radicalism is often associated with terrorism because radical groups can use any means to achieve their wishes, including terrorizing those who disagree with them. Although many associate radicalisms with certain religions, basically radicalism is not only related to certain religions, but can be attached to all religions (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 45).

d. Accommodative Religious Practices and Behaviors

Religious practices and behaviors that are accommodative to local culture can be used to see the extent of willingness to accept religious practices that accommodate local culture and traditions.

Moderate people tend to be more friendly in accepting local traditions and cultures in their religious behavior if they do not conflict with the main teachings of the religion. Religious traditions that are not rigid, among others, are marked by a willingness to accept religious practices and behaviors that do not merely emphasize normative truths, but also accept religious practices that are based on virtue, if these practices do not conflict with the principle in religious teachings. On the other hand, there are also groups who tend not to be accommodating to traditions and cultures

because practicing tradition and culture in religion will be considered as an act that pollutes the purity of religion. (Ministry of Religion, 2019: 46).

D. CONCLUSION

Based on what has been described above, the author concludes that the moderation principles in Islam are always to maintain a balance between two things, which are the balance between reason and revelation, physical and spiritual rights and obligations, individual interests and communal benefit, necessity and voluntarism, religious texts and ijihad of religious leaders, measure practices of every individual in Indonesia, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture.

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