Forming Tolerant Students Through The Lecture of Islamic Religious Education at Higher Education: A Reseach Based Teaching and Learning Strategy

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Abstract:

In recent years, Islam has received international framing on terrorism, radicalism and intolerance issues. The frame is widely spread also in Indonesia as the largest Muslim community in the world. A series of related cases reported massively by some mainstream media in Indonesia further reinforce the assumption. On the other hand, Islam, as a religion with the mission of *rahmatan lil'âlamîn*, away from that frame. Contrary to the media frames, this article attempts to reveal different views on religion, especially Islam and its teachings, which could or should be used as a means to internalize tolerant character to its adherents. Thus, the teaching of Islam will become an enemy for terrorism and radicalism. Based on these assumptions, the lecture of Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia University of Education, as one of the compulsory subjects in Indonesian National Education System, have been designed to disseminate the Islamic mission of *rahmatan lil'âlamîn* by internalizing the tolerant values within student. This research reinforces the idea that student could learn a value through environments.

1 INTRODUCTION

Value cannot be separated from humans' life. First, value is considered as something important in humans' life (Fraenkel, 1977; Hakam, 2010). In a special context, a value will be used by human as a guidance to distinguish between the good and the evil (Fraenkel, 1977), especially when the value itself has been considered as a standard or social norms (Türkkahraman, 2014; Khiker, 1977). Second, human is believed to exist as a creature with potential to be valuable (Hakam and Nurdin, 2016). The potential cause human to be able to receive or to present a certain value within themselves. This process, according to social learning theory, is known as value internalization (Hakam, 2010).

Related to the two statements above, this paper is intended to elaborate the internalization process of one specific value which is considered as an important value to be presented in a human among todays' increasingly heterogeneous modern life. The value meant in this paper is tolerance. The value, according to Lickona (1992), is an expression of comity as one of the two fundamental value in human's life along with behave responsibly.

In general, tolerance consists of two basic significance, non-interference attitude (Cohen, 2004) and recognizing the rights of others (which are different from us) (Galeotti, 1997; Hansen, 2013). The early form of this attitude are recognizing and respecting the diversity as the right of others (Turebayeva et al., 2013; Corneo and Jeanne, 2009) which resulted in acceptance (Anwar, 2015) and understanding (Shea, 1987) toward the diversity.

For Indonesian community, as a plural society, respecting the diversity is indispensable. Without the attitude of respect toward the diversity, the harmony in living as one community can never be established. Based on the assumption, Jackson, as cited in Raihani (2011), sees tolerance as the key to create social harmony in heterogeneous society like Indonesia and as one of the most important skills in 21 century (Trilling and Fadel, 2009) which should be possessed by every person living in a society where the diversity has been considered as commonality encountered in human life. Furthermore, according to the results of their research, Berggren dan Nilsson (2014) state that the economic and social life will work well in a tolerant society.

Based on the thinking above, the cultivation of tolerance value is non-negotiable. This can be done through education process which one its mission is to prepare the students to be able to live in harmony among the world society which is very plural (Sharma, 2015; Raihani, 2011; Jones, 2010; Almond, 2010; Sahin, 2011; Hansen, 2013). Therefore, the education institution, including higher education institution, is the best place to introduce, teach, accustom, and even becomes a laboratory to look, feel and practice tolerant attitude whether through the learning process in the classroom (Demircioglu, 2008; Polak, 2010) or through the arrangement of school environment. On the top of that, Stan (2013), argues that the tolerance must be set as the priority in todays' education. Furthermore, the tolerance climate should have been set as the standard to measure the excellence of an education institution, as stated by Sedini (2009) when she conducted her research in Ontario, Canada.

As mentioned before, this paper elaborates the way to design a learning process (through lecturing) in higher education, which purposely design to configurator a tolerant student. The internalization process is conducted in an integrated manner within an Islamic Religious Education (IRE) Course, specifically in Islamic Religious Education Seminar (IRES) Course in Indonesia University of Education

2 METHODS

Developing the lecture of IRE in the public college as an effort to form tolerant students is the main focus of this paper. In line with that, the writer chooses a qualitative method with descriptive research design. As a naturalistic approach, with qualitative design, this paper is trying to illustrate how the cultivation of the tolerance values occurred in the course naturally (natural setting). (Creswell, 2012).

Fraenkel et al. (2012) state that the sample used in a qualitative research is purposive sample. In the purposive sample the researcher chooses the site and the participant that may provide a wide-range of information related the selected phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, the researcher selected Indonesia University of Education (UPI) as the research site with 43 semesters 6 students of Mathematics Education class A in academic year 2016-2017 who took the IRES Course as the participant of the study.

IRES course is a religious course given to every Muslim students in Indonesia University of Education during the third year of college (on the 5th

or 6th semester) and consists of 2 semester credits. This course is the second religious course while the first religious course has been given to the students during the first year of college

The collection of the data is done through the classroom observation where the researcher acted as a lecturer designing and developing the learning process of the religious course with help of an assistant. Moreover, to discover the direct impact of the study toward the tolerance value of the students, the group interviews were administered by the researcher, and the interviews were conducted in a small group consists of 4 students for 20 minutes each. Furthermore, the data collected is presented and analyzed descriptively.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To ensure a lecturing process works well a teacher or lecturer needs to notice and to prepare three important steps, learning design, learning process, and learning evaluation. In IRES course, those three steps are designed and developed in order to create a certain learning condition which directly or indirectly driven the students to have better attitude toward tolerance.

I believe, based on some studies related to Social Learning Theory (Ambrose and Hilliard, 1962; Türkkahraman, 2014), University as an education institution is a structured environment which is appropriate to design and to conduct social learning activities for the students. Especially for learning about tolerance. Here is the first researchers' general view of study, who acted as a lecturer, in designing the IRES course for the students of Mathematics Education class A in academic year 2016-2017 in order to configurator them as tolerant students.

3.1 Lecture Planning

Course designing is an important phase. For an educator, the result of this activity will show his readiness or even his competency to teach. The failure in designing the course will affect the lecturing activities in general. This activity should be prepared at least 2 weeks before the class is started. In Indonesia University of Education, the output of course designing is a written document in a form of Semester Study Plan (SSP)

SSP is a written document of lesson plan for a whole semester. SSP for IRES course is designed to create a learning environment which directly or indirectly contribute to the learning of tolerance for the students. Therefore, in the assembling process of RPS there are several parts that need careful attention, those are:

- Formulating the objectives of the lesson
- Designing the learning process
- Designing evaluation activities; and
- Developing lesson materials.

The first thing that needs more attention in designing classroom activities is formulating the objective of IRES course. Related to the study, this course is directed to shape students' attitude of tolerance toward diversity. 'The diversity' here is limited by *khilafiyah* issue in Islam in the field of *Fiqih*.

As we know, Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world thus having various understanding of *Fiqih*. The diversity of those understandings represented by at least three massive religious mass organizations, namely Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and Persatuan Islam (Persis). For that reason, the IRES course as a part of religious education plays a role in learning toleration. At least, through IRES course the students are introduced to the diversity of understanding in Islam and taught to handle the matter wisely.

In the next step, the researcher designed a lecture design which focused on students' need in accordance with the objectives of the course that have been formulated before. The lecture design is developed by combining Problem-Based Learning Model (Barrows, 1986; Severy and Duffy, 1995), Discovery Learning (Bruner, 1997), and Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) by integrating those three learning models the IRES course is designed to be able to teach students both independently and collectively in a group. Moreover, the students are trained to think critically by doing research about various religionbased problems that occurs in the society and set the massive mass organizations mentioned before as the primary courtesy related to the religion-based problems which became the main topic of the research. The combination of the three learning models is called by me as a Research Based Learning (RBL). From three types of religious education enforcement introduced by Grimmit (1981; 1987; The International Association for Religious Freedom, 2002), this model is developed by using 'learning from religion' approach. This approach put the students as learners (Anwar, 2015) and religion function as a tool to develop students' attitude toward diversity (Walshe and Teeceb, 2013).

After designing the course, the other thing that needs to be noticed is the learning evaluation design. In IRES course the learning evaluation embraces

overall aspect of the study and enforces as long as the learning activity is in session. Each activity is appreciated and becomes the object of evaluation process. The students' involvement form in the evaluation process is designed in a form of self-assessment and sociometrist.

The fourth thing that needs attention while designing SSP is the lesson materials. In this phase, the lesson materials are arranged in the form of multitheme studies related to the religion issues in society, the themes are: education, culture, *da'wah*, politics, law, technology, and science. As example the theme can be about: Islam and Education, Islam and Technology, etc. Those themes in the next phase will be changed into many different research topics. The process to convert the theme into specific topics is conducted by involving the students.

3.2 Process and Lecture Steps

As a normal lecture, in a semester there are 16 meetings maximum including mid-term and final-term exam. In a RBL model of IRES course, all of those sixteen meetings are divided into three stages, namely: research planning and design, research implementation, and seminar and research reporting. In table 2 we can see the process and steps in doing IRES course using RBL.

3.2.1 First Phase: Planning and Designing Research

The first stage of IRES course using RBL is research planning and design. This stage was implemented in the first four meetings at the beginning of the course. However, before starting this stage, the lecturer must have created the course timeline which has been adjusted to the current calendar year. In addition, the possibility of interrupted session by national holiday or graduation ceremony, etc., should be considered while composing the course timeline.

The first session of the course filled with the IRES lecture orientation (see figure 1). All things related to the course, especially the course design planning, need to be informed to the students. The objective of the orientation is to synchronize the perception about IRES course among the lecturer and the students which will be held in that semester. After completing the course orientation, the lecturer randomly divided the students into eight research groups. The session is ended by giving the first group assessment in the form of group discussion, the groups must discuss about at least three research topics based on the course themes available which will be discussed in the next meeting

(see figure 2). All of the topics that will be introduced are controversial topics related to religion-based problems occur in the midst of society. Those topics will be criticized and discussed academically by using Islamic teaching as the solution to the problems. In this stage, the students are trained to think critically in order to capture fascinating phenomenon's related to the diversity issues in the society. Based on the observation, each of the students may propose certain research topic which he or she finds interesting to discuss with logic argumentation in the group, the discussion will be held until the topics proposed by the students' are converted into one research topic.



Figure 1: Lecture orientation of IRES.

In the next two meetings, after the research topics are agreed by the group, the lecture session will be focused on planning and finishing the research proposal and research instruments. The classroom session is only for consultation, while the finishing process of the research proposal for research instruments is discussed by the groups outside classroom session. The attitude of respect, responsibility, and harmonious collaboration among the group members is absolutely necessary to complete this stage.

The other thing that need to be noticed in this stage is the making of research letter permit by the faculty. The letter will be sent to all of the interviewees of the research topic, especially from the regional leader of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) along with the leader of the three mass organization in West Java Province; Nahdatul Ulama (NU), Muhamadian, dan Persatuan Islam (Persis) as the main source of the research interview.



Figure 2: Research topic discussion, and the process of research proposal and research instruments guidance.

3.2.2 Second Phase: Conducting Research

The activity has been started since the fifth meeting. In this phase each group conducting the field research activity based on the chosen topic. There are two main activities in this phase, data collection and data analysis. Through the activities students' were taught to think critically, and to collaborate with each other during the research process.



Figure 3: Data collection by interview.

The collection of the data administered by semistructured interview toward four main interviewees: MUI, NU, Muhammadiah, and Persis alongside the secondary source from either a formal institution or an individual related to the need of research topic (see figures 3). Other than the interviews, if needed, the data can be collected through observation (see figure 4), questionnaire, or literature reviews. In the process, the students will find various opinion of the chosen research topic. From those activities the students are expected to learn about the diversity of *fiqih* in khilafiyah. At the end of the research the students are expected to not only know but also understand the meaning behind the diversity. On a special condition, during the interview process the students will meet many expert with excellent thought and attitude of tolerance. According to the view of Social Learning Theory, each of the interviewee is considered as an agent or role model to inspire the students the way of thinking moderately and behaving tolerantly toward every aspect of the diversity in understanding in Islam, especially for the issues related to khilafiyah in *fiqih*.



Figure 4: Data collection by observation (traditional market in Bandung).

On the next phase, after all of the research data collected, the analysis of the data will be conducted descriptively. The result of the interviews from different sources is compared and added by literature reviews related to the topic of the research. In this stage the students are trained to think critically and objectively in presenting the result of the interview. Eventually, the students will learn about having moderate thinking and tolerant attitude.

The final activity from the second phase is arranging draft of research report which will be used as the research presentation material at a dissemination event in the classroom in a form of seminar. During the activity the students are taught to deliver the result of the research objectively.

3.2.3 Third Phase: Disseminating and Reporting Research Result

The dissemination of the research's findings is the first activity of the third phase of the course. The research seminar is prepared by other group in turns. The first group was the group providing the source of the seminar, while the third group acted as the committee of the seminar.



Figure 5: Dissemination of research result under topic: Islamic point of view on problematics of marriage in Indonesia.



Figure 6: Discussion sessions during dissemination of research results in the class.

During seminar (see figure 5 and 6) the research group focused in preparing seminar presentation. There are some things need to be prepared by the students; the draft of research report to be checked by the lecturer, the presentation slide, and the handout for classroom presentation which will be given to each seminar participants. Meanwhile, the group acted as the committee was given task to prepare every technical aspect regarding the seminar: preparing the classroom as the venue as well as the tools needed for the event (laptop and projector), and choosing the seminar staff (MC, moderator, registrar, holy Al-Quran and prayer reader, operator and documentation staff)

The second activity on the third phase of the course is writing a report. The research group write a report of the research findings. While the committee group write a report of the research presentation activities in the classroom. Both reports are given to the lecturer a week after the seminar.

Table 1: Lecture phases of IRES with research approach.

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Lecture phases	Lecture phase details	Description
First phase:	- Introducing	Planning
planning and	course	activity is
designing the	orientation and	started from
research	forming students'	the first to the
	research groups	fourth
	- Discussing	classroom
	research topic in	meetings
	group	
	- Conducting	
	students'	
	research proposal	
	guidance Conducting	
	 Conducting research 	
	instruments	
	guidance	
	- Conducting early	
	observation	
Second	- Initiating	The research
phase:	literature study	group
conducting	relate to the	activity will
the research	research	be started
	- Conducting	after the
	literature study	research
	related to the	proposal is
	research	already
	- Conducting	finished. The
	research site	activity
	observation	should be
SCIEN	- Conducting interviews	done before
	interviews	the fifth
		classroom meeting.
Third phase:	- Analyzing the	The research
dissemination	research data	findings'
and reporting	- Writing group	presentation
of the	research report	for the first
research	- Presenting the	group will be
result	research findings	held at the
	in a form of	seventh
	research seminar	classroom
		meeting
		while the last
		group will
		present their
		research
		findings at
		the
		fourteenth
		classroom meeting.
		meeting.

3.3 Lecture Evaluation

Learning evaluation, even in the university level, is an important matter which affects the whole learning process. The learning evaluation is conducted for at least measuring students' development toward the objective of the course, and to find out how far the lecturing process is able to facilitate the students to reach the ultimate goal of the course.

In the IRES course the evaluation process is conducted throughout the entire course. The evaluation not only aimed to measure the students' development toward the objective of the course which had been agreed upon before, but also to evaluate the learning process to measure the performance of the lecturer from students' perspective. The first part highlight the students' performance, while the second part highlight the lecturer performance.

The evaluation items in the first part, as seen in table 2, are including cognition, affection, and psychomotor aspect. The assessment of the cognition aspect involving students' basic religious knowledge and their understanding toward the findings of their research. Next, the assessment of the affection aspect is focused on students' attitude during the learning activities in the classroom (their attitude to the given task, and their management of conflict, especially their behavior toward any form of diversity they faced during the entire course)

Meanwhile, the students' work rate (students' independency as a learner, and their ability to collaborate in a group) and their products (research proposal, research instrument, research report, group presentation slides, and seminar activities report) are parts of assessment of their psychomotor aspect. The first part of the evaluation is conducted during the whole course.

Table 2: Lecture evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Domains	Description	
Cognitive	- Knowing basic religious	
	teachings	
	- Understanding of group	
	research results	
Affective	Student's attitude during the	
	lecture:	
	- Attitude to the lecture	
	- Attitude to the assignment	
	- Tolerance attitude	
psychomotor	Performance:	
	- Student learning independence	
	- Student collaboration	
	Products:	
	- Research proposal	
	- Research instrument	
	- Research report	
	- Research slide presentation	
	- Research result seminar report	

Whilst the second part of the evaluation directly involves the students in the evaluation process. The students are positioned as the evaluator. There are two points that need to be evaluated, the work rate of their group partner and the learning process in the classroom. The evaluation result of the second point in particular will be used as a constructive material for the lecturer to improve and to create better IRES course experience in the next semester. The evaluation at this point is conducted using semi-structured interview for 30 minutes for a round involving 3-4 students as interviewees.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This study is a part of a dissertation research entitled 'The Internalization of Tolerance Value through Islamic Religious Education Course in Public University as an Effort to Establish Moderate Student.' There are two important points that can be deduced from the result of the study. First, 'learning from religion' approach is more appropriate to be applied in IRE course at the higher education level compared to 'learning religion' and 'learning about religion' approach. The approach puts the students as active learners and religion as a meaningful aspect in human development. Second, the tolerance is learnt during the course. During the entire course the students were inspired to notice the diversity in humans' life, especially the divergence of Islamic teachings, and more importantly the students were taught to not only know but also understand the nature of the diversity itself.

5 SUGGESTIONS

Research about tolerance education and its implementation in an education institution has been conducted in many occasions, and one of those is this research. The result of the study strengthens the idea that the education institution, especially higher education institution, is a structured environment which can be designed as a place for students to learn certain 'value', such as the sense of tolerance. Unfortunately, this study did not find out the extend of internalization process of the students. That empty space cannot be answered in this study, therefore, further research related to this issue should be taken as consideration by other researchers.

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