Enhancing Religious Tolerance through Educators' Behaviors

Indra Gunawan[1], Anton Saetban[2], Aiman Faiz[3]

[1] indra16gun@student.upi.edu

[1,2,3] School of Postgraduate Studies, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Indonesia is one of the states with the greatest diversity in the world. One form of diversity is related to the choice of individuals in choosing religious beliefs. In this case, religious tolerance is a key mediation to realize the nation's ideals of unity. The religious harmony of life is an essential part of ensuring national unity. A tolerant attitude should be built through the active participation of educators in every educational environment to achieve the ideals of Pancasila, and the spirit of "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" (unity in diversity) as the noble aim of the founding fathers for the unity of the Indonesian nation.

Keywords: *Tolerance, Religion, Nation*

ABSTRAK

Indonesia adalah salah satu negara dengan keragaman terbesar di dunia. Salah satu dari keragaman ini berkaitan dengan pilihan keyakinan agama. Dalam hal ini, toleransi beragama merupakan sebuah kunci mediasi untuk mewujudkan cita-cita bangsa tentang persatuan. Kerukunan hidup umat beragama merupakan suatu sarana yang penting dalam menjamin persatuan nasional. Sikap toleran yang ideal mestinya dibangun melalui partisipasi aktif pendidik di setiap lingkungan pendidikan guna mencapai tujuan-tujuan atas dasar pancasila dan semboyan bhinekka tunggal ika sebagai wujud luhur cita-cita para pendiri bangsa.

Kata Kunci: *Toleransi, Agama, Bangsa*

INTRODUCTION

Tolerance comes from a Latin word "tolerantia" which means looseness, kindheartedness, lightness, and patience. In general, the term tolerance refers to open-mindedness, cordiality, voluntary actions, and softness [1]. Moreover, religious tolerance is tolerance related to belief issues, particularly faith to God [2]. In short, it is a pro-social action in accepting, appreciating, and respecting individual freedom of choosing their faith which is a part of human rights.

Indonesia is one of the biggest multicultural countries in the world, reflected by the sociocultural and geographical conditions which are complex, diverse, and wide [3]. Indonesia's cultural diversity is a priceless asset yet it is a strong trigger to conflict at the same time [4].

A study by Centre of Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in 2012 showed that religious tolerance in Indonesia is proven to be low. The survey on the study revealed that 59.5% of the respondents did not mind having

neighbors with different religious beliefs, yet 33.7% of them did. The study which was conducted in February 2012 in 23 provinces involved 2,213 respondents. When asked about the development of houses of worship of other religions around their neighborhood, as many as 68.2% of the repondents disagreed with the notion; only 22.1% of them were in line with it [5].

A study by CSIS revealed that Indonesia has a low tolerance level. In fact, Indonesia as a diverse country has to optimize its people's tolerance to maintain the social stability so that both ideological and physical chrases among various religious embracers [6].

One of the possible efforts to promote tolerance is by inviting a variety of components of the society such as teachers, parents, and leaders to give a good example in facing multicultural diversity. Therefore, any educational forms in such three circumstances as family, school, and society should uphold the values of Bhinekka Tunggal Ika (unity in diversity) and the third point of Pancasila which can be a good foundation to promote the values of tolerance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a framing or content analysis on the phenomenon of telorance within a multicultural society context. The object of the study were interpretative documentation and approach of the researchers and the focus was tolerance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Religious people cannot deny that they should socially interact with people either from their religion or those from different religions. In this context, one has to be given freedom to choose their faith and be respected to perform the values their religion has [7].

In the context of multi-religion interaction, intolerance tends to emerge when one has a bad prejudice to another person, both within the same group and in the different one [5]. Philosophically, ethical rules in religions are the same with one another since each religion has a universal value of goodness. What differs lies on the implementation [8]. Thus, there is no reason justifying that a certain religion is better than others or even the best among the others. All religions, especially those legal in Indonesia, invite their people to do good.

In fact, not every religion embracer understands this notion. Some of them are rational and some others are mystical (tend to be irrational). The impact of religious heterogenity tends to trigger a conflict among various religious embracers. Therefore, tolerance is extremely needed to create social balance and cohesion particularly in the context of multicultural society [6]

To create proportional religious tolerance behavior within a multicultural society in Indonesia, one should refer to the examples by their educators since examples are an important part in value education aiming to shape individuals with good moral, spiritual, and social behaviors [9]. When educators (parents, teachers, and leaders) perform good examples, people will be able to copy their behaviors, manners, and also tolerance and implement them in their daily life [10]. Indonesian founding fathers have realized that Indonesia is a country with a variety of languages, culture, religions, and ethnical groups [11]. This indicates that Indonesia basically has a strong concept of unity reflected in the third

point of Pancasila which is in line with Bhinneka Tunggal Ika which means unity in diversity [12].

It is inevitable that Indonesia is a multicultural country meaning that it consists of a variety of several things. However, Indonesia has always made Bhinneka Tunggal Ika its foundation [13]. This slogan is also in line with the third point of Pancasila, which is the unity of Indonesia. The key to the unity of a nation is tolerance. However, a certain value will not develop by itself; thus, there needs to be one giving an example of internalizing it. Tolerance internalization through an example by educators are described in the following scheme:

(Sumber: Olahan Penulis, 2017)
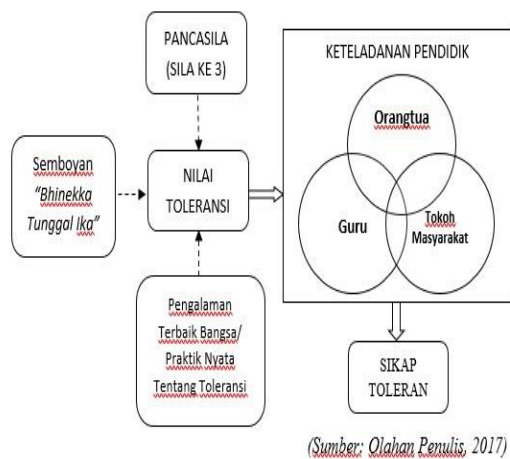
CONCLUSIONS

Harminuous religious life is an important key to support a national integration which is also a need to create stability in having a peaceful nation. This harmony can be easily obtained when different religion embracers respect, help, and realize that they need each other.

Internalizing the values of tolerance through an example by educators in three different contexts including family, school, and society, is expected to be able to enhance people's tolerance and respect to each other, either within the same group or different ones. This is the implementation of Indonesia's foundation Bhinneka Tunggal Ika which means unity in diversity as well as the third point of Pancasila, the unity of Indonesia.

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