EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS REGARDING RADICALISM AND EXTREMISM: A QUALITATIVE STUDY"

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to determine the extent of students' understanding of radical issues and terms and radicalism. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach. The research results show that the average respondent cannot differentiate between what is radical and what is radicalism. Some respondents did not agree with the assumption that Islam was related to radicalism and respondents understood that radicalism was different or had nothing to do with the caliphate state. In conclusion, it is deemed necessary to encourage students at primary and secondary education levels to better understand reading material in Islamic Religious Education and Civics lessons with varied learning methods.

Keywords: College Student; Radical, Radicalism; Islamic Religious Education
A. Introduction

The phenomenon of radicalism in Indonesia is still being discussed nowadays. This is reinforced by the statement of Muhammad Najib Azca (2013), that empirically, the rise of radical social movements among young Muslims over the last few years has become a major concern of the wider audience, both from academics, civil society, media, and policymakers as well as raises many important questions (Najib, 1996). On the other hand, people's understanding of radicalism ideas is still different. For many people, radicalism has even become a sensitive issue and is sometimes reluctant to be discussed. Likewise, the experience of the researchers when conducting the initial survey, where there was a reluctance from most of the prospective respondents to provide opinions, while the opinions of respondents who were successfully explored had no similarities. Some of the respondents' opinions about radicalism that have been successfully summarized by researchers are as follows:

“The act of wanting to change Pancasila with this caliphate is treason. Because they want to replace Indonesia. In Islam, there is no special form of state. Everything is the result of ijtiham by their respective countries. That includes Radicals.” (AR, personal communication, March 15, 2020). “…in this case, my opinion: if all Indonesians understand correctly the meaning of the word The Caliphate, then they will not be phobic of the term, The Caliphate in its lightest sense is leadership with Islamic standardization. As for radicalism which is currently assumed to be a group that is anti-government policies, it should not be considered wrong, the existence of this wave is the result of Pancasila values that are not felt by Indonesian citizens who yearn for social justice in all walks of life, as well as including the principle of freedom to practice. religious teachings adopted by Indonesian citizens. As for the acts of terror that have occurred in the Republic of Indonesia, they are the work of individuals and not radicalism. Wallahu a'lam.”

From this personal communication that conducts via WhatsApp, it appears that there are differences of opinion regarding radicalism. per Ahmad Syafii Maarif (M. Fanani, 2008), radicalism isn't precisely the same
and can't be equated with terrorism. Radicalism is more associated with the model of attitudes and ways of expressing one's religion, while terrorism includes criminal acts for political purposes. Radicalism is more associated with internal religious problems, while terrorism may be a global phenomenon that needs global action moreover. However, radicalism can sometimes be converted into terrorism, although not all of it, and not always like that (M. Z. Fanani, 2018). Globalization, for several Indonesian Muslims, has its positive and negative sides. The outbreak of the worst depression in decades demonstrates Indonesia's failure in handling the results of globalization (Rosyad & Maarif, 2020).

What is the picture of understanding radicalism among young people, especially students? In 2010 and 2011 (F. Mubarak, 2015) research was conducted on the religious behavior of UIN Jakarta students. From the survey data obtained, it shows that those who consider an Islamic state as the best model state for Indonesia are quite high. This can be seen through the responses of the respondents to the statement that; an Islamic state (a country based on the Qur'an and Sunnah) is the best form of state for Indonesia: the majority/(58.2%) of the total respondents agreed, (38.6%) disagreed, and (3.1 %) don't know/don't answer.

How do young people, especially students, build their understanding of radicalism? The study shows that the first rank of the total scholars who conducted international publications on radicalism and terrorism study was occupied by Indonesian scholars with 128 papers (30.9%). It shows that Indonesian scholars are serious about conducting radicalism and terrorism studies in their country. Whereas, publications forms that most contributed to radicalism and terrorism study were international journal articles with 273 publications (65.9%). The radicalism and terrorism study is the most studied in social sciences studies with 270 publications (65.2%) (Omer, 2021).

Based on that argument, Indonesian students should really understand the issue of radicalism. However, do Indonesian students actually understand the issue of radicalism? A survey conducted by the Institute for Islamic and Peace Studies (LaKIP), led by Prof Dr. Bambang
Pranowo, from UIN Jakarta, from October 2010 to January 2011 showed that radicalism in the minds of the students and teachers he researched is already at a level of worrying. The willingness of students and teachers to radical behavior, even if not reached the highest figure in percentage, but the facts in the study prove that radicalism, especially in education circles, is necessary to get special attention. Because if not, then there is the potential for terrorism a lot in the future (Tahir, & Tahir, 2020; Assa'adah, 2019). According to (Ramadhani et al., 2016), radicalism arises due to various causes, including educational backwardness, political changes, poverty, or low levels of cultural and social civilization. These factors in turn can trigger radicalism which can lead to terrorism.

The lack of reading materials for PAI and Civics subject matter with contents that can strengthen national character and values is one of the main problems of the lack of success of these two subjects in shaping the character of students in the learning process. In addition, monotonous teaching methods make students bored and pay less attention to PAI and Civics teaching in several schools. Students are more interested in learning Islamic teachings through mentoring meetings conducted by “ROHIS” (the organization that deepens and strengthens Islamic teachings in the school area) with mentors from outside the school who are affiliated with certain radical groups. In almost all schools that are part of this program, “ROHIS” is the most important vehicle for strengthening Islamic knowledge for students (Darraz, 2013).

It is necessary to distinguish between radicals, radicalism, and radicalization. According to KH. Hasyim Muzadi (in Rokhmad, 2012), someone who thinks radically (meaning deep thinking, to the roots) is fine and indeed thinks that is how it should be. For example, someone who thinks in his heart that Indonesia is experiencing many problems (economic, educational, legal, and political) due to Indonesia not implementing Islamic law. And therefore, for example, the basis of the Indonesian state must be replaced with an Islamic system of government (khilāfah islāmiyyah). Such a radical opinion is legitimate.
No matter how harsh the statement above, if it is only in discourse or thought, it will not become a public problem, because in essence, what comes into the mind or mind cannot be judged, because it is not a criminal act. In this sense, a person cannot be punished just because of his thoughts, but there must be an action or omission in acting. Radicalism is defined as radical in its understanding or is what makes a person or group permanently radical (Kementrian Agama, 2014).

Radicalism is an ism, an action that's attached to someone or a group who wants change, be it social, or political, by using violence, human rights, and extreme behavior (Team Compilation of the Language Development Center, 1998). Radical as this could grow democratically, force society, and terror. In other words, radicalism could be a radical that has become an ideology and a faculty of thought. within the view of the researcher, everyone has the potential to become radical and adherent to radicalism (radicalism), whether the environment supports it or not (Muzadi in Rokhmad, 2012). The mention of the term radicalism within the socio-historical review was initially utilized in socio-cultural studies and subsequent developments, the term was related to political and secular issues. The term radicalism may be a familiar concept in social, political, and historical scientific studies, the term radicalism is employed to clarify the phenomenon of a society or country (Effendy, 1998).

Furthermore, according to Muzadi (Rokhmad, 2012), radicalization is (someone who) grows to be reactive when injustice occurs in society. Usually, radicalization grows related to economic justice, politics, weak law enforcement, and so on. So, don't imagine when the terrorists have been arrested, then radicalism will disappear. As long as justice and prosperity have not been realized, radicalization will always appear in society. Justice involves many aspects, including legal, political, educational, social, human rights, and cultural aspects. Law is different from justice. Law is a certain aspect, while justice is the character of the law.

Etymologically, the word radical in English can mean acting radically and can also mean getting to the roots (Echols and Shadily,
Radicalism means being in an extreme position and far from being in the middle or crossing the limits of reasonableness. While terminologically, radicalism is fanaticism to an opinion and negation of the opinions of others, ignoring the history of Islam, not dialogic, and literal in understanding religious texts without considering the essential objectives of sharia (maqasid al-Syariah).

Some of the reasons above regarding radicalism have in common that radicalism is an understanding that's believed by a bunch of individuals who want drastic social and political changes or reforms by using coercive methods. However, when viewed from a non-secular point of view, it is interpreted as an understanding that refers to an awfully basic religious foundation with a high level of spiritual fanaticism and tends to know the Qur'an textually and literally so it's not uncommon for adherents of that understanding or sect to use different methods. anarchist, anti-tolerance, anti-dialogue, and act destructively (Abror Mhd., 2020).

Radical as an ism can grow democratically, community power, and terror. In other words, radicalism could be a radical that has become an ideology and a college of thought. during this case, everyone has the potential to become a radical and a lover of radicalism, looking at whether the environment (habitus) supports it or not. Meanwhile, what's meant by radicalization per Hasyim Muzadi quoted by Jaja Zarkasi and Thobib is someone who grows up to be reactive when injustice occurs in society. Usually, radicalization grows in relevancy to economic justice. politics, weak enforcement, and so on. So, don't imagine when the terrorists are arrested, then radicalism will disappear. As long as events and prosperity haven't materialized. radicalization will always appear in society. Justice embraces many aspects, both legal, political, educational, social, human rights, and cultural aspects (Zarkasyi, 2016).

What is meant by understanding is the ability to interpret, formulate, and translate in one's style. Or it could be the ability to interpret the theory and see some of the consequences and implications for the possibilities and causes of things (Nasution, 1996). Meanwhile,
according to Benjamin S Bloom (Sudijono, 2011), understanding is a person's ability to understand and understand something after something is known and remembered. Students are said to understand something if they can provide explanations and can describe in more detail their knowledge in their language. This understanding concerns the taste (testa) as stated by Ngailim Purwanto. That is someone who understands the meaning, concepts, situations, and facts that he knows. Not only based on verbality but also related to the situation and facts of the problem being asked (Purwanto, 2007). This is also reinforced by Winkel who defines understanding as the ability to capture meaning and meaning of what is learned. From some of the theories above, understanding leads to a person's ability to define and master something by capturing the meaning and meaning contained therein. Then be able to explain and explore it with their abilities.

Religion has multiple perspectives according to its point of view and approaches. The opinions of experts also differ from one another. According to Elizabeth K. Nottingham (Jalaluddin, 1997), religion is a common phenomenon "everywhere", which is related to human efforts to measure the depth of meaning of one's existence and the existence of the universe. In addition, religion can evoke the most perfect inner happiness and also feelings of fear and horror. Although attention is drawn to the existence of a world that cannot be seen (the hereafter), religion involves itself in the problems of everyday life in this world. Religion consists of two words, namely activity, and religion. Activity has the meaning of activity or busyness. More broadly, activity can be interpreted as an act or activity carried out by a person in daily life in the form of speech, action, or creativity in his environment. While the word "religion" comes from the basic word "religion" which gets the prefix "Ke-", and the suffix "-an". Religion itself has the meaning of belief in God, and the teachings of goodness related to belief (Baharta, 1995).

Religion as a reflection on the way of religion is not only limited to belief but also reflects in the manifestations of the collectivity of the people (religious activities). Religious activities of a religious community are not
only at the level of relations with God but also include relationships with fellow creatures. Religious activity is part of the ritual dimension of religion, and basically, religious activity arises from the way humans "manifest" their diversity. According to Susanne Langer, the dimension of ritual which includes religious activities shows that ritual is an expression that is more logical than just psychological. Rituals show the order of objectified symbols. These symbols express behavior and feelings and shape the personal disposition of worshipers following their respective models.

The symptom of radicalism in the Islamic world is not a sudden phenomenon. He was born in a political, economic, and socio-cultural situation that supporters of the radical Islamic movement consider very cornering Muslims. Politically, Muslims not only do not benefit from the system but also feel that they have been treated unfairly. They feel that their aspirations are not accommodated properly because the political system developed is an infidel political system that naturally favors secular nationalists rather than Muslims themselves (Umar et al., 2021). Many factors are suspected to have the potential to trigger the emergence of religious radicalism, including the struggle for political power and position, religious and ethnic sentiments, defeat in competing for various available opportunities, as well as narrow, shallow, textual, normative, and exclusive religious beliefs (Nata, 2014). According to Mauludy (2018), radicalism emerged in Indonesia due to changes in the social and political order.

In response to the current problem, Indonesian Muslims who are the biggest element, even the most important Muslim community in the world, have an unlimited obligation and responsibility to save lots not only the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila from various threats but also the requirement to avoid wasting Islam from piracy and also the fading of values, and noble values (Wahid, 2009).

From the problems above, it can be concluded that understanding the issue of radicalism is important for Indonesian students as agents of change who are responsible for Indonesia's future. The objective of this
research is to find out how far students understand the issues and terms of radical and radicalism. By obtaining an overview of students' understanding of the issues and terms of radical and radicalism, it is hoped that educational efforts regarding this issue will be more targeted.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to urge an image of students' understanding of radicalism. The research participants are active male and female students who are Muslim at the School of Psychology, Jayabaya University. The number of respondents was 60 people. The choice of respondents was decided purposively, per the respondent's criteria that had been determined. In this study, data collection was carried out through an online Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study was conducted in June 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, data collection was distributed online (using video conference Zoom). The stages administrated procedure during this research are:

1. Research Preparation Phase.
   a. Gathering information about radicalism.
   b. Prepare FGD guidelines, to get information in line with what's going to be explored
   c. Collecting information about potential respondents, then taking a private approach to induce a willingness to become a respondent.
   d. Build a rapport after the researcher have the willingness from respondents, and determine the FGD schedule

2. Research Implementation Phase. the subsequent step is to gather data on respondents through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) conducted online.

3. Data Recording Stage. the info obtained at the time of the FGD was recorded and therefore the results of the observations were recorded. The recorded data is then re-recorded within the kind of a transcript.

4. Processing Techniques and Procedures. the information analysis phase is meted out by compiling the info, entering the code, describing, analyzing, and interpreting the information.
To achieve credibility and dependability, among what the researchers are:

1. Theoretical sensitivity to minimize bias. Studied various concepts about Radicalism from several researchers, to get the concept that is most appropriate to the problem of Radicalism in students.

2. Organize data systematically and completely. In conducting interviews and observations, be prepared carefully by preparing interview guides, interview, and observation tools, controlling the direction of the conversation, and time efficiency.

3. Coding of transcripts regularly, and analysis continuously.

4. Testing of allegations. Aims to find variations of information from data, as well as to maintain the possibility of bias. by extending observations, reading various reference books and research journals related to the findings studied, increasing respondents, triangulation methods using FGD methods, and observations to confirm data obtained from respondents. Consult a variety of sources of information – for example, research databases, archival data such as school records or real estate documents, or tweets.

5. Important things as an analytical strategy. The possibility of new information submitted by respondents can enrich data analysis.

6. To deepen the data obtained, as well as to analyze the relationship of the data.

The data collection then will be analyzed so that events appear to be related together and with events of interest. Since most events are interesting. Once the link is developed, the results are generated in a form that can be easily communicated to the reader. After the results of the data analysis, the conclusion of the study describes. To arrive at prediction, post-diction, peri-diction, and understanding phenomena one must gather information and analyze it. Things like this are often cited as the core of the intelligence process by intelligence analysts Bloom, R. (2013). This information is then analyzed so that events appear to be linked together with events of interest.
C. Finding and Discussion

1. Findings

The results of the research are divided into three parts related to students' understanding of radicalism:

a. Understanding of Radicalism

Respondents generally have an understanding that radicalism is an ideology adopted by a person or group. Some say it is a form of party that sided with certain groups. While others say that ideology is precisely for the basis of the state, not someone's thinking and radicalism is a form of thought. Some respondents associate radicalism with a group of people who want change because of dissatisfaction with a system through drastic and extreme means or actions or using violence. In other words, radicalism is understood as an ideology/understanding that wants to be applied to the social system and political system, by all means, even violence to get what they want. Some respondents accused radicalism as a form of engineering made to bring down Islam because of hatred. Some say that radicalism is an understanding or goal that is not in line with the goals set by the state.

b. Opinions on Radicalism Issues

Some respondents stated that the issue of radicalism must be eradicated so as not to harm the ideology we adhere to today, this was agreed by other respondents who stated that this group spread the wrong teachings of Islam, and created groups with the wrong goals as well. Another respondent stated that radicalism is a very dangerous issue because it can cause a group of people to become terrorists and can even divide people. This issue has been around for a long time and is related to terrorism. They invite or influence other individuals to hate each other. One respondent (R3) stated that the radical group considers this country a Muslim-majority country that requires all students to follow the applicable rules based on the Qur'an and Hadith. Even though Indonesia is a country that has a variety of religions. R3 told his experience when he was in junior high school as at that time he was always taught things related to politics, for example, the election of governors, in which the
teacher instructed his students to tell their parents to choose a party. As well as teaching that Islam is the truest religion to feel superior. If analyzed, the opinion of R3 has closely related to a contemporary cognitive theory that views humans as agents who actively receive, use, manipulate, and transfer information. As in this case, R3 assumes that doctrines or opinions from others will be accepted, used, and manipulated to divert good and correct information. Such as the doctrine of radicalism and the doctrine of politics exemplified by R3. That is because humans are active agents, they easily accept and even manipulate information, including making it negative information to influence others. The process of spreading the issue of radicalism uses social networks to take action by inviting a group of people to assist in facilitating the action, as a result, many issues can trigger controversy, so radicals can be used as weapons by radicals to provoke ordinary people who do not understand radicalism and the phenomenon that happened.

Other respondents say that Indonesian people must understand Pancasila because Pancasila is an ideology that unites the nation, therefore this problem becomes complex for millennial children who in the future will become the nation's leaders to move forward against obstacles that can trigger divisions in the unity.

c. The Relationship of Radicalism with the Caliphate

Some respondents stated that there was no relationship between radicalism and the caliphate, while others stated that there was a link between radicalism and the Caliphate State. Furthermore, some students stated that the idea of khilafat emerged because Indonesia's population was predominantly Muslim. Although some students stated that radicalism had no connection at all with religion, radicalism was considered fanaticism toward religion. Islam must be radical in the sense of being harsh and fanatical in religion because if you follow the current rules, a caliphate cannot be formed. It has something to do with groups that want to establish a caliphate state. Some students feel pressured or feel uncomfortable with the material presented when they join a spiritual
association during high school, some even receive threats so that the spiritual association is considered to lead to terrorism.

2. Discussion

The results showed that the average respondent could not distinguish what was radical and what was radicalism. They assume that radicals are part of radicalism. Radicalism itself is an ism, an action attached to a person or group that wants change, whether social or political, by using violence, thinking about human rights, and taking extreme actions (Tim Penyusun Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa, 1998). Many respondents interpreted radicalism as not an ideology, but an understanding that is contrary to the current order because it arises from a sense of dissatisfaction, injustice, or the welfare of a group or society, or system. The assumption that radicalism is related to Islam can be from issues that develop in society and the media. As Eddy Saputra (Saputra, 2016) said that the use of social media has an impact on the implementation of social and religious values, especially among teenagers. The lack of reading materials for PAI and Civics subject matter with contents that can strengthen national character and values is one of the main problems of the lack of success of these two subjects in shaping the character of students in the learning process (Darraz, 2013).

Some respondents disagreed with the notion that Islam is related to radicalism and the concept of a caliphate state. The concept of a caliphate state in Indonesia is only for the benefit of certain groups, especially since Indonesia has various ethnic cultures and adheres to the Pancasila ideology. Respondents understand that Radicalism is different or has nothing to do with the Caliphate state because the Caliphate is a form of Islamic Shari'a state that cannot be applied in Indonesia because Indonesia is a country consisting of five recognized religions and various ethnic groups, which is why Indonesia has the ideology of Pancasila.

Some students felt pressured or felt uncomfortable with the material presented when they joined a spiritual association during high school, some even received threats so that the spiritual association was
considered to lead to terrorism. Previous studies have shown that radicalism has permeated educational institutions, this assumption has been confirmed by several research results, such as research at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah in 2010 and 2011. In that year, a study was conducted on student religious behavior at UIN Jakarta. From the survey data obtained, it shows that those who consider an Islamic state as the best model state for Indonesia are quite high (E. Mubarak, 2014).

Some students felt pressured or felt uncomfortable with the material presented when they joined a spiritual association during high school, some even received threats so that the spiritual association was considered to lead to terrorism. This is also reinforced by Rokhmad's research (2012), where the students are more interested in learning Islamic teachings through mentoring meetings that Rohis conducts with mentors from outside the school who are affiliated with certain radical groups. Almost all schools make this part of the program and make Rohis the most important vehicle for strengthening Islamic knowledge for students.

In addition, there is a tendency that the education system tends to prioritize the development of linear thinking skills rather than lateral thinking skills, so students tend to think rigidly and accept what they get from information sources without wanting to find out what might be in the folds of the information. For this reason, it is necessary in the world of education to develop and pay attention to this Islamic religious learning process, so that it fits the meaning of the Qur'an and Hadith. Inclusive education is one way and point of view in interpreting the text and context of Islamic teachings. Developing lateral thinking is necessary. Lateral thinking is something that students have to have flexibility in addressing change. The heuristic program could be a term coined by Edward de Bono, a Maltese psychologist, doctor, and author. de Bono defines the heuristic program as a technique of thinking associated with changes in concepts and perceptions (Halim, 2022). Jumping, sporadic, irregular way of thinking. While linear thinking could be a straight, sequential, systematic, or procedural way of thinking (Utomo, 2011). However, the problems concerning the PAI education system in Indonesia
are of course inseparable from the problems of the education system in Indonesia in general (Zul karimen Nasution, 2002). This matter needs to be studied separately.

All of this can be done, among other things, by being aware of the limitations of understanding and knowledge. Therefore, continuing to study openly and humbly as well as practicing religious teachings that are full of spirituality and God's love is a must. Thus, we will be tolerant and respect differences and freedom, and reject the efforts of anyone who wants to make Islam a medium of power (Wahid, 2009). According to Mauludy (2018), the correct way to overcome radicalism in Indonesia is thru the Government's Role. In terms of the role of educational and spiritual institutions, Hudda (2019), developing the competence of educators who are broad-minded and ready to interpret the blueprint (hard curriculum/hidden curriculum) of Islamic education may be a necessity. Besides that, a psychological approach is critical to guide and direct students.

E. Conclusion

The average respondent cannot distinguish what is radical and what is radicalism. They assume that radicals are part of radicalism. Many respondents interpreted radicalism as not an ideology as the respondent meant, but an understanding that is contrary to the current order because it arises from a sense of dissatisfaction, injustice, or the welfare of a group or society, or system. Radicalism is not an ideology but an understanding that is contrary to the current order because of a sense of dissatisfaction with the system order. The assumption that radicalism is related to Islam can be from issues that develop in society and the media. It seems that students get more information and understanding of religion from non-academic sources. Based on the results of research on student understanding of radicalism, it is considered necessary to encourage students at the elementary and secondary education levels to better understand the reading material for PAI and Civics lessons with varied learning methods. Islamic Religion teachers at the primary and secondary
education levels need to encourage students to be more active in accessing knowledge from various sources and not impose strict restrictions on internet access because it has become the main source of information today. Islamic Religious Education teachers need to develop creative thinking skills or lateral thinking so that they are comparable to efforts to hone linear thinking skills.

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