PREJUDICE AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Abstract

The Indonesian nation is a multicultural nation with diversity found in several aspects of life, such as ethnicity, culture, religion, social status and so on. Basically, multiculturalism not only has potential for the development of the Indonesian nation, but on the other hand it can also bring about horizontal conflicts that must be resolved wisely. Conflicts that occur in multicultural societies must be processed so that they can lead to a dynamic process of change in a constructive and positive direction, rather than leading to destructive actions. The resolution of a conflict will generally depend heavily on internal and external factors. Internal factors are how the conflicting parties respond to the conflict they face, while external factors are how outside parties play a role in handling the conflict. Therefore, it is important to create a plan and steps for conflict management in the form of peace building, so that the dynamic process of multicultural society is maintained well.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Cultural Society

Introduction

Indonesia is a country that has various tribes, nations, languages and beliefs or religions, this creates differences between individuals and other individuals, individuals and groups as well as between groups and other groups, creating its own challenges in creating a harmonious society. Various ethnic groups live side by side with different backgrounds in life. The different geographical conditions of residence mean that people in Indonesia have diverse lives which are influenced by their respective cultures as a legacy from each previous generation.

Apart from that, cultural factors from outside entering Indonesia and the spread of major religions in remote areas of Indonesia create a process of acculturation and assimilation and increase the existing cultural diversity. This can be seen in daily life such as religion, customs, traditions, customs, livelihoods, arts which are in accordance with the characteristics of these tribes.[1]

Islam is the religion adhered to by the majority of people in Indonesia. As a religion that is widely adhered to by Indonesian people, Islam certainly has an important role in the nation's journey. However, it turns out that Islam also has its own diversity, both in the characteristics of

[1] Widiastuti Widiastuti, *SWOT Analysis of Indonesian Cultural Diversity,*Widya Scientific Journal 4, no. 2 (2013), hlm. 8–14.

teachings, people and also religious symbols. Differences in views within a religion can give rise to conflict within a religion. The difference between schools of thought is a visible and real difference. Then differences in religious mass organizations emerged. Even though there is one faith, namely the Islamic faith, there are different sources of interpretation and appreciation, the study of the Qur'an and the Sunnah has proven to be capable of causing internal disharmony among Muslims.[2]

Inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations are currently entering new challenges, this is due to the emergence of conflicts with SARA (Ethnicity, Race, Religion and Inter-group) nuances and changes in the dynamics of social and religious relations that occur in the field. Various events that have been turbulent in parts of Indonesia in recent years show indications that there has been a shift in inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations in this country. Religious conflict is primarily a fierce expression of mistakes that use religion as a basis for group identity. The riots that occurred in Indonesia were a response to socio-economic inequality, economic displacement by immigrants, declining political legitimacy, and views regarding threats to group identity. In some cases, the riots involved more direct complaints about rights to practice religion. The use of religious identity demands an explanation beyond the immediate causes of violence.[3]

Nowadays there are many very sensitive issues regarding multiculturalism in the lives of Indonesian society, and also issues such as inter-religious conflicts, conflicts between mass organizations, conflicts between tribes that exist in Indonesian society. Expressions of ethnic feelings still often seem to cause tension in relations between ethnic groups. Various forms of violence continue to occur at various levels of society, making it easier for vertical and horizontal conflicts to erupt.[3] Prolonged conflict will have a psychological impact on life man. This condition will ultimately threaten the disintegration of the Indonesian nation.[4]

Multicultural Society

The root of the word multiculturalism is actually culture. Etymologically, multiculturalism is formed from the words multi (many), culture (culture), and ism (school/understanding). In essence, this word contains recognition of the dignity of humans living in their communities with their own unique cultures. In this way, each individual feels valued and feels responsible for living with their

[2] Ulfah Fajarini,*Portrait of Religious Conflict in the Tangerang Banten Community and Conflict Resolution Based on Multiculturalism in Islam,*‖ Al-Tahrir: Journal of Islamic Thought 14, no. 2 (2014), hlm. 346.

[3] Triana Rosalina Noor,*Watching Indonesia: A Sociological and Psychological Analysis of Religious Conflict in Indonesia,*An-Nafs Journal: Psychological Research Review 3, no. 2 (2018), hlm. 137.

[4] Triana Rosalina Noor,*Islamic Education as a System in Era 4.0* ,TA'LIM: Journal of Islamic Education Studies 2, no. 2 (2019), hlm. 19.

community. A society's denial that there is a need to be recognized (politics of recognition) is the root of all inequality in various areas of life.

Furthermore, the definition of culture in this word by experts must be contrasted between one concept held by one expert and the concept held by another expert, because according to Mahfud multiculturalism is an ideology and a tool or vehicle for improving the level of humans and their humanity, then the concept of culture must seen from the perspective of its function for human life. Among the characteristics of a multicultural society are: first, the occurrence of segmentation, namely a society formed by various ethnicities, races, religions, education, economics, politics, language, etc., but still have separation in the form of primordial concepts. And secondly, the relative potential for conflict, meaning that the more differences there are in a society, the possibility of conflict occurring is very high and the integration process is also difficult.[5]

Prejudice Theory

The classic definition of prejudice was first introduced by a psychologist from Harvard University, Gordon Allport, in his book The Nature of Prejudice in 1954. The term comes from the word praejudicium, which means: a statement or conclusion about something based on superficial feelings or experiences towards a person or group. certain people. Allport further stated that "Prejudice is antipathy based on false generalizations or generalizations that are not flexible. Antipathy it can be felt or expressed. Antipathy can be directed directly at groups or individuals from certain groups." The key word in Allport's definition is "antipathy," which Websters Dictionary calls "negative feeling." Allport also strongly emphasized that antipathy is not only personal antipathy but also group antipathy.

Likewise, according to Jones, prejudice is an antipathetic attitude that is based on a wrong and inflexible way of generalizing. The error may be expressed directly to people who are members of certain groups. Prejudice is a negative attitude directed towards someone on the basis of comparison with their own group. According to Effendy, as quoted by Liliweri, prejudice is one of the obstacles or serious obstacles to communication activities, because people who are prejudiced are already suspicious and oppose the communicator who is carrying out communication. In prejudice, emotions force us to draw conclusions based on prejudice, without using our thoughts and views on real facts. Therefore, once prejudice has set in, people will not be able to think objectively and everything they see will always be evaluated negatively.[6]

[5] Bambang Rustanto,*Multicultural Society in Indonesia*, hlm. 41.
[6] Onong Uchjana Effendy,*Introduction to Communication Science*, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 1981), hlm. 80.

According to Johnson, inter-racial and inter-ethnic prejudice, even though it is based on erroneous generalizations of feelings, the emergence of prejudice is caused by certain things, such as (1) the depiction of differences between groups, (2) the cultural values held by the majority group which are very dominant. minority groups, (3) inter-ethnic stereotypes, and (4) some ethnic groups feel superior, thus making other ethnic groups inferior.[7]

From a social psychology perspective, the occurrence of acts of violence, hostility and injustice in society originates from group antagonism. According to Taylor et al.13 group antagonism appears when members of one group (in group) show negative attitudes and negative behavior towards members of another group (out group). Group antagonism has three interrelated components, namely stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice is one of the most destructive aspects of human behavior and often leads to horrific actions.[8]

Prejudice is a social attitude that is usually negative, the object of prejudice is another person or group, this attitude is based on membership in a group. Based on several similarities in these definitions, a formulation can be drawn that prejudice is a social attitude of a person or group towards another person or group in the form of a negative assessment based on their membership in a group so that it often does not correspond to actual reality.

Forms of prejudice can be manifested in: first, stereotypes, namely assigning certain characteristics to someone based on subjective categories, just because they come from an out group. Second, social distance, namely the feeling of separating a person or certain group based on a certain level of acceptance, such as: (1) unwillingness to marry another ethnic group, (2) unwillingness to include other ethnic groups as members of their club, (3) unwillingness to accept them as neighbors, (4) unwillingness to accept them as colleagues, (5) unwillingness to accept them as citizens, (6) unwillingness to accept them as visitors to their country, (7) unwillingness to accept them in their country.[9]

Conflict Theory

Definition of conflict from an anthropological aspect, namely that it arises as a result of competition between two parties; where each party can be an individual, a family, a kinship group, a community, or perhaps a layer of social class supporting a particular ideology, a political organization, an ethnic group, or followers of a particular religion. Thus, the parties that can be

[7]Allan G. Johnson, *Human* Arrangements*: an Introduction to Sociology*, (Sandigeo: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishing, 1986), hlm. 77

[8] Shelley E. Taylor, dkk., *Social Psychology*(trans.), (Jakarta: Kencana, 2009), hlm. 210.

[9] Alo Liliweri,Prejudice *and Conflict…,*hlm. 199-216

involved in conflict cover many forms and sizes. Mulyadi goes further said that if we look closely at social life, the main component is the interaction between members.[10] In connection with the interactions between members, various types are found. Type of social interaction in general include cooperative (cooperation), competition (competition) and conflict (dispute). These three components will be interrelated with each other.

Meanwhile, in sociology, we know of conflict theory which attempts to understand conflict from a social science perspective. Conflict theory is a theory that views that social change does not occur through a process of adjusting values that bring change, but occurs as a result of conflict which results in compromises that are different from the original conditions. Conflict theory was born as an antithesis to functional structural theory which views the importance of order in society.[11]

This conflict theory was built in order to directly oppose functional structural theory, therefore it is not surprising that the prepositions put forward by its adherents conflict with the prepositions contained in functional structural theory. Society is considered to be in a static condition or more precisely moving in a condition of balance, and vice versa in conflict theory. Society is always in a process of change which is characterized by continuous conflict between its elements. According to functional structural theory, every element or every institution provides support for stability, conflict theory sees this that each element contributes to social diintegration. Another contrast is that adherents of functional structural theory see members of society as informally bound by values, norms and general morality, whereas conflict theory assesses that the order that exists in society is only caused by pressure or imposition of power from above by groups of people. the one in power.[12]

The famous conflict theory is the conflict theory put forward by Karl Marx regarding class theory. With the emergence of capitalism there was a sharp separation between those who controlled the means of production and those who only had power. The development of capitalism exacerbates the contradictions between the two social categories so that ultimately conflict occurs between the two classes. The exploitation carried out by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat continuously will eventually raise the consciousness of the proletariat to rise up and fight so that major social change occurs, namely social revolution. According to Marx's predictions the

[10]Mulkhan, Mulyadi.*Social Conflict Viewed in Terms of Structure and Function.*Jurnal Humaniora Volume XIV, No.3/2002, hlm 84.

[11] *International Encyclopaedia of The Social Sciences* Vol. 3, hlm 236

[12] George Ritzer,*Dual Paradigm Sociology of Science*,(Jakarta: PT. RajaGrafindo Persada, 2018), hlm. 26-27

proletariat will win this class struggle and will create a society without classes and without a State.[13]

Another conflict theory is the theory put forward by Ralf Dahrendorf which states that society consists of organizations based on power (domination of one party over another party based on coercion) or authority (domination accepted and recognized by the dominated party) which is called Imperatively coordinated associations (forcibly coordinated associations) because the interests of the two parties in these associations are different. The ruling party has an interest in maintaining power, while the controlled party has an interest in gaining power that can cause social change. Thus, according to Dahrendorf, conflict is a source of social change. The main idea contained according to the conflict theory put forward by Dahrendorf is that every human society is subject to a process of changes that are everywhere, dissensus and conflict are everywhere, every element of society contributes to the disintegration and change of society and every society is based on coercion. some members against other members.[14]

Prejudice and Conflict

There is a close relationship between conflict and prejudice. Prejudice still contains negative attitudes, thoughts, beliefs and beliefs towards certain groups. From this prejudice, acts of discrimination will arise. If prejudice is still in the mind, but discrimination has led to systematic action. Discrimination will give rise to actions that try to remove the status and role of a group of people from relationships, relationships and communication between people. Over time, this act of discrimination will certainly give rise to conflict.

According to Rose, prejudice can harm society in general and organizations in particular. This happens because prejudice can hinder the development of an individual's potential to the maximum. Steplan further explained that prejudice not only affects the behavior of adults but also children so that it can limit their opportunities to develop into people who have tolerance towards target groups, for example minority groups. Rosenbreg and Simmons, also explained that prejudice will make certain groups of individuals different from other groups of individuals, and make them unwilling to join or socialize. If this happens in society it will certainly damage cooperation. The conclusion that can be drawn from the description of the impact of prejudice above is that the presence of prejudice will influence a person's attitudes and behavior in various situations. Prejudice can make certain people or groups unwilling to join or socialize with other groups. If these conditions exist in the organization and society, it will disrupt good cooperation, so that efforts to

[13]George Ritzer and Jeffrey Stepnisky, *Sociological Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 2018), hlm. 84.
[14] Ritzer, *Dual Paradigm* Sociology *of Science*, hlm. 26-29

achieve organizational goals cannot be realized properly.

Causes of Conflict in Multicultural Societies

Conflicts that occur in multicultural societies cannot be separated from the boundaries of the term "*conflict*"which etymologically comes from Latin"*with*" which means together and "*fly*" which means impact or collision.[15] In another sense, conflict is a social process that takes place involving people or groups who challenge each other with threats of violence.[16] Conflict can also be interpreted as a clash of power and interests between one group and another group in the process of competing for relatively limited societal resources (economic, political, social and cultural).[17] Conflicts like this can also be called racial conflicts, namely clashes between different racial groups because of clashing interests and cultures, which generally occurs because one race feels that it is the superior and most perfect group among the other races.[18]

Conceptually, conflict is a conflict between two people or institutions, which is caused by differences in achieving their needs. Therefore, conflict is a condition where there is no interpersonal or group trust in society. In many cases, conflict occurs because of various negative perceptions that develop in society. Today's society tends to be materialistic and calls itself a modern society even though in reality it sometimes does not reflect modernization itself. Community members are sometimes filled with an atmosphere of mutual suspicion between each other. If this continues to develop, this will lead to disharmony and a crisis in social relations. When there has been a crisis in social relations, what more momentum can there be if it is accompanied by the presence of provocateurs makes it easier for various conflicts to arise, whether in the form of looting, vandalism, arson, abuse, and even murder.[19]

Basically, in simple terms the causes of conflict are divided into two, namely: first, because of horizontal pluralism, which means the structure of society is culturally diverse, such as ethnicity, religion, race and social pluralism in the sense of differences in jobs and professions such as farmers, laborers, traders, businessmen, civil servants, military, journalists, religious scholars,

[15] Elly M. Setiadi and Usman Kolip,*Introduction to Sociology, Understanding Facts and Symptoms of Social Problems: Theory, Applications and Solutions*,Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2011, hlm. 345.

[16]J. Dwi Narwoko dan Bagong Suyanto,*Introductory and Applied Sociology Text*,Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2005, hlm. 68.

[17]Robert Lawang,*Basic* Material *Book for Introduction to Sociology*,Jakarta: Open University, 1994, hlm. 53.

[18] Bambang Rustanto,Multicultural *Society in Indonesia*,hlm. 68.

[19]Noor, *Observing Indonesia: A* Sociological *and Psychological Analysis of Religious Conflict in Indonesia*,hlm. 137

drivers and intellectuals. Second, because of vertical pluralism, which means the structure of society is polarized based on wealth, education and power.[20]

Meanwhile, in public relations theory, conflict is caused by ongoing polarization, distrust and hostility between different groups in a society. The target to be achieved in this theory is to increase communication and mutual understanding between groups experiencing conflict and also to strive for tolerance so that society is more accepting of the diversity that exists within it. Meanwhile, intercultural misunderstanding theory assumes that conflict is caused by incompatibilities in the ways of communication between different cultures. The goal that the misunderstanding theory aims to achieve interculturalism is reducing negative stereotypes (bad thoughts) towards other parties, and increasing the effectiveness of intercultural communication such as dialogue.[21]

From these two theories, it is implicitly known that the main factors causing conflict in multicultural societies such as racial conflict are: first, excessive primordialism or tribal feelings.[22] Second, negative stereotypes or negative prejudice towards other parties, namely people's feelings towards certain people, racial or cultural groups, which are different from the group of people who are prejudiced.[23] Third, racial discrimination or unfair treatment based on race. The definition of discrimination within the scope of Indonesian human rights (human rights law) can be seen in article 1 paragraph (3) of Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights.[24] Meanwhile, racial discrimination is treating a person or certain group unfairly fair based on their race.[25] And fourth, the view of racism is a belief system or doctrine which states that one's own race is the most superior race.[26]

The conflict that occurs will certainly have a negative impact on the life of a multicultural society. Some of the negative impacts are: (1) If the conflict is not successfully resolved, leading to violence or war, then group unity will be destroyed, (2) There will be changes in individual personality such as becoming violent, aggressive and irritable, especially if the conflict ends on

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[20]Elly M. Setiadi and Usman Kolip,*Introduction to Sociology, Understanding Facts and Symptoms of Social Problems: Theory, Applications and* Solutions,hlm. 361.

[21]Bambang Rustanto,*Multicultural Society in Indonesia*, hlm. 68-69.

[22]*Ibid*, hlm. 49

[23]Hartono and Amicun Aziz,*Basic social knowledge*,Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1997, hlm. 259.

[24]*Ibid*, hlm. 59-60.

[25]Sri Oktavianty Wahono, et al,*Legal Reform Against Racial and Ethnic Discrimination Policies in* Indonesia,hlm. 3.

[26]George M. Fredickson,*A Brief History of Racism*,hlm. 19.

violence, (3) Destruction of existing social values and norms. (4) Resulting in wrong religious fanaticism. (5) Resulting in mutual hostility between races and religions.[27]

Multicultural Society Conflict Resolution Strategy

Problems that occur in multicultural societies cannot be avoided. So that every problem and conflict that occurs can have a positive impact, it is necessary to develop conflict resolution strategies.[28] The following strategies are offered: According to William Hendricks, there are several forms and processes of conflict resolution, namely:[29]

1. The act of avoiding, which is a form of problem solving by allowing conflict or running away from conflict.
2. Competition or authoritative command, namely resolution through dominating a situation with a situation of losing or winning" and forcing everything by using power.
3. Accommodation or leveling, namely resolving a conflict in a cooperative but not assertive manner. It means allowing other people's desires, leveling differences to maintain artificially created harmony.
4. Compromise, namely resolving conflict through a bargaining system to find common ground on a problem.
5. Collaboration, namely resolving conflicts through a cooperative attitude to achieve the satisfaction of each interested party, through existing differences, finding and solving problems so that loyal people can experience the results.

Apart from that, Dahrendorf also mentioned that there are three forms of conflict management, namely:[30]

1. Conciliation; A parliament in which all parties discuss and debate openly and in depth to reach an agreement without any party monopolizing the discussion and imposing their will. Most political conflicts are channeled and managed in the form of conciliation.
2. Mediation; Both parties agree to seek advice from a third party (a mediator in the form of a certain figure, expert or institution who is deemed to have in-depth knowledge and expertise regarding the matter in dispute) but the advice given by this mediator is not binding on them.

[27]Elly M. Setiadi and Usman Kolip,*Introduction to* Sociology, *Understanding Facts and Symptoms of Social Problems: Theory, Applications and Solutions*,hlm. 378.

[28] Wahyudi,Conflict *Management in Organizations.*hlm. 93-106

[29]Rusdiana,*Conflict Management.*hlm. 190

[30] Surbakti,Understanding *Political Science.*hlm. 160

3. Arbitration; Both parties agree to obtain a final decision (of a legal nature) as a solution to the conflict from a third party as an arbitrator.

Conclusion

Problems in a multicultural society cannot be avoided, but wherever possible problems in the form of conflict must be resolved wisely. A multicultural society that has diversity in terms of religion, culture, economics and politics means that conflict will easily lead to destructive things, and conflict can even be followed by forms of violence, such as war and massacre. However, in communities that have high capacity, it is very possible that conflict can dynamically change in a constructive and positive direction.

The resolution of a conflict will generally depend heavily on internal and external factors. Internal factors are how the conflicting parties respond to the conflict they face, while external factors are how outside parties play a role in handling the conflict. For this reason, it is important to create a plan and steps for conflict management in the form of peace building.

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