

Moderat Islamic Da'wah to Eliminate Islamophobia

Dakwah Islam Wasathiyah untuk Menghapuskan Islamofobia

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Abstract

Islamophobia is one of the latent problems in many muslim country, including where the majority of the population is Muslim, such as Indonesia. Hatred and fear of Islam, can disturb the harmony in society. This article describes the dangers of Islamophobia, and some strategies which can be taken to handle it. The aims of this study are to explore what are the challenges and opportunities of the Indonesian people regarding these Islamophobia problems. This article uses the theory and concept of Islamophobia. In addition, the concept of discourse popularized by Jurgen Habermas is used to examine the problems. This qualitative study uses a literature approach. Based on the discussion conducted, Islamophobia in Indonesia can permeate the personalities of non-Muslims and Muslims alike. Therefore, efforts are needed to spread an understanding of the true teachings of Islam. Such efforts are the responsibility of all Muslims. One of the ways that can be taken, is echoing Islam rahmatan lil'alamin, spoken and written at every opportunity. Most importantly, practice behavior according to the noble values of Islam in order to represent the goodness of Islam in front of the widest public.

Keywords: Indonesia, Islam, Islamophobia, compassion, discourse

Abstrak

Islamofobia merupakan salah satu bahaya laten di negeri dengan mayoritas penduduknya beragama Islam seperti Indonesia. Perasaan benci dan takut pada ajaran Islam dapat mengusik keharmonisan masyarakat. Artikel ini mengupas tentang bahaya Islamofobia di Indonesia. Tujuannya, mengupas apa saja tantangan dan peluang bangsa Indonesia berkenaan dengan problematika tersebut. Selain teori tentang Islamofobia, konsep wacana yang dipopulerkan Jurgen Habermas dipakai untuk menelaah masalah yang didiskusikan dalam artikel ini. Artikel kualitatif ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kepustakaan. Berdasarkan telaah yang dilakukan, Islamofobia di Indonesia bisa hinggap dalam pribadi warga nonmuslim maupun kaum muslimin. Oleh sebab itu, butuh upaya untuk menyebarkan pemahaman tentang ajaran Islam yang hakiki. Usaha semacam itu merupakan

tanggung jawab segenap umat Islam. Cara yang bisa ditempuh antara lain, menggaungkan Islam *rahmatan lil'alam* secara lisan dan tulisan dalam tiap kesempatan. Terpenting, mempraktekkan tingkah laku sesuai nilai luhur keislaman guna merepresentasikan keindahan Islam di hadapan publik seluas-luasnya.

Kata kunci: Indonesia, Islam, Islamofobia, Kasih Sayang, Wacana

Introduction

Etymologically, Al-Islam can be interpreted as an attitude of submission or surrender. As for the term, it is interpreted as an attitude of submission to all the will of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala (Al-Ashfahaniy, n.d.). Islam is also commonly understood as "congratulations", it has the same root as Al-istislam or surrender, As-salamah or pure clean, As-salam or prosperous, As-silmu or peace. Adherents of this teaching are known as Muslims or Muslims. In short, a Muslim is one who submits to God. While Islam is a teaching that spreads safety and peace for the universe (Jamal, 2011).

Islam is the last divine religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad about fourteen centuries ago. Islam is a religion that is a mercy or spreader of love for the universe. The statement that this religion spreads love is contained in the Muslim holy book Al-Quran Surah Al-Anbiya verse 107 which reads: *Wama Arsalnaka Illa Rahmatan Lil'alamin*, meaning, and We (Allah) have not sent you (Muhammad) except as a mercy. for the universe.

The principle of Islam is an invitation to prosper the life of the world. This is done to seek blessings from God Almighty. As a form of human surrender. One of the features of Islamic law is that it relies more on its holy book, the Qur'an and the instructions of the Prophet Muhammad, As-Sunnah, from various sources of knowledge. Through this aspect, Islam differs from all other religious rules and schools of philosophy.

Departing from these explanations, it would be strange if anyone experienced Islamophobia. Islamophobia comes from the words "Islam" and "phobia". Which can be clearly interpreted, that Islamophobia is a feeling of hatred. Fear and allergy to the teachings of Islam. Some say that the concept of Islamophobia dates back to 1918, when tienne Dinet and Sliman Ben Ibrahim wrote a book entitled *La Vie de Mohammed, Prophete d'Allah*. The reference explains that Islamophobia is used as a political strategy for French war when facing enemy soldiers who are Muslim, in order to strengthen the motivation for war against Muslim troops (Amrullah & Sasongko, 2017). Meanwhile, one of the authoritative literatures on Islamophobia, or feelings of hatred or fear stemming from stereotypes against Islam, is the book *Orientalism*, which was first published in 1978.

Edward Said's work describes how the West, in this case those from the European and American continents, views the East, which includes Asia and the Arabian Peninsula, as a second-class nation. In a wider context, Islam as a religion that is widely embraced by residents of the East, is considered a conservative and anti-modern teaching (Rachman, 2018). Said explains this on many pages, including the following: We certainly never imagined how much damage has been caused by the myth originating from twentieth century orientalism. This myth has created a portrait of Arabs (Islam, pen) as violent and violent, as is widely assumed by "advanced" quasi-Western societies (Said, 1978).

Generally, if there are people outside of Islam who think this religion is barbaric, they are people who are intoxicated by their own perspective. They argue that Islam teaches war. The facts prove that the Prophet Muhammad, the main role model for Muslims, was indeed listed as the number one commander in his entire life. But it must also be underlined, in the early days of Islamic civilization, fighting and attacking was the main alternative to avoid attacks from the enemy.

Therefore, it cannot be immediately interpreted that Islam likes physical fights and acts of violence. When approached with contemporary international relations theory, what the Islamic troops were doing at that time was categorized as extreme realism, namely, a situation in which forces, like it or not, had to compete for influence and power. Silence is a dangerous decision. While aggressive is a necessity (Burdah, 2014).

Aggression is also not only done by Muslims. Those who are outside the teachings of Islam are no less active in taking up arms. The difference is, Islam has "sky" rules in war. For example, in war, Muslims may not attack those who have surrendered and may not even destroy vegetation. In conclusion, war is not the goal of this religion (Al-Dawoody, 2011).

The problem of Islamophobia was even more devastating after the attacks on the twin World Trade Center (WTC) buildings in the United States on September 11, 2001. The masterminds of the attack were believed to be terrorists who embraced Islam. After the global tragedy, there are many movements that can be classified as an attempt to sideline Islam as a marginal religion. In the summer of 2010, when plans to build an Islamic Center near Manhattan's Ground Zero were blowing, someone declared an "International Burn the Quran Day" event. The labeling of Islam as a religion that is tyrannical, pedophilic, full of bloodshed, and stupid has been heard many times from the Western hemisphere (Majid, 2012).

The problem gets worse when the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS commits a lot of terror and heinous acts. In fact, they claim to be representatives of the Muslim community. In many international media channels, representations of Islam tend to be represented by these radical terrorist groups like ISIS. As a result, Islam is not imaged as it should be. Distortions about the concept of Islam are rampant. It is not impossible, some people in Indonesia also get an incomplete understanding of Islam because they are exposed to content from Western media (Armstrong et al., 2018).

Cases of hatred and fear of Islamic teachings are increasingly symptomatic in the new media era where information is so widely available. Stories about destructive puritanism, aired on many internet channels. Both in pages or social media accounts that are managed by the community and news agencies, as well as those handled by individuals.

Information, data, stories, and news that are conveyed often contain fighting because they only start from the desire to find the number of viewers, readers, likes, shares, and other material things (Parhan et al., 2021). In fact, not all puritans are conservative, old-fashioned, and doomed to disaster. The scholars agree that all rituals in Islam, all mahdhah worship, are sourced from generation to generation purely or purely directly from the Prophet Muhammad Sholallahu alaihi Wassalam. The implementation of worship variations that occur only at the level of social activities or muamalah (Harun, 2017).

This article wants to explore the dangers of Islamophobia for the harmony of society in Indonesia. The aim is to describe a number of problems that need to be watched out for in the current era in relation to Islamophobia. Including, the challenges and opportunities of these problems. This study was conducted using a qualitative method, using a literature study approach. It is hoped that conceptual thinking can be generated through discussions that rely on literature, both those sourced from printed media or books, or those sourced from online media. This study is organized based on a number of discussion categories in order to facilitate discussion and formulation of conclusions.

This study uses a qualitative method to describe facts within the scope of the discussion topic, namely, about Islamophobia in Indonesian society. The approach used in this study is a literature study. Literature studies or research use literature, both printed and online, to obtain comprehensive data (Galvan & Galvan, 2017). The library sources used are books, journal articles, and other literature related to the topic of discussion about Islamophobia in society. Data analysis

techniques are carried out through a process of reduction, presentation, and formulation of conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The results of data analysis are described by categorization or making important points in the discussion section to obtain a focused factual picture (Bogdan & Taylor, 1990).

Beware of Media Distortion

Mass media is a means of mass communication process. Mass communication is the transmission of messages from one communicator or message sender, to many communicants or message recipients. In the conventional era, mass media took the form of radio television, newspapers, and journalistic products. In the new media era like today, mass media has a much more diverse type. The mass media, which on several occasions have transformed into internet-based social media, are competing to be closest to the community. The available platforms also show various kinds of treasures, ranging from Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, websites, to conversation applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2012).

The mass media have the potential to manipulate meaning and tamper with people's culture (Eriyanto, 2005). Theoretically, one of the functions of the mass media is a means of cultural transmission. A popular term appeared: the world outside and pictures in our heads, from Walter Lippman in the 1922 era. The idiom refers to the power of the media to build stereotypes in the human mind. Facts are far beyond, but the definition or meaning of that fact is entered and then appears in people's heads due to intake from the mass media.

What is in the mass media and conveyed to the public always has the power of propaganda. Therefore, everyone needs to be vigilant when interpreting information from the mass media. Must be selective and not rash. Messages that are transmitted through the media always have the possibility of being biased (Innis, 1999). No exception, messages that contain definitions, concepts, and understandings of Islam. The understanding of Islam, both law and discourse, that appears in the media may have been reduced or increased. In accordance with the agenda of the producer or message maker.

The media have the power to build stereotypes. Stereotypes are short impressions of certain groups, where it actually only relies on imaginings and assumptions that cannot be generalized. Stereotypes confuse facts when people make judgments about certain groups. He is often hyperbole so that the stereotyped group is considered strange, foreign, and dangerous. There is a concept of "we" and "other" in the process of building an exaggerated impression (Wade & Tavis, 2011).

As an illustration, there is a Muslim association or group that is considered radical because it has been reported by the media several times, likes to take the law into its own, forcibly closes a discotheque during Ramadan or goes on a rampage in a liquor factory. The media did not clarify holistically the reason the group did so.

Meanwhile, the group claims to have frequently reported errors in discotheques and liquor factories to the authorities. Unfortunately, there was no meaningful response from the authorities. On the one hand, vigilantism is a mistake in a legal country like Indonesia. But on the other hand, the media should focus on issues related to the Islamic community comprehensively.

If there are a lot of media that do injustice in voicing messages, the stereotypes that will be formed will be more massive. In fact, media distortions which in turn create stereotypes about Islam and Muslim groups often appear. The public sphere that is covered in stereotypical messages is not only at the global level, but also at the national level and even at the grassroots level.

In addition to news content, films are one of the mass media products, where these products can also convey messages to the public. There are many studies that mention the distortion of the meaning of Islam in foreign films (Rachman, 2016). The research in question is not only

released by Muslims. Not a few journal articles or books published by European and American institutions have questioned the misrepresentation of Islam in international films (Ramji, 2016).

No wonder, if the audience of these films, both Muslim and non-Muslim, both from Indonesia and from abroad, then have a turbulent perception of Islam. Religion, which is actually rahmatan lil'alamin, has transformed into the understanding in question. At the very least, efforts have been made to renew religious viewpoints and practices.

Of course, there is nothing wrong in trying to create renewal, if the domain is not in mahdhah worship. The problem is, there are attempts to shift and even overhaul the basic rules according to lust. For example, there have been attempts to downplay the concept of polygamy under the pretext of equality, overriding qishash with the argument of Human Rights, and even the thwarting of the sustainability of the Sharia economy by the oligarchs of capitalism who are afraid of diminishing material benefits.

Apart from films, articles, and opinions that are spread in the mass media, it cannot be chewed raw. There must be a screening and weighing effort. Otherwise, Islamophobia will continue to manifest itself. It is possible that the makers of such a product or message are imbeciles, followers of lust, or even a grand agenda of the enemies of Islam. Of course, groups that do not want this religion to progress do exist under the sky. They are afraid that Islam will become the majority religion and the rules of Islam will be the basis of life on earth.

The research agency PEW Research Center and survey The Guardian reported that the Islamic community has the highest growth rate compared to other religious communities. It is predicted that in 2075, the number of Muslims will become the majority in the world (Muhyiddin & Hafil, 2020). For those with acute Islamophobia, the findings are certainly troubling. The existence of Islamophobia in society can trigger mutual suspicion. Mainly, suspicious of those who are Muslim and or the teachings of Islam. Of course, such conditions are counter-productive to the nation's development. The solidity of unity in pluralism is undermined little by little by feelings of hatred or fear of a particular religion.

Mass media has at least two types of views from who manages it. First, mass media managed by companies or businesses. Second, mass media managed by social communities or individuals, including social media accounts. Of course there are two types of media that voice Islamic content objectively. So, the news from there is valid to be used as a mecca of information. However, there are also those who from the start had interests that were not only about sharing information. Namely, being a mouthpiece for the production of information according to the interests of investors and not public welfare oriented. They sell information according to the orders of capitalists who are willing to pay a high price.

Fellow Muslims Don't Hate Each Other

As a country with a majority Muslim population, the model of understanding and activities of Islamic rituals in Indonesia must be different. The pattern of Islam that exists in this country is the impact of the spread of Islam in the world. Moreover, now is the era of new media. Where information does not collide with space and time. Information can flow freely and penetrate geographical boundaries, giving birth to what is called a network society (Castells, 2004). Islamic groups in Indonesia are not only networked in the domestic sphere. Many are also networks of transnational movements.

There are many experts who classify the typology of Muslim understanding in Indonesia. This understanding of Islam then created various Islamic movements. When viewed from the point of view, where the seeds of the movement were born, there are two types of movements: transnational and non-transnational (Wahid et al, 2009). Examples of transnational movements are Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and the Tablighi Jamaat. Political movements oriented to the Egyptian Muslim

Brotherhood and da'wah movements that have affiliations with institutions in Saudi Arabia can also be categorized as transnational. While examples of non-transnational movements are Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah.

When viewed from the focus of their activities, there are those who have a concentration on social movements and education (both general and Islamic), politics, purification of Islamic teachings, and other fields. Those who claim to concentrate on the social field of education are usually reluctant to be directly involved in practical political activities. Although, there are members and sympathizers of this movement who become politicians. They are not too concerned with the details of community social worship, and even tend to carry out and or allow the "melting" of religious rituals with tradition. They have no problem with the celebration of sending prayers or Yasin letters to fellow Muslims who have died. Although factually it was not taught in detail at the time of the Prophet. As long as it does not harm others, does not violate the principles of the Shari'a, and is considered to have the values of social worship, all kinds of activities that breathe Islam are not considered a problem.

Movements that have a concentration in politics usually expect Islam to be an absolute leader, or in terms it is often called running "Islam kaffah". This movement in Indonesia is divided into two: those who agree with democracy and those who do not agree with democracy. Those who agree with democracy decide to form a political party. Meanwhile, those who do not agree with democracy have two models: choosing not to commit violence and choosing to become terrorists. Those who chose not to resort to violence, but continued to demonstrate to replace the existing model of government in Indonesia, were later considered a forbidden movement.

They are accused of often referring to the model of politics and government in Indonesia as thogut. But at least, the members of this movement can still mingle in society today. Because, in principle they do not have hatred for others. They just don't agree with the implementation of the government and political system which is judged not to come from Islamic teachings. Meanwhile, those who concentrate on politics as well as concretely commit acts of violence to manifest the superiority of Islam in a kaffah manner, have been firmly called terrorists and common enemies. Not only the enemies of Muslims in Indonesia, but also Muslims around the world and even the enemies of mankind in all corners of the earth. As a disclaimer, this article will not discuss terrorist groups because from the start they have been agreed upon by all parties (except themselves) as disruptors of civilization.

There is also a puritanistic movement in the field of Islamic religion in Indonesia that is most visible lately, which are those affiliated with institutions or groups from countries in the Arabian Peninsula. Even though they clearly claim not to come from a particular group, they even claim to be salafi (followers of the early Muslims, in this case the companions of the Prophet Muhammad), but the uniformity of messages conveyed by one preacher with other preachers in this movement is clearly visible. They also often provide studies on the radio, youtube channel, and the same television channel. Thus, it is clear that they are in one union or congregation. One of the characters that appears in each of their da'wah is their fondness for using the words: *kullu bid'atin dhollalah wa kullu dhollalah finnar* (every heresy is misguided, and every heresy is in hell). The utterance may be intended as a criticism of those whom they consider to be heretics. On the other hand, they also claim to be obedient to the government, so they don't like Islamic political movements that like to criticize the government. The assumption also grows, that their obedience to the government is a reflection of the views of their teachers who are indeed big in a Constitutional Monarchy country. Such countries generally have an absolute power base in government: the king.

All Islamic movements, regardless of label or concentration, can go hand in hand. They complement each other in the scientific aspect, and work hand in hand to build Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the harmonization of Muslims is often peppered with Islamophobia. The context of Islamophobia here can be broad, namely, hatred and fear that is in the mind of a Muslim, against the gait of other Islamic groups or movements that have different views with him.

For example, a Muslim who feels that all this time he has focused on social movements and education, suddenly becomes allergic to those who enter the world of politics. Worse yet, the dislike turned into hatred. When a fellow Muslim brother criticizes the government, where the government may on several occasions provide social assistance and education to him, he becomes displeased with the brother. In fact, reminding the government of what has become a policy and related to the public interest is not prohibited in religion.

He also hates and is even afraid of the puritan movement that blasphemes a little heretical a number of practices that he used to do. In fact, the puritans who generally forbid musical instruments are also afraid to convey the same fatwa in monarchical countries where their teachers come from. Where the monarchical countries have a state anthem that is sung with musical instruments. Hatred sometimes also shifts into fear if this group grows in number of followers.

Meanwhile, the movement that focuses on politics feels strange about those who are only involved in social and educational lines. They argued, when the Prophet Muhammad faced Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, the Muslims quickly sought a caliph for the smooth running of state affairs and politics. Therefore, politics should be in command. Through politics, total Islamic supremacy can be achieved. They are also uncomfortable with the puritans who like to find fault with others, including considering the movement of critics of the government as a semi-rebel group.

While the puritan movement is so frontal in launching arguments against fellow Muslims. When those who are considered ustadz tend to like to hunt down the faults of others, the followers become even wilder. As a result, not a few followers labeled figures from other movements with inappropriate names. For example, there is a doctoral education graduate who has long attended a pesantren education in the field of hadith, nicknamed Ustadz Fulan "Al Kadzab". Imagine how wild their followers who like to criticize are, to carelessly label people as "Al-Kadzab", a label that is popularly juxtaposed with the name Musailamah, the false prophet in the era of Sayyidina Abu Bakr Siddiq. Even if Ustadz Fulan made a mistake, the level would not be the same, even if it was far from Musailamah, who had clearly apostatized. In this context, it is appropriate to say that the teacher pees standing and the student urinates and runs.

This is a fact in society that can be witnessed both in real space and in cyberspace. The contestation of Islamic discourses and narratives, which are actually in the form of deciphering the typology of late-day Muslims, has even become a bridge for debate. In fact, the diversity of Islamic views is a necessity. Moreover, the number of Muslims in Indonesia is the majority, at 87 percent of the total population of more than 258 million people (US Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2017).

Discussions and differences of opinion about a definition or understanding are natural, as long as they are accompanied by clear arguments and authoritative references (Vancil, 1993). Debates about a discourse or understanding must be based on five main requirements, among others, the validity of reference or reference data, the factuality of thought, orientation to local social value standards, honesty, and the presentation of a holistically structured opinion (Habermas, 1996). With these five conditions, the views discussed, however fierce, will not become a coachman's debate or end in a fight. On the other hand, if the debate only starts from a desire to be popular or to expand its influence, the impact will be nothing more than bullshit that is thrown around everywhere. Historical facts prove that there are many Islamic scholars who maintain harmony even though they have different views.

Feelings of hatred or fear of the teachings of Islam actually have no strong reason. The reason is, this religion from the beginning has tried to give love to the universe. Islam does not only

teach its people to love their fellow human beings. More than that, Islam also gives direction to Muslims to protect the environment, not to torture animals, and even to always use natural resources sparingly. The Prophet Muhammad once ordered his companions not to waste water, even if his house was near a flowing river. At the time of leading Medina, and even when he had mastered Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad never cheated and even harmed people from other religions. The non-Muslims who were fought by the Prophet Muhammad in his day were non-Muslims who from the start were hostile to Islam and in fact systemic tried to destroy this religion. Therefore, in the current era, non-Muslims should not also maintain Islamophobia. Indeed, not all non-Muslims hate or fear the teachings of Islam. However, for those who still hate and fear Islam, please change that thought, so that suspicion can be eroded. Cooperation between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters permitted by the Shari'a can also be carried out without harming both parties.

The specter of Islamophobia does not only touch non-Muslim circles. Not a few ordinary Muslims are afraid of those who are considered religious fanatics. The strange thing is, these laymen are sometimes easy to label Muslims who appear to have an "unusual" appearance as possessing radical thoughts. The appearances referred to include women wearing black and veiled clothes, and men with beards and short pants. In fact, Muslims who look like that there are references. Even those who don't have that kind of appearance have references. The point is, religious fanaticism is commonplace. Without fanaticism, a person is very likely to change religions. Many football club supporters are fanatical about their team. So, it does not make sense if the adherents of a religion are not fanatical about their religion. What should not be religious fanatics and trying to vilify and even disturb other religious people. A comprehensive understanding of absolute Islam continues to be echoed in the community, especially those who claim to be Muslim.

Conclusion

Among activists of Islamic movements, community organizations, non-governmental organizations, communities, or the like, the passion for *khusnudzon* must be inflamed continuously. There is no point in discussing non-fundamental differences today. However, disagreements will always exist and have started long ago. There are many more urgent matters that need to be addressed. Among other things, moving the people's economy and maintaining harmony in society for the sake of a safe, peaceful and prosperous life. Togetherness in a pluralistic society like Indonesia is the main key to building a glorious civilization. Gratitude, if you can be an inspiration to other countries. One way to eliminate Islamophobia in society is to provide an understanding of the dangers of this kind of attitude. Efforts to do this work are the domain of all parties, especially among the Muslims themselves. In addition to continuing to echo the teachings of Islam which is *rahmatan lil'alamin* at every opportunity, it is also required to practice noble behavior. With concrete examples of real daily actions when socializing in society, Muslims can ensure that their presence on earth is a solution, not a problem.

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