

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO REDUCE RADICALISM OF ELEMENTARY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study started from the problem of radicalism found among students of Elementary Teacher Education (ETE). The purpose of this study was to analyze the role of religious education courses in reducing radicalism among ETE students. This study is action research using the Kemmis Taggart model. The study was conducted in one class with 37 students who have different religion. Religious education courses were designed in such a way, starting from the syllabus, learning content, learning process, to media and teaching aids, so that it was ensured to be able to reduce student radicalism. Pretest and posttest data were collected using test techniques to measure the level of student radicalism. The collected data were analyzed using the mean difference test technique with the help of SPSS. The results of the study showed that this course was successful in reducing radicalism among ETE students.

Keywords: Radicalism, Religious Education, ETE Students

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini berangkat dari adanya masalah ditemukannya radikalisme di kalangan mahasiswa PGSD. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah menganalisis peran mata kuliah pendidikan agama guna mengurangi radikalisme di kalangan mahasiswa PGSD. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan (action research) yang menggunakan model Kemmis Taggart. Penelitian dilakukan di satu kelas dengan jumlah mahasiswa sebanyak 37 orang yang berasal dari agama yang berbeda-beda. Mata kuliah pendidikan agama dirancang sedemikian rupa, mulai dari silabus, isi pembelajaran, proses pembelajaran, hingga media dan alat peraga, sehingga dipastikan untuk mampu mengurangi radikalisme mahasiswa. Data pretest dan posttest dikumpulkan dengan teknik tes untuk mengukur tingkat radikalisme mahasiswa. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis dengan teknik uji beda mean dengan bantuan SPSS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mata kuliah ini berhasil mengurangi radikalisme di kalangan mahasiswa PGSD.

Kata Kunci: Radikalisme, Pendidikan Agama, Mahasiswa PGSD

A. Introduction

The first principle of Pancasila firmly states that Indonesia is a religious country. Everyone has the obligation to choose one of the religions recognized by the government. As a multi-religious country, Indonesia has various potentials, both positive and negative. Positively, religious diversity is a wealth that can be proud of. This can be realized if every religious community can live in harmony with each other. While negatively, if religious communities have excessive fanaticism towards their religion, then the potential for conflict between religious communities becomes greater.

Students as part of an educated society need to be wise regarding their religion. Inward fanaticism is certainly natural for them to have. On the other hand, outward fanaticism can cause disharmony in the relationship between students who embrace a particular religion and adherents of other religions.

The existence of students who are radical towards a particular religion can be dangerous for their environment. Radicalism tends to be expansive. This causes the existence of radical students in a university to

tend to spread their radicalism to other students. If this radical community grows larger, it is feared that there will be fights between students based on religious differences. Research by Jalil (2021) shows that violence in the name of religion can occur due to radicalism, fundamentalism, and extremism. Therefore, preventing radicalism is urgent.

In order to prevent bigger problems, radicalism needs to be addressed immediately. Samho (2022) stated that radicalism has an urgency to be prevented. One of the concepts offered to prevent this from developing is religious moderation.

Various efforts to prevent the development of radicalism have been put forward by previous researchers. Tawaang and Mudjiyanto (2021) saw that radicalism can be prevented through social media. This result was logic because social media have important role in peoples live now. Still related to the research by Tawaang and Mudjiyanto, other researchers, namely Bastian, Rahmat and Basri (2021) highlighted that digital literacy needs to be instilled properly in order to prevent radicalism.

The three solutions proposed by previous researchers appear to have

various limitations. One limitation in terms of the context of the research object, it appears that the three studies did not reach Elementary Teacher Education students as their objects. The success of strategies in preventing radicalism in each object will not necessarily be suitable if applied to the student environment. This is because students are a more educated society. In addition, in terms of age, students are also in a phase of finding their identity. This has an impact on high idealism, and if not managed properly can lead to radicalism. ETE students as the candidate for elementary teacher in future need to control their radicalism level as normal as possible.

This study aims to reduce radicalism among students. The strategy used to reduce radicalism is to design one of the national compulsory courses (namely religious education) so that it can reduce radicalism among students.

Radicalism can occur in people who embrace any religion. Radical religious adherents are often interpreted as the opposite of moderate (Anah, 2021). Radical religious adherents tend to have deeper or more extreme thoughts,

experiences, and actions compared to moderate religious adherents.

Radicalism arises in a person due to various factors. According to Rahman (2019), radicalism arises due to a misinterpretation of certain religious teachings or holy books. This misinterpretation includes a piecemeal understanding, or an excessive interpretation of a particular teaching.

To measure a person's level of radicalism, indicators of radicalism are needed. Sefriyono and Mukhibat (2017) proposed indicators of radicalism from the perspective of their identity. There are eight proposed indicators, namely: considering the government as *thaghut*; rejecting the national anthem and respecting the flag; building emotional ties to religious groups that are stronger than emotional ties to other groups (eg family, friends, and professions); worship carried out in private; paying atonement fees; wearing striking religious clothing; consider people outside their group as wicked and infidels; reluctant to listen to lectures from other groups outside their group. These indicators can be used as a basis for developing an instrument to measure the level of radicalism in this study.

Religious education is one of the compulsory subjects in Indonesian education. This is based on the first principle of Pancasila, namely Belief in the One Almighty God. Starting from school to college, it is necessary to teach religious education to their students.

There are various benefits of religious education in the world of education. Some of the benefits of religious education include shaping the character of students (Salisah, Darmiyanti, and Arifudin, 2024; Nurazizah, Rukajat and Ramdhani, 2022). According to Sapitri, Amirudin, Maryati (2022), the formation of this character is obtained through revitalization in character education. The main character that can be formed from this religious education is a religious character (Jannah, 2023; Puspitasari, Relistian, Yusuf, 2022; Efendy and Irmwaddah, 2022).

One of the most important roles of religious education, besides forming character, is preventing radicalism. Research from Nafisiyah and Wardan (2024) and Ulum (2023). The role of preventing radicalism does not only apply to Islamic Religious Education as stated by the two studies. Messakh and Boiliu (2023) show that preventing

radicalism through religious education is also necessary in Christianity. Meanwhile, research from Batu and Sihotang (2022) focuses more on the Catholic perspective.

The design of appropriate religious education can have an impact on reducing student radicalism. For this reason, the design of lectures needs to cover all stages, including planning (preparation of RPS), syllabus, learning models, learning resources and learning media, and learning evaluation.

B. Research Method

This research is an action research using the Kemmis and Taggart model. There are 4 research steps, namely plan, act, observe, and reflect. There are two implementation cycles in this research.

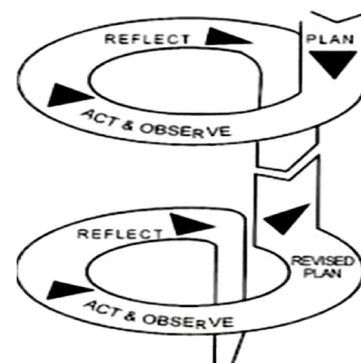


Figure 1. Kemmis and Taggart Research Model

The research was conducted in one class of Elementary Teacher

Education at a private college in Bekasi Regency, West Java. The number of students involved in this study was 37 people from different religions. There were students who were Muslim, Christian, Catholic, and Buddhist.

The religious education course was designed in such a way, starting from the syllabus, learning content, learning process, to media and teaching aids, so that it was ensured to be able to reduce student radicalism.

Pretest and posttest data were collected using test techniques to measure the level of student radicalism. The instrument was developed from the radicalism indicator developed by Sefriyono and Mukhibat (2017). There were 20 instrument items (questionnaire) created in this study. The questionnaire using Likert Scale 1-5, and all of which had been passed for validity and reliability testing.

The collected data were analyzed using the mean difference test technique with the help of SPSS software. The pretest result data is compared with the posttest result for each cycle, and the improvement is analyzed. The improvement can be

said to be significant if it can be accepted at the 0.05 error rate.

C. Results and Discussion

The research was conducted as per the predetermined design. The religious education course was designed in such a way that it could focus on reducing the level of radicalism in students.

There are several components that are part of the design of the religious education course applied in this study. Several components designed in this course are the same as the explanation in the research method section, namely the syllabus, learning content, learning process, media and teaching aids. In addition, students also underwent a radicalism level measurement test with an instrument that had been developed previously.

There are several important points in the learning process carried out. Students are asked to look for elements of tolerance between religions in the teachings of their respective religions or holy books. In addition, students are also assigned to look for goodness from other religions. In the final semester test, students carry out role-playing learning, where

students are tasked with becoming religious leaders according to their respective religions to broadcast religion with a focus on tolerance.

The entire learning process went well, and students benefited from this learning. All students (37 people) attended lectures from beginning to end, and fulfilled all lecture processes and rules (taking mid-term tests, taking final semester tests, and absences of no more than 3 times). All students also received grades for this course at the end of the semester.

Before the lectures began, at the beginning and end of the semester, students were asked to take a radicalism level test. The results of the radicalism level test after taking one semester of the course were compared with the level of radicalism at the beginning of the lecture.

At the beginning of the semester, it was found that the level of radicalism of students was above normal. On a scale of 20-100, the average pretest score was at 68.56 with a standard deviation of 10.92. There were 5 people who had high radicalism (more than 80). This fairly high number was then reduced through the implementation of religious learning.

Table 1. Result of Descriptive Statistic Pretest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	37	68.5676	10.92281
Valid N (listwise)	37		

After undergoing one semester of religious lectures, a posttest was conducted to measure the level of radicalism of students after attending lectures. Based on the calculations obtained, the average level of radicalism had decreased to 63.27 with a standard deviation of 9.81. In this posttest, there were no more students who had high radicalism (above 80).

Table 2. Result of Descriptive Statistic Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Posttest	37	63.2703	9.81962
Valid N (listwise)	37		

Based on the data above, the radicalism level may decrease from level of 68,56 to 63,27 as the result of implementing this religious education subject. The decreasing may be significant or not depend on the test result bellow.

Table 3. Result of Comparative Testing

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	5.29730	2.73724	.45000	4.38466	6.20994	11.772	36	.000

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the decrease in the level of radicalism at the beginning of the semester and at the end of the semester was 5.29. The value after being tested had a t count of 11.77 at an error level of 0.00. This shows that the decrease of 5.29 is significant.

The results of this study indicate that religious education learning has the ability to reduce radicalism. The results of this study have various differences with other studies.

This study focuses on efforts to overcome radicalism through multi-religious religious education. Other studies such as those conducted by Hasibuan (2024) and Dinata, Kuswadi, and Qomarudin (2022) show the same results, but only in the scope of Islamic Religious Education. Even Khasanah (2024) looked more specifically, namely the strengthening

of Aswaja values in Islamic Religious Education.

Not limited to religious education alone, several other researchers also use other subjects to reduce radicalism. Prakasih, Firman and Rusdinal (2021) make multicultural education a solution to counter radicalism. In addition, there are also Amtiran and Jondar (2021) who focus on Pancasila.

In addition to using certain subjects or courses, previous researchers also use other approaches to reduce radicalism. Ali (2021) focuses on pocketbook media to reduce radicalism. While Nursidik (2024) focus on educational management.

Based on the discussion that has been carried out, it appears that this study has a spirit that is in line with other studies but with a different strategy, which is the novelty of this study. Efforts to try to combine various

existing solutions are expected to be more effective in overcoming radicalism. For example, the use of pocketbook media in religious education courses will make it even more effective.

D. Summary

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that religious education is able to reduce radicalism in elementary teacher education students. This is proven by a significant decrease in the level of radicalism from pretest to posttest.

Therefore, it is suggested that religious education courses with specific designs such as in this study be applied to lectures to reduce student radicalism. In addition, for further research, it is suggested to perfect the design of the courses that have been developed with various additions such as the use of learning media and integration with other subjects.

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