



Building Social Harmony Through Islamic Theater: Efforts to Enhance Religious Moderation in Kedung Sumur

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Abstract:

The Community Service Program (KKN) in Kedung Sumur Village aims to enhance public awareness of religious moderation through arts and cultural approaches, particularly Islamic theater. This approach was chosen to convey religious messages in an engaging and easily understood manner. The Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method was employed, focusing on leveraging local potentials, such as the creativity of children and teenagers in performing arts. The program consisted of several stages, including village potential mapping, acting training, Islamic theater performances, and community discussions. The results indicated that this approach successfully increased community participation in religious activities and strengthened understanding of moderate religious attitudes. The program also positively impacted social interactions within the village and provided valuable experiences for students in community service. For program sustainability, further development of arts-based educational approaches and collaboration with various stakeholders are recommended to reinforce the values of moderation in daily life.

Keywords: Social Harmony, Religious Moderation, Kedung Sumur Community Service Program.

Abstrak:

Program Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) di Desa Kedung Sumur bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat tentang moderasi beragama melalui pendekatan seni dan budaya, khususnya teater Islami. Pendekatan ini dipilih untuk menyampaikan pesan keagamaan dengan cara yang menarik dan mudah dipahami oleh masyarakat. Metode yang digunakan adalah Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), yang berfokus pada pemanfaatan potensi lokal, seperti kreativitas anak-anak dan remaja dalam seni peran. Program ini dirancang dalam beberapa tahapan, termasuk pemetaan potensi desa, pelatihan seni peran, pementasan teater Islami, dan diskusi bersama masyarakat. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan ini berhasil meningkatkan partisipasi masyarakat dalam kegiatan keagamaan dan memperkuat pemahaman tentang sikap moderat dalam beragama. Program ini juga berdampak positif pada interaksi sosial warga desa dan memberikan pengalaman berharga bagi mahasiswa dalam pengabdian kepada masyarakat. Untuk keberlanjutan program, direkomendasikan pengembangan lebih lanjut dari pendekatan seni sebagai media edukasi, serta kolaborasi dengan berbagai pihak untuk memperkuat nilai-nilai moderasi dalam kehidupan sehari-hari.

Kata Kunci: Harmoni Sosial, Moderasi Beragama, Kkn Kedung Sumur

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INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation has become an important issue in the social life of Indonesian society, known for its diversity in religion, culture, and ethnicity. As a country with a Muslim-majority population, Indonesia faces challenges in maintaining a balance between religious diversity and unity values. Religious moderation is not just a concept but also a practice that must be realized in everyday life to create social harmony. In this context, public awareness of the importance of a moderate religious attitude needs to be enhanced through various approaches, including education, arts, and culture.

Community Service Program (Kuliah Kerja Nyata/KKN) is one form of student service to society, where they apply the knowledge they have learned in academia to real-life situations. Through KKN, students not only contribute to village development but also play a role in fostering social awareness, including in matters of religious moderation. This program allows students to interact directly with the community, understand existing problems, and seek appropriate solutions based on local social conditions.

Kedung Sumur Village, the location for this KKN program, is a village with a Muslim-majority population. However, there are still challenges in organizing religious activities, such as low community participation in religious study groups (majelis taklim) and educational religious activities. This is due to various factors, including the busy daily lives of the people, most of whom work as farmers and laborers. Additionally, the lack of innovative approaches in delivering religious messages also hinders efforts to raise awareness of religious moderation.

To address these issues, KKN students developed an arts and culture-based program through Islamic theater. Islamic theater was chosen as an educational medium because of its high appeal and ability to convey religious messages in a more engaging and easily understood manner. This arts-based approach aims to provide the community with a deeper understanding of the importance of a moderate religious attitude while encouraging their active participation in more inclusive religious activities.

The method used in this program is the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which focuses on empowering the community based on the assets and potentials they already have. Through this method, students do not merely act as facilitators but also encourage the community to recognize and utilize their local resources to support social development. One of the key assets utilized in this program is the creativity and interest of children and teenagers in theater arts.

This program was implemented in several stages, starting with socialization and mapping the village's potential, followed by acting training for elementary and junior high school students, and culminating in an Islamic theater performance open to the general public. After the performance, discussions were held with religious and community leaders to reinforce the understanding of religious moderation values. Thus, this program is not merely focused on entertainment but also carries a strong educational value.

The results of this program show that an arts and culture-based approach successfully increased community participation in religious activities. Children and

teenagers who were previously less involved in religious activities became more enthusiastic about expressing Islamic values through theater arts. Additionally, post-performance discussions helped the community better understand the importance of religious moderation in daily life.

Another impact of this program was the increased social interaction among village residents. Previously, community involvement in religious discussions was limited, but after this program, people became more open to dialogue and sharing religious understandings in a more inclusive way. This demonstrates that religious moderation can be instilled not only through sermons or formal studies but also through creative approaches that are closer to the community's daily life.

For KKN students, this program also provided valuable experience in community service. They learned how to communicate effectively with the community, understand existing social needs, and develop more engaging and adaptive educational strategies. This experience serves as a valuable asset for them in applying their academic knowledge to real-life situations.

With the success of this program, it is hoped that arts and culture-based approaches in promoting religious moderation can continue to be developed. Besides Islamic theater, many other forms of art can be used as educational media, such as Islamic music, short religious-themed films, and visual arts that highlight moderation values. Collaboration between students, religious leaders, and the community also needs to be strengthened to ensure the sustainability of this program and maximize its benefits.

METHOD

In implementing a program to enhance religious moderation through the Community Service Program (KKN) in Kedung Sumur Village, the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach was used. This approach focuses on empowering the community by utilizing the potential and assets they already possess. Instead of viewing problems as the starting point for intervention, the ABCD method emphasizes identifying the strengths within the community, such as human resources, local culture, and the creativity of children and teenagers in theatrical arts. Through this method, the community is not merely an object of the program but actively participates in the educational process and social change.

The first step in this method is observation and mapping of village potential. KKN students conducted interviews and discussions with religious leaders, village officials, and the community to understand the social conditions and challenges in religious activities. From the observations, it was found that low community participation in religious activities was mainly due to a lack of engaging approaches in delivering religious messages. Therefore, it was decided to use Islamic theater as an educational medium that is more communicative and easily accepted by the community.

After mapping the village's potential, the next step was program design and acting training. KKN students wrote a theater script with the theme of religious moderation and involved students from Islamic Elementary Schools (MI) and Islamic Junior High Schools (MTs) in acting training. These training sessions were conducted regularly under the guidance of the students, allowing children and teenagers to

understand the meaning of the story they would perform. Additionally, props, costumes, and other technical aspects were prepared to ensure that the performance ran smoothly and captured the community's attention.

The next stage was the implementation of the program, which involved performing Islamic theater open to all residents of Kedung Sumur Village. The event was designed to be interactive, including a discussion session after the performance, where religious leaders and students engaged with the community to clarify the message of religious moderation being conveyed. This discussion aimed to instill an understanding that religious moderation means being tolerant, respecting differences, and avoiding extremism. This art-based approach proved effective in increasing community involvement in religious education.

As the final stage, evaluation and follow-up were conducted. Feedback from the community was gathered through informal discussions and brief interviews with participants and audiences. The evaluation revealed that the Islamic theater approach successfully increased public interest in religious activities and provided a better understanding of religious moderation. To ensure the program's sustainability, KKN students recommended that village officials and local educational institutions continue similar activities, whether in the form of theater or other artistic approaches. This way, the message of religious moderation can continue to be disseminated and become an integral part of the culture of Kedung Sumur Village.

Kedung Sumur Village is located in Pakuniran District, Probolinggo Regency, and is known as an area where the majority of the population adheres to Islam. Geographically, the village is situated in a highland region, with most of its residents working as farmers and laborers. The social structure of the community still strongly upholds traditional values and mutual cooperation, as reflected in various community activities such as communal work (gotong royong) and religious events. However, due to work commitments, community participation in religious activities, such as Islamic study groups (pengajian) and religious assemblies (majelis taklim), tends to be low.

Regarding religious life, the people of Kedung Sumur Village practice Islam well, but there are still challenges in organizing religious activities. One of the main obstacles is the lack of engaging and accessible religious education platforms for all groups, especially children and teenagers. Religious study groups in the village are often attended only by specific groups, such as elders and community leaders, while younger generations are less actively involved. This issue became a concern for KKN students, who aimed to raise religious awareness through more creative and engaging methods.

Moreover, in social life, religious moderation is an important aspect that needs to be strengthened. Although the village community is religiously homogeneous, their understanding of moderate religious attitudes still requires improvement. Religious moderation includes being tolerant, respectful of differences, and avoiding extreme views. With the advancement of technology and the influence of social media, there is concern that young people may be exposed to ideologies that are not aligned with the values of moderation. Therefore, an educational approach is needed to build public awareness of the importance of living harmoniously together.

Given these conditions, the KKN program in Kedung Sumur Village focused on enhancing religious moderation through arts and culture. One of the main initiatives was the introduction of Islamic theater as an educational medium for the community. By using performing arts, it was hoped that religious messages could be delivered in a more engaging way, thereby improving the community's understanding of the importance of moderation in religion. This program also aimed to create a more inclusive discussion space, where the community could openly talk about religious issues in a more relaxed and interactive setting.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KKN PROGRAM IN ENHANCING RELIGIOUS MODERATION

The implementation of the KKN program in Kedung Sumur Village began with socialization and mapping of the village's potential. KKN students first coordinated with village officials, religious leaders, and the local community to explain the program's objectives and the importance of religious moderation in daily life. Following this, an assessment was conducted to identify the community's potential and challenges in practicing religious activities. Observations revealed that the community had an interest in arts and culture but lacked a platform to express creativity within a religious context. Therefore, an Islamic arts approach, specifically Islamic theater, was chosen as the main medium for this program.

The next stage involved training and preparation for the Islamic theater activities. KKN students collaborated with local madrasahs and Islamic educational institutions to train elementary and junior high school students in acting. The theater script was designed to highlight themes of religious moderation, tolerance, and the importance of respecting differences in society. During the training process, students were not only taught acting techniques but also given an understanding of the values embedded in the story. This process aimed to shape a more open-minded and moderate perspective among children and teenagers as the future generation of the village.

Once preparations were complete, the program moved to the implementation stage with the Islamic theater performance open to all residents of Kedung Sumur Village. The event was met with great enthusiasm from the community, with many villagers attending the performance. After the play, a discussion session was held, led by KKN students and religious leaders, to explore the meanings and values presented in the performance. This discussion aimed to strengthen the community's understanding of the importance of religious moderation and how to apply it in daily life.

As the final part of the program, an evaluation and follow-up were conducted. KKN students gathered feedback from the community regarding the effectiveness of the arts-based approach in promoting religious moderation. The evaluation results showed that the program successfully increased community interest in religious activities and fostered a more inclusive discussion culture. For sustainability, the students recommended that village officials and local educational institutions adopt similar methods in future religious education activities. This way, the values of religious moderation can continue to be instilled and become an integral part of the culture in Kedung Sumur Village.

IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON THE COMMUNITY AND STUDENTS

The implementation of the KKN (Community Service Program) in Kedung Sumur Village has had a significant impact on the community, particularly in raising awareness of the importance of religious moderation. Through an approach based on arts and culture, the community has begun to understand that being moderate in religion is not only about practicing personal worship but also about how they interact with others in social life. The Islamic theater performances organized during the program successfully captured the community's attention and provided an easier way to convey messages of tolerance and diversity. This initiative has helped create a more harmonious and inclusive environment in the village.

Moreover, the program has successfully increased community participation in religious activities. Previously, religious gatherings such as Islamic study groups and sermons were less popular among the younger generation. However, after the introduction of Islamic theater as an educational medium, they became more enthusiastic about participating. Children and teenagers involved in the performances not only gained experience in acting but also learned religious values in a more enjoyable way. Through this initiative, the community has come to realize that religious education does not always have to be formal and monotonous but can be presented in a more engaging and interactive manner.

For the KKN students, this program has provided invaluable experience in serving the community. They have not only learned how to apply the knowledge acquired in university but also gained a deeper understanding of the social realities in the village. Direct interaction with the community has taught them effective communication skills, strategies for education tailored to local conditions, and ways to overcome various challenges in program implementation. These skills serve as essential assets in developing leadership abilities, teamwork, and adaptability in different environments.

Furthermore, the program has strengthened the role of students as agents of change in society. Through KKN activities, they have contributed to building greater social and religious awareness that is inclusive and tolerant. The success of this program demonstrates that students are not only involved in academic pursuits but can also create tangible impacts in society. It is hoped that this experience will inspire students to remain actively engaged in social and educational initiatives and continue developing innovative learning methods that provide broader benefits to the community in the future.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The KKN program in Kedung Sumur Village has successfully increased public awareness of the importance of religious moderation through an artistic and cultural approach, particularly Islamic theater. This program not only introduced a new way of delivering religious messages but also enhanced community participation in more inclusive religious activities. Through theatrical performances and discussion sessions, the community has become more open to the values of tolerance, diversity, and moderate religious attitudes. Additionally, the program has benefited students by improving their communication and leadership skills as well as their understanding of social dynamics within the community.

To ensure the sustainability of this program, it is recommended that village officials and local educational institutions continue to develop art-based activities as a medium for religious education. Furthermore, collaboration with religious leaders, schools, and youth organizations should be strengthened to maintain similar programs in the future. The use of digital media, such as educational videos or podcasts on religious moderation, can also serve as an alternative to reaching a wider audience. With joint efforts from various stakeholders, it is hoped that religious moderation will become deeply ingrained in the daily lives of the people of Kedung Sumur Village and become an integral part of their culture.

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