

FKUB DIALOGICAL COMMUNICATION IN DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE CITY OF SURAKARTA

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Abstract

The background of this research is the emergence of religious radicalism and intolerant behavior by some groups of people in various parts of Indonesia, including Surakarta, which, if not addressed immediately, can threaten harmonious social life in the society. The Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) was formed by the Ministry of Religion whose main objective is to establish harmony between religious communities, to foster religious tolerance. One of its main tasks is to carry out dialogue with religious and community leaders. The purpose of this study was to describe the dialogical communication process carried out by the Surakarta FKUB with these religious and community leaders. Referring to the constructivist paradigm, this study uses qualitative methods. This study concluded that dialogical communication carried out by FKUB Surakarta was quite effective in overcoming differences, could prevent radicalism and lead to tolerant understanding, attitudes and behavior among the Surakarta community.

Keywords: dialogical communication, FKUB, religious tolerance.

1. Introduction

Indonesia as an archipelagic country consisting of more than 17,000 islands, and multicultural with a population of 714 ethnic groups, 1,100 regional languages, the government seeks to increase the potential for diversity and at the same time minimize the potential for conflicts that can arise due to friction of interests that occur in society, both in the form of empirical issues occurs in society or because of some discourses developments lead to conflicts that fulfill the content of mass media or social media. With such diversity, this tolerant way of life based on Pancasila becomes an example for other countries in building harmony among their people (Hamid, 2018).

In a multicultural country, the development of intercultural, interethnic and interfaith tolerance is a necessity. Intercultural contact among the population occurs at the individual or group level. The positive impact of these contacts is the process of acculturation and assimilation, while the negative ones are such as friction and conflicts between ethnic groups. From various studies, it was found that inter-ethnic

conflict was a social dynamic as a result of social fragmentation, economic inequalities, educational disparities, political power, along with cultural and religious differences (Nurhadiantomo, 2004; Mulyadi and Soedarmono, 1999; Rimmelink, 1994).

In fact, we still encounter conflicts based on SARA (Ethnic, Religion, Race, and Inter-groups) friction today. Based on the research and development group database from Kompas Daily (2019) the SARA conflict in Indonesia in 1990-2003, in 28 provinces there were 4,270 conflicts, with 11,160 people died. The largest numbers are North Maluku (3,244 people), Aceh (2,929), Maluku (1,602), Jakarta (1,190), Central Kalimantan (817), and West Kalimantan (688).

It involved religious conflicts, there were 433 incidents and the number of victims was 5,452 people (the highest was Muslims-Christians). These inter-religious conflicts occurred in Poso, the Muslims-Christians conflict (1992, 1995, 1998, 2000), in Situbondo (Muslims - Christians, 1996), in Ambon (Christians - Muslims, 1999), in Sampang (Sunni Muslims - Shia Muslims, 2004), in South Lampung (Buddhists - Muslims, 2012), in Aceh (Muslims - Christians, 2015), in Tanjungbalai North Sumatra (Muslims - Buddhists, 2016) and in Papua (Christians - Muslims, 2018 & 2019).

In particular, Surakarta, which is more popularly known as Solo, which now bears the title of "the spirit of Java", in the past was the center of the kingdom and today as the center of Javanese culture and trade, has attracted residents of other regions to come and settle in this city. Solo developed into a multicultural city whose inhabitants are Javanese who are originally from Solo, some are Javanese from outside Solo, various ethnicities from other regions in Indonesia and even ethnicities from abroad. In this city there have been repeated racial conflicts, including in 1911-1912 the riots between the Chinese Kongsis and the Javanese Kongsis, then the strikes and riots of the railroad workers in 1923, the 1946-1950 anti-autonomous region riots, the 1966 anti-Chinese riots, the anti-Chinese riots. 1980, and the anti-Chinese riots during the reformation in May 1998 (Mulyadi and Soedarmono, 1999).

In order to maintain religious diversity and tolerance, on March 21, 2006 the Indonesian Ministry of Religion established the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) in the center of Jakarta, followed by its establishment in provinces and districts / cities including in Surakarta City. In general, FKUB plays a role in

developing multiculturalism and tolerance, particularly in reducing and resolving conflicts between religious communities their respective working areas.

The residents of Surakarta also embrace various religions, but although racial conflicts have been recorded several times, their religious life is quite harmonious. The residents of this city have generally succeeded in developing tolerance between religious communities. This prompted us to conduct research on the role of FKUB in developing religious tolerance in Surakarta. The purpose of this study was to describe the dialogical communication process carried out by the Surakarta FKUB with religious and community leaders.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Change

Social change according to Burhan Bungin (2006: 91) is a social process experienced by members of society as well as all cultural elements and social systems, where all levels of community ways of life voluntarily or are influenced by external elements leave their usual life patterns, culture, and the old social system then adapts or uses the new life patterns, culture and social system.

Social change is influenced by internal and external factors. Some are deliberate, with social engineering, but some are not deliberate, unplanned, at least not planned by the government, but can be initiated by other parties, it could also be due to changes in the natural environment.

Human life is not static, but dynamic, constantly changing, and communication is believed to be one of the determining factors for this change. Change is caused by internal or external factors. It could be caused by human factors or natural factors. Also by the development of science that has led to new discoveries, which we call innovation. Human creativity in innovation has brought about changes in civilization. The rapid change we know as revolution. The civilization revolution has brought people to change, starting with nomadic life, hunting, farming, to the industrial revolution, and currently the industrial revolution 4.0.

The history of human communication took an extraordinary leap when the printing press, then radio, and telephone technology were invented, all of which colored the development of the mass media. Mass media accelerates the diffusion of information, knowledge and culture. Socio-cultural changes have become so fast and lead to mass culture and popular culture. Cultures all around the world are

colored by the power of the mass media which massively influences the life of the global community.

Internet technology accelerates changes from global until local levels, the use of the internet has become a necessity, the mass media has changed its form and function, from initially being one-way to interactive, audiences who initially could only receive information now can act as producers of information. (Abreu et al, 2017).

With the presence of the internet as a mass media and means of social media in the midst of human life, social change is becoming faster and harder to control because everyone can use it as a "creator of civilization", igniting new social and cultural values.

In Surakarta, the community has also experienced social changes. Due to internal and external factors, for example the socio-cultural values of "ewuh pekewuh", "trima ing pandhum", "alon-alon asal kelakon", "tepa selira" and "mikul duwur mendem jero" begin to fade and altered with current values that are considered more modern or more in accordance with beliefs, faiths and a new awareness

2.2. Religious Constellation in Surakarta

The population of Surakarta embraced various religions, namely Islam, Catholic Christianity, Protestantism, Buddhism and Hinduism. These five officially recognized religions continue to exist today. Even though Confucianism has been recognized by the government, statistically these followers of this religion have not been registered in the data of the Central Statistics Agency or the Ministry of Religion. BPS (National Bureau of Statistics) still includes Confucianism adherents to Buddhism.

Based on data from BPS Surakarta (April 2020), the population based on the religion of the city of Surakarta in 2019 is Islam with a number of followers of 450,392 (78.59%), Protestant Christians of 79,819 (13.93%), Catholic 40,491 (7.07%), Buddhist 1,829 (0,32%) and Hindu 378 (0.0065%).

To fulfill the spiritual needs of believers of religions, places of worship are scattered throughout the Solo City. The Muslim population has a place of worship as many as 665 mosques and 307 prayer rooms. Other places of worship consist

of 6 Catholic churches, 191 Christian churches, 8 monasteries / pagoda / shrine, and 3 temples.

After the 1998 reformation, the religious development in Solo became more dynamic. Various religious groups, especially among the Muslim community, thrive. Increasing freedom is a precondition for the emergence of radical Islamic groups, including: Laskar Hizbullah Sunan Bonang, Laskar Jundullah, Laskar Zulfikar, Laskar Salamah, Laskar Teratai Emas, Laskar Honggo Dermo, Laskar Hamas, Laskar Hawariyyun, Barisan Bismillah, Movement Ka'bah Youth, Hizbullah Brigade, and Majelis Ta'lim al-Islah, Mosque Activist Communication Forum (FKAM), Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), Surakarta Islamic Youth Front, HTI, Surakarta Islamic Community Forum, and Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid, and etc. (Baidhaw, 2007)

The strength of Islamic groups that identified as moderate was still dominated by Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama. Muhammadiyah is the largest group in the Solo and is expected to continue to emerge as a balancing force for "radical Islamic" groups. Solo is also the base for the Kejawen Islamic community.

These new post-reform Islamic groups showed radicalism related to the problem of Christianization. The Islamization-Christianization contestation initially subsided under the surface. Along with the spread of this radical movement, Islam-Christian contestation and conflict began to emerge. Handling the issue of radicalism is the main agenda of the Surakarta city government, as well as the main task of FKUB related to tolerance among religious communities, maintaining harmony in a multicultural society.

2.3. Dialogical Communication

Dialogical Theory by Mikhail Bakhtin and Martin Buber (Littlejohn, 2019: 243) states that in dialogue a person can convey and try to defend his opinion, but at the same time he accepts and respects the opinions of others. According to Bakhtin, world problems are not something that is "certain" but has not been decided (unfinalizability). The world is not static, it is always changing. The world is formed by multiple voices, heteroglossia (many voices) all of which contribute to constant change.

Bakhtin in the dialogical theory says that *the other* is an inseparable part of building self-awareness of the *self*. The dialogical relationship between *self* and

other which is equal is what builds self-awareness of both parties. *Self* and *other* are not stand alone entities, but are *co-being* for one another. This *co-being* has consequences for the emergence of *answerability* or responding to each other's presence. *Other* in Bakhtin's dialogical theory is needed because *self* is never able to see itself completely. Wholeness can be formed when there are other people who show or help reveal the self-integrity. Therefore, the existence of each individual only becomes *co-being* because a new being appears through the relationship between *self* and *other* which then carries out the process of creating a joint *self* (Manshur, 2017).

3. Research Methods

The paradigm in this research is constructivist. The type of research method is qualitative. Data collection was carried out with field studies, interviews and observations. In-depth interviews were conducted with informants who were determined by purposive sampling, although snowball sampling is also possible. The location/object of this research is in the city of Surakarta, the informants include administrators of the Surakarta FKUB, religious leaders, administrators of religious organizations in the city of Surakarta, and community leaders.

Observation of the object of research is carried out by actively engaging in situations and conditions so that researcher can appreciate the reality that occurs in site. Observations concerning verbal and non-verbal attitudes and behavior in the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and group realms in various interreligious dialogues. Observation and interviews refer to categories that are arranged based on the tolerance indicators mentioned below and related to aspects of communication at various levels, including aspects of communication in the dialogue process.

Religious tolerance can be divided into six indicators. First, mutual acceptance of the existence of people from other religions. Second, understand the needs of other religions. Third, trusting and not suspecting each other between fellow believers. Fourth, there is a will to grow and develop together. Fifth, willing to sacrifice for the common good. Finally, the sixth, prioritizing universal religious values (honesty, peace, respect, obedience to leaders / government).

Data analysis in this study refers to a grounded theory method according to Emzir in Mawardi (2019) that the process is systematic and follows standard formats, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

4. Result and Discussion

The management of FKUB Surakarta City for the period 2017-2022 which was confirmed by the Decree of the Mayor of Surakarta Number 450 / 15.4 / I / 2017, placing the Chairman of PD Muhammadiyah Surakarta H. Subari as chairman, accompanied by M.J.Tri Prasetyo, SH., MH and KH. A. Dahlan as deputy chairman assisted by H. Alkof Hudaya SH as secretary and Pdt. Jonedi Ginting, SP, MA. As deputy secretary. The board consists of 17 members, consisting of 10 elements of Islam, 2 elements of Christianity, 2 elements of Catholicism, 1 element of Hinduism, 1 element of Buddhism, 1 element of Confucianism (surakarta.go.id, 30 March 2017).

According to the Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religion and the Minister of Home Affairs Number 9 and Number 8 of 2006 FKUB's duties are (1) Conducting dialogue with religious and community leaders; (2) accommodating the aspirations of religious mass organizations and the aspirations of the community; (3) Channeling the aspirations of religious mass organizations and the community in the form of recommendations as material for the regent / mayor's policies; (4) Providing written recommendations on applications for the establishment of places of worship, and providing written opinions on temporary permits for the use of non-places of worship buildings given by the regents / mayors; 5) Providing opinions or suggestions in matters of dispute resolution over the construction of houses of worship to the regent / mayor; (6) To make a list of problems in religious harmony at the sub-district level, and / or sub-districts / villages that do not have a District FKUB; (7) To disseminate the laws and regulations and policies in the religious sector related to religious harmony and community empowerment.

Observing the FKUB duties, it appears that dialogue activities between religious and community leaders are a priority to be carried out on an ongoing basis. The dialogue between religious leaders is followed up and carried on internally in each religion, thus providing enlightenment and good understanding of various issues among members/followers. The hope is that this dialogical understanding will be able to eliminate the impact of the massive message of radicalism and intolerance

disseminated by certain parties to attack public awareness which if left unchecked will disrupt the joints of social life, life becomes disharmonious, intolerant and leads to inter-religions conflicts. .

Seeing the objective conditions that the Surakarta society is pluralistic and there is a tendency for the growth of religious radicalism, that is why FKUB's efforts in building tolerance among religious communities is prioritizing dialogue with various parties, through Focus Group Discussion or informal discussion forums, by often conducting hospitality with face-to-face approach which allows dialogue. Dialogic communication is carried out in a close atmosphere of mutual trust, mutual respect, respect for differences and aims to build togetherness and understanding regarding the issues discussed. Interfaith issues that often occur in Surakarta are the construction of places worship, related to permits, rejection from certain groups, etc.

FKUB Surakarta develops dialogical communication because through the dialogue process it can bring together the thoughts and opinions of various parties, it is more dialectical because during the process, the movement brings together *self-others* to achieve *mutual understanding*. Thus dialogical communication is a very democratic socio-cultural communication process.

Through dialogical communication, differences are not to be contested, not looking for what is right and what is wrong, but through dialogue it encourages all parties to be able to understand each other, appreciate each other, and respect each other. And finally through various dialogues with religious leaders and community leaders conducted by FKUB, mutual trust began to emerge. One by one, interfaith problems can be resolved properly.

5. Conclusions and suggestions

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the dialogical communication carried out by FKUB Surakarta is quite effective in overcoming differences, so that it plays a role in preventing radicalism and leads to tolerant understanding, attitudes and behavior among the people of Surakarta. In general, most of the people of Surakarta have backgrounds and characters that support religious tolerance.

The dialogical communication conducted by FKUB has only targeted religious and community leaders, it has not yet expanded to ordinary people. Therefore, we

suggest that in the future there should be dialogue between religious communities within the general population or *grassroots* groups.

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