

Building Resilience in Preventing Violent Extremism through
Moderate Religious Education in Indonesia - **CONVEY Indonesia**

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This Policy Brief Series is made as part of CONVEY Indonesia project conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia.

CONVEY Indonesia is aimed to promote peace in Indonesia and prevent extremism with violence and radicalism through a set of research, surveys, policy advocacy and public interactions based on the potency of religious education. CONVEY Indonesia project covers issues on tolerance, diversity and nonviolence among youth.

Religious Education and Nationality: Where Do the Political Parties Incline to?



Introduction

Studies on political parties and religious education (Islamic) policy are rarely conducted even though we have to pay a serious attention to the religious education for politicians since education institutions are expected to produce future generations who are capable to create peace. Moreover, polarization of political party's viewpoint only occurs in the issues related to religion and this viewpoint polarization has never been found in any other issues. (Muhtadi, 2018).

Indonesian religious education system has a considerably long history, even longer than the history of the state itself. The current challenge in religious education is plurality. Indonesia acknowledges six religions/beliefs. In this matter, a religion that might shape individuals who have the capability to acknowledge diversity and interact with differences would be more preferred. However, according to the research conducted by Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM), the occurrence of intolerance towards people of different religions is increasing among Indonesian students, college students, and teachers. One of the causes of this increment would be religious education. The research of PPIM (2017) showed that 48.95 percent of the students/college students feel that religious education has a major portion in affecting them not to interact with other religion believers. This intolerance symptom can be seen in every level of education, ranging from kindergarten to university.

Therefore, an in-depth study should be conducted to see the kinds of religious education policies and activities performed by political parties, and the way political parties play their roles in the education sector which have been infiltrated by intolerance and radicalism concepts during the last decades, as proven by the research of PPIM UIN Jakarta (2016, 2017, and 2018).

The role of political parties is undeniably crucial to the legislation process and regulation making. Regulations made by Indonesian government (in which Indonesian government comprises the members of political parties) are

applicable nationally and locally. Thus, political parties could indirectly give a contribution to the making of consistent regulations with the spirit of toleration and for the sake of national endurance.

This article describes the way political parties (participating in the General Election of 2019) view the religious education performed in Indonesia by observing the visions, the missions and the programs. These aspects of political parties were found in their official websites, the confirmations of political figures conveyed by Indonesian press and the data obtained from interviews with the administrators of the 16 political parties (participating in the General Election of 2019). Data triangulation was conducted to see whether a program of religious education can be found in the political party's agenda. We would also like to provide some recommendations for the strengthening of religious education in Indonesia.

Research Method



Data Source

- Party's Articles of Association
- Party's Program & Policy
- Statement of Party' Figure in Media
- Interview Result



Informants

- 46 People from 16 Parties
- Participants of 2019 General Election



Data Analysis

- Trend & Pattern of Response



Method

- Triangulation from Document Study & Interview



Researcher

- 6 Researchers
- 6 Assistants



Research Period

- June 17 - August 16, 2019

Political Parties

Participating in 2019 General Election



Religious Education Policy

Religious Education has an important role in national education. It is specified in UU Sisdiknas (Law of National Education System) Number 20 of 2003 (Article 3) that the goal of national education is to improve student's capability and to dignify the character and civilization of Indonesia and to educate the people so that they could develop the students to be faithful, pious, virtuous, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative and independent human being, as well as to be democratic and responsible citizens.

In order to achieve the education goal, article 37 paragraph (2) states that religious education is compulsory to the education curriculum. It indicates that the goal of national education is to create a religious and moral human being for the sake of national harmony.

Vision and Mission of Political Parties on Religious Education

Political parties had no specific vision and mission on religious education. The agenda of Indonesian political parties (stated in their articles of association) explicitly considered education and religiosity as two different things. The lack of specificity in the vision and mission on religious education would lead to the absence of a specific and strong agenda on religious education. This condition pointed out that religious education had never been considered to be the main concern of political parties, even in the national context. Religious education was still considered to be the part of the national education as the parameter of success to the educational institution

Viewpoint on Religious Education

With regards to the political parties' viewpoint on an ideal religious education, each party had a rather philosophical and theological explanation. They had a relatively good notion and conception when it came to the ideas of religious education, but it has never been systematically conceptualized into an agenda to be pressed forward in the form of policies or concrete programs which can be felt directly by the people.

Education, especially the religious education, was a part of the not-so-specifically-patterned general framework. Political parties considered religious education (also on the Indonesian education) to be a strategic factor to strengthen the values, orientation, and identity of Indonesia, but the programs were not adequately measured. The big framework that was supposed to be the justification basis for the urgency of tolerant and nationalist religious education was based on the vision, mission, and articles of association of the party, and they were inspired by the nationality concept mentioned in Pancasila, 1945 Constitution, and *bhinneka tunggal ika* (unity in diversity). Hence, the conception on religious education offered by political parties became strongly relevant with the spirit of nationality

since the final base was to create Indonesian society who are intelligent, religious, pious and having a good moral as the effort in reflecting the ideology of Pancasila.

Due to the wide conception on religious education, the interpretation of Indonesian political parties on religious regulation was somewhat different. For some political parties, religious regulation was inevitable because it was a kind of logical consequence from the actualization of religious values as specified in Indonesian ideology, Pancasila. The other parties considered religious education (including the religious contents in public education) as a kind of pragmatism generated from local electoral interest, while the remaining parties found it as a deviation to the concept of diversity. These different viewpoints implied that political parties were not united when facing a case related to the relation between religion and country, and it led to a subjective interpretation.

In general, political parties found that the exclusive religious concept was a deviation to the spirit of diversity and nationality. This viewpoint eventually became an entrance to the effort in strengthening a moderate and tolerant religious education. This step was considerably prospective due to the strategic position of political parties in affecting state's policy. A comprehensive conception and understanding on moderate, tolerant, and diverse religious education would also be important because a strong commitment and partial understanding about the urgency and the model of religious education for the diverse society were barely possessed by the political parties.

Typology of Political Party's Viewpoint on Religious Education

Indonesian political party's viewpoint on religious education can be divided into three typologies, namely the viewpoints of Islamic parties, nationalist religious parties, and nationalist parties. This result was obtained from the research about political parties' viewpoint on

religious education. This research used the AD/ART (Article of Association or Bylaws), the programs socialized via official website and the interview with the figures of the political parties as the applicable data.

The first group, which was the Islamic Party, includes: a). Modern Islamic Parties such as PKS, PPP, PBB, and PAN. PKS and PPP were focusing on the supremacy of Islamic superiority in religious education, while PBB was a Modern-Formalistic party focusing on modern religion aspect with a touch of the nuance of Indonesia. It disagreed with the adoption of Salafi-Wahabi values from the Middle East. PAN developed an idea of modern religious education by stressing on the integration of religion to all of the learning contents, as well as confirming the need in a religious education which encourages pluralism/diversity; b). A Moderate-Traditionalist Islamic party such as PKB promoted the importance of strengthening the traditional education institution such as *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) and *madrrasah* (Islamic school), as well as accommodating local culture as a method in strengthening the concept of 'moderate Islam' which should be '*rahmatan lil'alam*' (a blessing to the entire nature) as an effort to block radicalism.

The second group was nationalist religious political parties. This group supported religious education and religious agenda in politics, but it should not be too involved in school's policy. This kind of political party emphasized the harmony between the country (nationality) and the religion (religiosity).

The third group was the nationalist political parties such as PDIP. It emphasized that religious education was the subordinate of nationality concept. According to PDIP, Pancasila education was the more important aspect rather than the religious education. PDIP tended to reject state's intervention to the religion, and the state should not deeply intervene religion because it is a private territory. PDIP viewed that nowadays religious education tend to be Islamic. Other than PDIP, there was PSI with the opinion that an ideal religious education may boost the

implementation of religious studies in order to nurture tolerance between religions.

According to a party so-called NasDem, the state must be assertive towards Salafi-Wahabi who tends to create intolerance and violence. On a certain level, PDIP, PSI and NasDem were on the same side in rejecting religious regulation, such as Sharia Regional Regulations, since it was deemed discriminative to the minority and it might threat the unity of Indonesia.



Recommendation

1. Support the leaders of political parties to strengthen the compatibility between religious and nationality concept in the vision, mission, regeneration system and recruitment as well as AD/ART of political parties.
2. Facilitate a dialogue and democratic space for civil society so they could voice out their aspirations related to the formulation of religious education policy applied by political parties. It can be implemented by absorbing the aspiration of the people from various classes as an effort to improve the policy on religious education.
3. Support the role of government, in this case the Ministry of Home Affairs, to strengthen the parties' regulation which support the compatibility between religiosity and nationality.

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Profile of PPIM UIN Jakarta

Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta is an autonomous research institution under Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. PPIM UIN Jakarta was established in 1994 and has been continuously conducting research, advocacy, and publication concerning the life issues and religious education in Indonesia.

Since 2017, PPIM UIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia, have been holding the Countering Violent Extremism for Youth (CONVEY) program, a program aimed to create peace in Indonesia based on religious education potential by covering the issues on tolerance, diversity and violence among youth. In addition, since its establishment to this date, PPIM UIN Jakarta has been publishing the Journal *Studia Islamika*, an international journal focusing on Islamic studies in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.





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