GROUNDING ISLAM MODERATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: A FORM TO PREVENT ISLAMOPHOBIA IN INDONESIA

MEMBUMIKAN MODERASI ISLAM MELALUI MEDIA SOSIAL: SEBUAH CARA MENCEGAH ISLAMOFOBIA DI INDONESIA

Doli Witro[1a] Nurul Alamin[2b]
[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
[2]Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kerinci, Indonesia
[a]*E-mail: doliwitro01@gmail.com*
[b]*E-mail: nurulalamin02@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT
The purpose of the study is to introduce and understand the paradigm of Islamic moderation to the public through social media in terms of separating from Islamophobia. The research method is qualitative by using library research. The data analysis technique used is Critical Discourse Analysis. Misunderstanding Islam will have the potential to cause Islamophobia. Social media can be used to provide an understanding of Islamic moderation to public. Given the enormous epidemic of hoaxes on social media, media literacy education and culture of clarification must be encouraged along with grounding Islamic moderation.

Keywords: Islamic moderation; Islamophobia; Social Media; Literacy.

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan paradigma baru tentang pemahaman keislaman yang ramah dan toleran yaitu moderasi Islam (wasathiyah al-Islam) kepada publik melalui media sosial sehingga terlepas dari Islamophobia. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Penelitian ini bersifat penelitian pustaka. Teknis analisis data yang digunakan adalah analisis wacana kritis. Kesalahan pemahaman tentang Islam akan berpontensi menimbulkan Islamophobia. Media sosial bisa digunakan untuk memberikan pemahaman tentang moderasi Islam kepada masyarakat. Mengingat besarnya wabah hoax di media sosial, dalam hal ini pendidikan literasi media dan budaya klarifikasi harus digalakkan seiring dengan membumikan Moderasi Islam.

Kata Kunci: *Moderasi Islam; Islamofobia; Media Sosial; Literasi.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the WTC incident in New York, and the call to fight against terrorism (Spalek, 2008), Islam has become a vital issue always to be discussed. Islam is seen as the cause of all problems, and their stereotypes are subject to these accusations. In Indonesia, since the beginning of the 21st century until now, there have been a series of acts of terrorism that have had a significant impact on the state's life (Purwaningsih & Witro, 2020). Bali bombing tragedy I in 2002; the bomb attack on the J.W. Marriot in 2003; the Australian Embassy bomb in 2004; the second Bali bombing tragedy in 2005; as well as the simultaneous attacks that rocked the J.W Marriot Hotel and the Ritz-Carton Hotel again in 2009; the 2011 book and serpong bomb attacks; police shootings in Solo in 2012; suicide bombing and armed attack in Thamrin, Jakarta in 2016 (Azra, 2017; Kurdi, 2018; Mbai, 2014).

Departing from the events mentioned above, anxiety spreads in the community, especially accusations against Muslims. A series of arrests of several Muslims who are thought to be related to the incident; such as Amrozi, Ali Imron, and Imam Samudra, and Abu Bakar Baasyir were also suspected of being the masterminds of the chaos in this country (Moordiningsih, 2015). A series of bomb explosions associated with Islam will positively influence public opinion. The public will put a negative view on Islam, namely the emergence of fear. The fear of Islam is known as Islamophobia.

Public opinion occurs because of a message from the communicator, then there is a discussion among the communicants, and the communicants take a stand on the contents of the message conveyed by the communicator. The opinions of these communicants can be positive opinions or even negative opinions (Syarief, 2017).

Therefore, it is necessary to introduce a new paradigm of a friendly and tolerant understanding of Islam, namely Islamic moderation (wasathiyah al-Islam) (Faiqah & Pransiska, 2018). In introducing and providing an understanding of a new paradigm to the public about Islamic moderation, one way is through social media.

Research on Islamophobia has been carried out in various countries in the world. In Europe, it has been done in various countries (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008); Australia (Ho, 2007); Turkey (Aslan, 2019); Indonesia, and other countries. Indonesia itself has been done by many researchers. Alfin, Muhibbin Zuhri, Rosyidi, & Stelmachowska (2018), *Wacana* Islamophobia *dan Persepsi terhadap Islam Indonesia melalui Studi Bahasa di Kalangan Mahasiswa Polandia.* In his research, Jauharoti Alfin said that Polish students found different characters. Smile easily and behave well towards other people in Indonesia. Aziz (2016), *Menangkal Islamofobia melalui Re-Interpretasi Al-Qur'an*; Anwar (2009), *The Dialectics of* Islamophobia *and Radicalism in Indonesia*; Moordiningsih, Islamophobia *dan Strategi Mengatasinya*; Amalia & Haris (2019), *Wacana* Islamophobia *di Media Massa.* Departing from some of these studies, they have something in common with this study, namely discussing and using Islamophobia

variables. At the same time, the difference is that this study uses social media as an instrument to ground Islamic moderation.

This paper discusses the urgency of grounding Islamic moderation through social media. This is important to discuss because in today's digital era, social media is a medium that is often accessed by all groups, and this can be used to ward off Islamophobia in Indonesia. The purpose of the study is to introduce and provide an understanding of the paradigm of Islamic moderation to the public through social media. Through this study, it is hoped that social media users, especially in Indonesia, can know and understand Islam properly so that they are separated from Islamophobia.

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative research. This research is library research. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through documentaries and literature studies. The data analysis technique used is critical discourse analysis to see discourse - the use of language in speech and writing - as a form of social practice (Amalia & Haris, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Grounding Islamic Moderation through Social Media

The moderation of Islam in Arabic is called *al-Wasathiyyah al-Islamiyyah*. Al-Qaradawi mentioned several vocabularies similar in meaning to it, including the words *tawazun*, *i'tidal*, *ta'adul*, and *istiqamah*. While in English, it is called Islamic Moderation

(Al-Qaradhawi, 2011). Wahbah az-Zuhaili, for example, defines Islamic moderation, balance in beliefs, attitudes, behavior, order, muamalah, and morality. This means that Islam is a very moderate religion, not excessive in all matters, not excessive in religion, not extreme in beliefs, not arrogant or gentle, etc. (Al-Zuhayli, 2010).

Islamic moderation is a view or attitude that always tries to take the middle position of two opposing and exaggerated attitudes so that one of the two attitudes referred to does not dominate a person's thoughts and attitudes. In other words, a moderate Muslim is a Muslim who gives every value or aspect that is opposite to a specific part no more than the right it should be. Because man, whoever he is, is not able to rid himself of the influence and bias either the influence of tradition, thought, family, era, and place. Therefore, he cannot represent or offer full moderation in the real world (Syifa, 2019).

Islamic moderation is one of the many terminologies that have emerged in the world of Islamic thought, especially in the last two decades. It can be said that Islamic moderation is one of the issues of this century in Indonesia. This term appears suspected as the antithesis of the emergence of radical understanding in understanding and executing religious teachings or messages. Thus, discussing Islamic moderation's discourse has never been spared from talking about radicalism in Islam (Faiqah & Pransiska, 2018). Along with the emergence of Islamic moderation, this century is known as the digital era with the rapid development of information and technology. Digital

media that is popular today is social media. According to Carr and Hayes, social media is internet-based media that allows users to have the opportunity to interact and present themselves, either instantaneously or delayed, with a broad audience or not, which drives the value of user-generated content and the perception of interactions with others (Carr & Hayes, 2015).

Based on a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), in 2014, internet users in Indonesia reached 88.1 million from 252.4 million people or equal to 34.9% of Indonesia's population. In 2016 the number of internet users increased drastically, namely 132.7 million from a population of 256.2 million people. Here it can be seen that within two years, internet users in Indonesia have increased by 44.6 million people or equal to 51.8% of Indonesia's population. While in 2017, internet users in Indonesia increased again to reach 143.26 million from a population of 262 million people or 54.68% of Indonesia's population (APJII, 2016, 2017; Yusuf, Witro, et al., 2020).

Thomas Hidya Tjaya once wrote an article entitled "Facebook and Hasrat Kita" in Kompas (26 April 2018), in which he stated that Indonesia was in third place after the Philippines and Brazil in the category of social media usage, which was three hours 23 minutes per day. Likewise, Rudiantara, Former Minister of Communication and Information, in his article in Kompas entitled "'Social Wellness on Social Media" (18 May 2018), stated that active users of social media in Indonesia, particularly Facebook,

reached 130 million, and Instagram users. Reached 53 million, which is third after the United States and Brazil (Mujiburrahman, 2018).

From the data and phenomena above, it can be seen that internet media is no stranger to Indonesians. More than part of the Indonesian population has used internet media, especially social media. Even in Indonesia, social media is used for three hours, 23 minutes per day (Kompas.com, 2018). This shows that the Indonesian people have accessed social media for a long time. Muhammad Najib said Islamophobia in Europe was strengthened by social media, which contained provocative content and reached every layer of the Blue Continent as technology developed. Furthermore, Najib said that social media is often new media to express various ideas, including spreading hatred against Islam (Islamophobia). That way, the incidence of blasphemy in Scandinavian countries cannot be separated from social media's role (Republika.co.id, 2020).

When talking about acts of terrorism, which in the internet media, the news is often associated with the perpetrator being a Muslim. Departing from this, it is no wonder social media users put fearful views on adherents of Islam.

Islam is a religion that leads to the value of tolerance, teaches peace among religious communities and between religious communities(Yanti & Witro, 2019) . Islam strongly condemns murder. Therefore, moderation of Islam as a paradigm shows that Islam is not a religion that teaches violence (Yanti & Witro, 2020), nor a religion

that teaches murder to be socialized through the internet, especially social media. This is a rebuttal to those who have opposing views on Muslims heard and heard from the media linking acts of terrorism with Islam.

Moderation of Islam as an Antidote to Islamophobia in Indonesia

The definition of Islamophobia itself is a combination of the words "Islam" and "phobia". The known Islam which is known is essentially a divine religion which in its teachings, contains commands and prohibitions for associating partners other than God (Allah s.w.t.), starting from having to practice the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith. Meanwhile, the word "phobia", comes from English, fear, hate (Aziz, 2016). Thus, Islamophobia is an understanding that knows and fears Islam. This fear is caused by many things, for example, Islam is activated as an extreme religion, war (jihad), and other harmful things (Mohammad H. Tamdgidi, 2012).

Islamophobia has several characteristics. To understand these characteristics, the Runnymede Trust (1997) report describes a key to understanding the differences between these characteristics, namely an open and closed view of Islam (open and closed views of Islam). The fear of Islam that occurs is characteristic of a closed view of Islam (closed views), while logical disagreement and criticism and appreciation and respect are open views of Islam (Moordiningsih, 2015). Moderation of Islam or middle Islam must be understood by groups who view Islam in a closed view. Through social media, Islamic moderation can be

demonstrated and provide a genuine understanding of Islam to the public. This is to provide understanding to those who adhere to Islamophobia.

Humans today, utilizing the internet and social media can be said to be very massive. Therefore, it will be beneficial if social media is used to spread goodness (da'wah). All information (shared) on social media will be directly and easily accessed by anyone and anywhere. Social media can connect humans to communicate with each other anywhere and anytime, no matter how far they are, and no matter day or night (Sumadi, 2016; Witro, Putri, & Oviensy, 2019). Sharing the understanding of Islamic moderation on social media can be in the form of text, photos, and videos explaining that Islam is a religion of peace and upholds the value of tolerance. This is not necessarily going to run smoothly as expected because, on social media, there are many hoaxes (fake news) hate speech, cyber crime and other unwise uses contribute to serious problems in the form of intolerance, hostility and others (Nurasih, Rasidin, & Witro, 2020; Witro, 2019). In Oxford: Learner's Pocket Dictionary, it is said that a hoax is deceived somebody with a hoax (tricking many people with fake news) (Oxford University, 2011).

According to the results of a survey conducted by Mastel Indonesia in 2017, 44.30% of respondents received hoax news every day. The most widely used media is social media (92.40%) – Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, and so on–. The type of hoax that was most widely accepted was political-regional elections (91.80%), followed by SARA (88.60%). Meanwhile, the media

channel widely used to spread hoaxes is social media (92.40%) (Mastel Indonesia, 2017). Looking at the data above, one type of hoax that is widely accepted by social media users is the issue of SARA. This issue includes religion (Witro, 2018, 2020).

In warding off Islamophobia and providing an understanding of Islamic meditation, social media users must have good media literacy. The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) argues that media literacy is a series of communication competitions, in which there is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in various forms (Sukasih, Sismulyasih SB, & Harmanto, 2015). According to Potter, as quoted by, media literacy is a perspective that can be used when dealing with the media to interpret the meaning of a message received. Someone will build this perspective based on a knowledge structure constructed from using information (Batoebara, Suyani, & Nuraflah, 2020).

Starting from the above, there are at least three things that need to be considered in order to have the most basic literacy skills. First, access messages, namely accessing messages contained in the media, both printed and electronic media; Second, analyzing messages means examining, understanding the messages received from the media; And third, evaluate the messages that have been accessed and analyzed. At this stage, children must be able to assess the messages received according to the facts and avoid hoaxes (fake news) of media literacy (Yusuf, Zuzana, & Witro, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

Islamic moderation is very urgent for all Muslims to understand. Misunderstanding Islam will have the potential to cause Islamophobia. This will lead to a fear of Islam even though Islam is a religion that teaches peace and tolerance and is friendly to anyone, both fellow believers and inter-religious believers. In today's digital era, social media is a medium that is very often accessed by all groups. Therefore, social media can be used to provide an understanding of Islamic moderation to the public. Given the extensive epidemic of hoaxes on social media, media literacy education and culture of clarification must be encouraged along with grounding Islamic Moderation.

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