

Women's Role in Religious Moderate Education (An Overview of Feminism-Theology)

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Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to describe knowledge, culture, and contemporary Muslim civilization. The results of library research find that the achievements of the golden age of Islamic civilization are the culmination point of Islamic progress to date. There are various reasons for the waning of Muslim culture and civilization. For example, the death of scientific tradition in the Muslim world, the feeling of satisfaction of Muslims today with the achievements of earlier Islamic thinkers, so that they no longer feel the need to do *ijtihad*. The efforts needed to rebuild a high civilization can only be initiated, if the Muslim community has high intentions and enthusiasm to seek and develop knowledge based on a strong religious commitment; carry out assimilation and acculturation; have an open attitude to cooperate with all parties in the field of culture; and support from the government through political policies to develop culture.*

Keywords: Knowledge, culture, and Islamic civilization.

A. Introduction

The rise of differences in society in religious tolerance has become a sharp public polemic and has been going on for quite a long time, so that gradually it can endanger the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia. Diversity in Indonesia is still often ignored in religious tolerance. In the eastern hemisphere of Indonesia, conflicts between ethnic, tribal and religious groups still occur frequently. This is something that must be addressed by the Indonesian people in understanding religious moderation. So that divisions between ethnicities, tribes, groups can be minimized. This is where the role of women as one of the subjects in raising awareness of religious moderation education in society.

Moderation is basically a dynamic condition, always moving, because moderation is basically a process of continuous struggle carried out in people's lives.

So as a condition of religious moderation is to have extensive knowledge and have a good religious understanding. In the Indonesian context, to be used to identify how strong religious moderation is practiced by a person in Indonesia, as well as how much vulnerability they have, there are indicators of religious moderation used, namely: (1) national commitment, (2) tolerance, (3) anti-corruption. violence and (4) accommodating to local culture (Kementarian Agama RI, 2019).

Women are God's second human creation after Adam. However, its existence is not seconded by Islam. In Islam, rahmatan lil 'alamin, puts women in an equal place with men. Being a companion to a male figure in the world, does not mean that women can be ignored. Today, the role of women is no longer as a "konco wingking" or friends behind the scenes of men. But women also have the right to develop skills in the public world. The public's view of the role of women in the public world still needs to be improved. So that society is able to give more space for women to work. In society, the role of women is able to influence the patriarchal cultural order that develops in society. Meanwhile, the right to develop potential must also be given to women. Also, the obligation to build a harmonious society in the diversity of religions is also a burden for women.

Creating a productive, efficient society is also determined by the quality of women themselves. The level of education that women have is also able to influence the position of women in society. Public awareness of religious moderation education for all genders must be increasingly realized. Because women also have the right to get higher education. The importance of higher education for women because in the future women will give birth to quality generations born from quality mothers.

In this study, the author uses a feminist approach. The term feminism is a modern word or a word as a product in the modern era. The meaning of the word feminism talks about an ideology that contains a number of ideas, ideas that are used to realize a struggle for social change (Russel, 1993).

The emergence of various women's movements and feminist theology shows the openness of women's critical thinking. Women struggle against a patriarchal culture that is supported by culture and religion. Women have the right to fight for themselves for the sake of self-respect, justice, and the liberation of their critical

thinking. Women want equal participation between women and men both in the domestic sphere and in the public sphere. Furthermore, this paper will focus on discussing the role of women in Religious Moderation Education (in a theological feminism review).

B. Discussion

1. Education of Religious Moderation

In terms, moderation comes from the west (English) which is moderate which means “balanced” and within the limits of human nature. This kind of moderation always tries not to have extreme ideas, opinions or movements; more inclined to always be in the middle position (middle); always strive to uphold a fair attitude; and opinions based on considerations that are willing to respect the opinions of others. According to Kamali (2015) that the concept of moderate has a strong relationship with justice and balance because moderate means being in the middle of two extreme points. This concept is not only found in Islam but in other religions and traditions such as Confucianism (Lun Yun) and Greek philosophers (Golden Middle Way). Aristotle defines the middle way as the middle point between two extreme points, excess and indifference. Kamali (2015) also explains that the opposite of moderate attitude (wasathiyyah) is extreme attitude (tatarruf). In contemporary language, it is often called right Islam or left Islam.

Moderate or Wasathiyyah is one of the main teachings in Islam which today is often ignored, even forgotten. This concept is closely related to all the problems that exist in Islam both in the perspective, beliefs and actions of individuals as well as communities and society. Muslim women who have a moderate attitude will encourage the creation of harmony in individual behavior and community views which in turn creates harmonious relationships between individuals in unity and avoids divisions and differences. However, this concept is often neglected even though we clearly know its benefits and importance in our real life.

The word Wasathiyyah comes from the origin of the word wasat which literally means “fair, middle way, elected.” Wasathiyyah can also have the meaning of “strong” as in youth which is a strong position between the weaknesses of childhood and old age.

The concept of Wasathiyyah is not only aimed at individuals (individuals) but also at groups or communities. In this case it can be interpreted that the moderate attitude of the individual will encourage the formation of a moderate group or society. This means that the concept of wasathiyyah is not only intended for men, but also for women. The same role is assumed for Muslim women in realizing the formation of a wasathiyyah society. It is in the Qur'an, QS. Al-Baqarah: 143:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ
 وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَنْتَبِغِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ بِنَءِ قَلْبٍ عَلَى
 عِقْبِي ۗ إِنَّ كَانَتْ لَكَ بِيَرَّةَ الرَّسُولِ الْيَسْرَةَ وَالْهَيْبَةَ وَلَمَّا كَانَ هَالِكًا لِيُضِيعَ
 آيَاتِنَا لَمَّا نُنزِّلُ الْوَحْيَ لَكَ بِيَرَّةِ رَبِّكَ إِذَا هُوَ خَائِبًا ۚ

Meaning: “And similarly We have made you (Muslims) “middle people” so that you are witnesses of (deeds) humans and that the Messenger (Muhammad) is a witness over (deeds) you. We have not made the qibla that (formerly) you (oriented) to it, except that We may know who followed the Messenger and who turned back. Indeed, (the change of Qibla) is very heavy, except for those who have been guided by Allah. And Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is Most Gracious, Most Merciful to mankind.”

Imam Jalaluddin as Suyuthi interprets the word “ummatan wasatha” as the chosen people and the intermediate (moderate) people while Imam At-Tabari in his interpretation gives the meaning of a just and chosen people. The interpretation of this Madaniyah verse shows that Muslims are asked to be middlemen who do not become people of the extreme right and extreme left. “Ummatan wasatha” in this verse also contains an understanding that Muslims live side by side with adherents of other religions and beliefs in a life that upholds justice, humility and harmonization of relations. Muslims view adherents of other religions as being creatures of God who have the same opportunity to live in society.

According to Qaraḍāwī further explanation that the wasatha ummah is a Muslim community that is able to try to balance between “science and charity, worship and social interaction, culture and character, truth and power, as well as participation and involvement in politics.” This kind of ummah will reject all models of extremism and religious indifference. Those who choose the middle way are one

of the religious communities that are able to survive longer than the eroding global currents. Because with a moderate understanding, it can bring Muslims to be wiser in social interaction with the general public.

The principle of balance and justice in the concept of moderation means that in religion, one should not be extreme in his views, but must always seek common ground, the basic principle in religious moderation is to always maintain a balance between two things (Kamali, 2015).

The involvement of Muslim women in the concept of *ummatan wasatha* is also very influential, when women apply the concept, women are able to balance the character of moderate Muslims in society. In the social interaction built by a group of women with the concept of *ummatan wasatha*, they are able to balance their actions in religion. Women's concern for their participation in society to avoid acts of extremism is able to bring Muslim civilization open to religious balance.

The concept of *ummatan wasatha* is not only limited in scope to the perspective and character of each individual towards actions or events that are directly related to each individual action. Moderate attitude is related to how each individual captures the response and takes an action on what is happening in his environment and is not in accordance with the moderate attitude itself. According to Davids and Waghid (2016) that the *Wasatha Ummat* is a community that is always moving towards the dynamics of religious life, so that in providing independent critical assessments by formulating and delivering responses to contemporary issues it is more useful. So that the opinions expressed are able to strengthen unity, unity, integration and a sense of belonging to build the nation and avoid expressions that cause disputes and lead to divide the people. For this reason, moderation is also a response to any behavior, actions that tend to take the form of extremism or neglect of religion, injustice and disturbing public stability.

Women have two important roles in life. In addition to having a role in the domestic sphere, women are also entitled to play a role in the public sphere. These two domains are capable of becoming the development ground for Religious Moderation Education. In the domestic sphere, women act as children, mothers, wives and daughters-in-law. Meanwhile, in the public sphere, women also have the

right to develop their potential according to their abilities, such as becoming teachers, employees, traders, and various professions that they can engage in.

Women as stakeholders of religious moderation, women must have an understanding of religious moderation as early as possible. Because in the process of maturation, women are very vulnerable, a woman enters the circle of religious intolerance. The most important role is parenting, because it is the biggest influence on the growth of women's souls. Parents are fully responsible for parenting patterns in providing an understanding of religious moderation. The level of understanding and awareness of a woman's religious moderation is in line with her age and level of education.

Mature education can provide women with cognitive knowledge and empirical experience. How can a woman intervene herself to understand religious moderation, before she can intervene in others. This is where the emotional maturity of a woman is needed. So that women are not considered to be an obstacle to the growth of religious moderation. With women's mature understanding of religious moderation, they are able to increase the strength of the unity of the nation and state. Because Indonesia is a country founded on various ethnic groups, different national cultures, the problem of religious moderation is more complex. Seeing this, tolerance is a meeting point for moderation. Where, our understanding of tolerance for religious differences is able to eliminate extremism little by little.

Women as civilians, must also take part in building public ethics with the concept of religious moderation. Coloring the world of diversity in Indonesia, women also have an obligation to build public discourse on the concept of religious moderation. State policies must also provide public space for women to succeed in the concept of religious moderation. Egalitarianly, women as citizens should be given ample space to engage in religious moderation.

2. Women's Role in Education Moderate Religion Feminism Perspective

The method of feminist theology is the starting point of women's experiences and it is associated with the hermeneutic process that leads to the recovery and reinterpretation of scriptures and traditions. Ruether says that the process includes three interacting aspects (Ruether, 2003): "(1) a critique of misogyny and

androcentrism in the biblical and theological traditions; (2) restoration of alternative, prophetic, egalitarian traditions; and (3) reimagining all theological symbols in an egalitarian way and creating justice.

Women have the same potential as men in all respects. Even women have great potential in building and maintaining the tolerance needed by the Indonesian state. The country of Indonesia, which is very diverse in ethnicity, culture and local wisdom, requires humans with good human resources. Why do women have such a big potential role? This is because psychologically, women in playing their role as mothers, relate very intensely to their family members, namely their children and always work together, able to cultivate female attitudes to not be selfish, full of patience, motherly attitude, and willing to be willing to sacrifice. Having these attitudes makes women always ready to adapt, consider alternatives or other possibilities and be able to see the differences that exist in their environment (Muntago, 1972).

The discussion entitled “Islam and Women’s Education”, has been stated by Haiffa A. Jawad that one of the most important rights for women in Islam is the right to obtain education (Jawad, 1998). All the knowledge that must be mastered by women cannot happen immediately. Everything must go through education and teaching, women must be required to continue to learn and try to understand the problems that are around them. As long as they are still in ignorance, the fate of the women will not change. Education is the main key in living life in the world. Because to get happiness, self-respect, in the world, humans have the right to education.

In Indonesia, the right to education has been protected by the 1945 Constitution article 31 paragraph 1. In Islam the right to education is also reserved for every human being, both male and female. Islam does not dichotomy of rights only for men. Considering the role of women in the Islamic world, they are also given their own space. Islam has raised the dignity of women. During the jahiliyah era, women were only used as second persons, not allowed to take part in the public sphere. The era of ignorance was very forbidden for women to express themselves. Even the characters tend to be killed, so that the ability of women at that time was buried, even disappeared. Even at that time the right to live alone, for a woman a necessity if known to the state authorities.

The arrival of Islam gave freedom of public space for women. Women Return are trusted to spread their wings and develop their abilities in the public sphere. His life became meaningful with the defense of this peace-making religion. Islam really provides open opportunities and ideas that are more reasonable for the rulers to accept. Women are promoted by Islam, no longer make the world gloomy, but women are the best partners for men to carry out their duties as caliphs on earth. The task of being a caliph on earth is not only carried out by men, but also by women. Leadership traits are not only owned by one gender, but can also be owned by women. The assumption that women can only be led is not justified. Because the nature of leadership is a trait that can be raised, developed by all humans. Leadership traits are not external traits, but traits that are shaped by external human factors. Such as the family environment, school environment, community environment.

In the school environment, leadership traits can be manifested together with class members. The responsibility for maintaining class stability is not only on the head of the class, but also for all class members. Good cooperation in solving problems according to their respective duties becomes non-academic learning for school children. The class administrator who is the ruler of the class also does not need to dictate every detail of the responsibilities of each class member. It is hoped that with the emergence of awareness by each class occupant, it will increase the cohesiveness and stability of the class situation. This is not only the role of male students whose opinions can be accepted by all class members. Female students must also have an opinion, so that what they want can be realized because of openness.

In the community, for example, religious activities held by the community. The participation of women in these community activities plays an important role. Important posts in the implementation of religious activities can also be assigned to women. Women are not only given the responsibility as a consumption section. It can be promoted to a core manager. In joint decision making, the role and presence of women also determine the outcome of the deliberation. The results of the deliberation will greatly prioritize comfort for women if women are included in making decisions. Child-friendly and female-friendly activities can be realized if the policies adopted are inclined towards the common interest above the interests of one group.

Looking at the history of Islamic education in the archipelago before and after the independence of Indonesia, the role of women was limited to being at home. Because not all women have the right to education. The community paradigm about women is only weak creatures who do not have a broad role in the public sphere in their community. And society views women as second-class beings who don't need to go to school. It's useless to go to school if you end up only going into the kitchen. Women at that time were very passive and had not been able to make a real contribution to the progress of the nation, religion and country (Ford & Muers, 2005). In addition, the possibility behind this gap is that there is still a strong culture in Indonesian society which thinks that girls are not wanted for higher education to university, parents are quite satisfied if women have received basic education, then are given household skills to be ready to become mother or wife. Women cannot take part in the social environment because their association is very limited.

Unlike the case, when it is agreed that the main means for a process of forming or developing individual potential, nature, human resources or whatever its name is through education, then the right to obtain these services (education) is certainly the most basic part for every individual, whoever and wherever. it exists, even though it is a "female" living being.

The right to freedom for women is gradually developing, not only in obtaining education, but also in the freedom to develop their education in the world of work. Practicing all the knowledge that women get to be developed in accordance with the talents, interests, education of the woman.

According to Mernissi, in Arabic the words Hurr (free) and hurriyah (freedom) are not related or cannot be identified with the connotation of modern human rights. It is said that freedom in the Islamic tradition is not rooted in a history of struggle for individual autonomy and independence, but rather freedom is interpreted as the opposite or opposite of slavery. Furthermore, it is said that this is a very important difference to understand the dynamics of Muslims today (Mernisi, 1994).

In the context of past culture, Syalabi does not believe that the gap in educational opportunities for Muslim women is caused by the people's misunderstanding of the commands of the Qur'an. But by remaining husnudhan, he

identified the cause of the disparity more because of the difficulty of traveling (scientific rihlah) to faraway places, and meanwhile Arabs used to put women in places of noble dignity so as not to let them get into trouble (Fuadi, 2002).

The autonomy “given” by Islam to women is of course based on the belief in women’s abilities and skills that are the same as men in various public fields including matters relating to religion. This autonomy and/or independence makes women sit on an equal footing with men in the most basic terms in the period of religious development, namely the involvement of women to receive and convey the text of Allah’s revelations both in the form of the Qur’an and as Hadith. As Leilla put it:

Fortunately, the attitudes of men and women in the first muslim society made women’s contributions part of the received texts; consequently, even in the most misogynistic periods women have been able to participate to some degree in the world of thought and learning. Women tradisionits, usually taught by their fathers, were found in muslim societies in all ages, including the Abbasid (Ahmed, 1992).

The meaning of the sentence above is:

Fortunately, the attitudes of men and women in the first Muslim societies made women’s contributions part of the accepted text; consequently, even in the most misogynistic periods, women were able to participate to some degree in the world of thought and learning. Traditional women, usually taught by their fathers, are found in Muslim societies of all ages, including during the Abbasid period.

After the arrival of Islam, which is rahmatan lil ‘alamiin, women are able to bring themselves to be more accepted by society. Women are given wide space by Islam to develop themselves. Women are able to bring a renewal of thought about religious moderation or wasathiyah, thus forming the wasatha ummah. Where a society that is able to make religious moderation education acceptable in all walks of life. Women are the main key in religious moderation education, so the role of women in real activities is very much needed.

C. Concluding Remarks

The attitudes of women that reflect moderate behavior are:

- 1) Always avoid extreme behavior or disclosure.

Women as one of the perpetrators of education must have a moderate ideology so that it can be realized with behavior that shows an attitude of religious moderation.

- 2) Tendency towards the middle or balanced dimension.

Women choose the middle way to avoid tendencies that are more to the right or to the left. Where the position of women in religion must prioritize the dimensions of a moderate space of self-expression.

- 3) His views are willing to consider the views of other parties who are different from him (inclusive).

Even though they are women, sometimes they still have different opinions in looking at things. In fact, with men, women need not be afraid to bring their thoughts regarding religious moderation education.

Women have the right to express their opinions, even to engage in the development of religious moderation education.

- 4) Contextual and adaptive to the situation.

Women who view religious differences as a natural context and can be accepted by reason. Women do not deny the existence of religious differences in today's modern era. The difference is actually a blessing from Allah SWT. So that women are better able to adapt to these differences, so that in the future there will be no extremism.

So this is the conclusion of the results of our research on the paper entitled "The Role of Women in Religious Moderation Education (An Overview of Feminism-Theological), as follows:

- 1) Women have a very important role, even as "agents of change" in education for religious moderation in society;
- 2) Religious moderation education with a theological-based feminism perspective is one of the breakthroughs, which makes women get priority in protecting rights, both in the domestic and public spheres; as well as being one of the answers to the problem of the gap in rights and obligations between men and women;
- 3) Religious moderation education from the perspective of theological-based feminism can be carried out more easily and faster by involving women, because

the theological-based feminism perspective is an approach that prioritizes the protection of women's rights.

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