

Countering Radicalism and Intolerance from School: Lessons Learned in Indonesia



Anggi Afriansyah¹, Sari Seftiani¹

¹ Researcher, Research Center for Population, Indonesian Institutes of Sciences

異なる思想や民族への不寛容と若い世代の急進化は世界中で深刻な問題だが、多民族国家のインドネシアでは教育を通じて、不寛容と急進化を防ぐ取り組みを続けてきた。本稿ではその成果を検証し、課題を検討した。

Abstract

Intolerance and radicalism have been one of the most discussed issues of the time in every nation-state around the world. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia is one of the countries that prevented actively intolerance and radicalism. According to Dunn, Sing, and Sumaktoyo (2013), intolerance in this study is defined as a negative orientation or a refusal to people from a different group of social and political rights and perspective. Intolerance indicated by violence or *hate-speeches* of people on different groups. While radicalism is a religious interpretation both actively and passively that tries to replace the political system of the country (Nadzir et al., 2017). This phenomenon also occurs in educational institutions. Therefore, it is crucial to prevent the intolerant and radical behaviours through school from the beginning. Unfortunately, there are many obstacles to make the school as a media to counter intolerance and radicalism optimally. This paper focuses on the problems in the education system in Indonesia and its role in countering intolerance and radicalism. This study utilized *mix-match* methods, both quantitative and qualitative approaches. We found that school as media for countering the intolerance and radicalism issues still not effectively worked out because the school has not become a meeting space that allows mutual learning and recognition, and encouraging the critical thinking of the students which needs more attention of the government.

Keywords

education, peace, school, intolerance, radicalism

Introduction

There are several studies about intolerance that are using a quantitative method in Indonesia, including the study in education area (PPIM, 2018). Nevertheless, those There are several studies about intolerance that are using a quantitative method in Indonesia, including the survey in the education area (PPIM, 2018). Nevertheless, those studies have not been sufficient to gain a deeper understanding of intolerance, especially in education perspective. Education is a crucial part of building a tolerant and peaceful situation. At school, students can meet other students who have different economic, ethnics, and religion. However, until now, the education system in Indonesia, especially in school, still

has problems to strengthen tolerance in Indonesia. Previous studies found that school is one of the places where intolerance and radicalism are disseminated (Wahid Institute, 2014; Infid, 2016).

A large number of state schools needs to have a role which can counter intolerance and radicalism. The formal education institutions are numerous and have a tiered structure. The counter of intolerance and radicalism can strengthen through the educational area. School can be a space for actualizing tolerance issue and “meeting spaces” for children with various groups.

The issue of radicalism and intolerance has become a concern of the Indonesian government. Intolerance, radicalism, and extremism are considered as the causes of a

large number of violent incidents in Indonesia (Kompas.com, 2018). The National Agency for Combating Terrorism (BNPT) said that the right ideology lessons for children through educational institutions need to be strengthened as an essential part to suppress radical and intolerant behaviour.

The increasing of intolerance and radicalism phenomenon occurs because the school as the main education locus failed to build a complete education system that grows humanization for students. Currently, school is a place where students focus a lot on academic orientation. Therefore, they have limited time to meet other different groups.

Methods

This study utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods. In 2018, a survey was conducted across nine provinces in Indonesia. There were Aceh, DKI Jakarta, DI Yogyakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java, Banten, North Sumatera, and South Sulawesi. Multistage random sampling was utilized in order to obtain a sample of a person aged 17-64 years or married. A total of 1800 respondents were interviewed face to face.

This study added the variable of geo-cultural in sampling method to obtain the respondent as considering the effects of culture on tolerance behaviour. Horga and Brie (2013) said that the differences in culture related to language, ethnicity, and religion increase the tendency of being xenophobia and intolerance on a person. The qualitative data is collected in Jakarta as the case studies to gain a better understanding of the school system as a basis to counter the intolerance and radicalism issues.

Profile of respondents

Appendix 1 shows the characteristics of the respondent in nine provinces. The majority of respondent around 32-46 years old. Of out four respondent, three respondents are married (77.8%), and more than 50% of respondents were living in urban areas. When looking at the level of education (Figure 1), the majority of the respondent were tertiary school (SMA) and below. There is 36.8% respondent who have finished senior

high school (SMA), around 23% has finished the elementary school, 20.6% has finished the secondary school (SMP), and only 1.1% who has completed the master degree or doctoral.

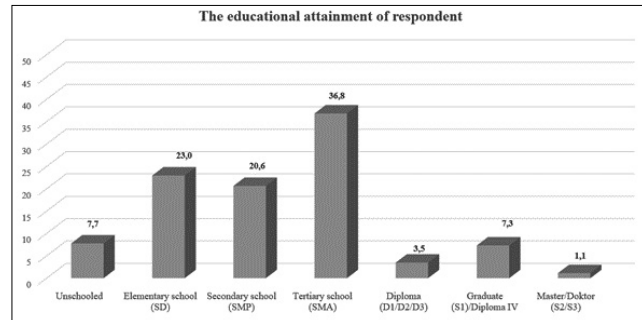


Figure 1. The educational attainment of respondent

Furthermore, around 60.2% of respondents are working, and 29.6% of respondents are a housewife. Of the total respondents who are working, there is 46.6% who are working as an employee or labour. Besides education and job, the expenditure also became an indicator of social-economic characteristics. Data also shows that there are 53.7% of respondents have expense around Rp<1.000.000 - 3.000.000, and 12.2% is Rp<3.000.000 - 5.000.000 are 12,2%.

Regarding religion in Indonesia, due to the randomness, the data is quite similar to the census data (Figure 2). In this study, data shows that the majority of respondents are Moslem (87.5%). In 2010 Indonesia population census data, around 87.2% are Moslem.

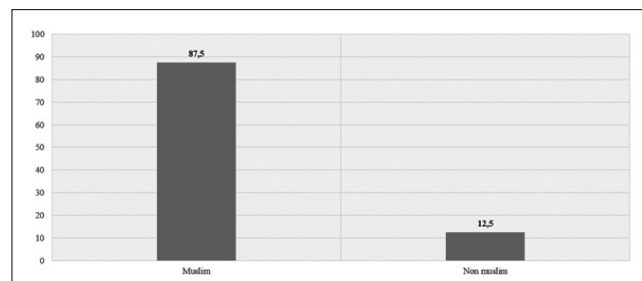


Figure 2. The proportion of respondents based on religion in nine provinces.

The rationality of respondents on misinformation

In this study, we also asked the respondent about the kind of information and hoax that might be contradictory with established issues. Three of them are (1) the resurgence of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party); (2) state intentionally designed the ulama's criminalization; and (3) the existence of million Chinese labour in Indonesia. Besides, we asked if the respondents familiar with the information, we also asked whether they believed the information or not.

Figure 3 shows the proportion of respondent whether the respondents know and believe in the information about the resurgence of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party). As we can see, the prevalence of respondent who knows about the resurgence of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) increases with the level of education. It means that the more educated a person, the propensity to know the information rising. It is also shown that respondents with the highest-level education (Master/Doktor (S2/S3) are the category that very familiar with the information about the resurgence of PKI. However, not all the respondent who knows the information related to the resurgence of PKI believe in this information.

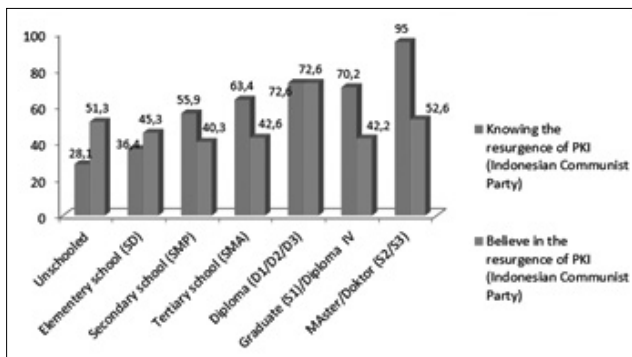


Figure 3. The proportion of respondents who know and believe in the information about the resurgence of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party).

Interestingly, of the total respondent with the highest level of education who familiar with this information, more than 50% believe this information. Moreover, the highest proportion of respondents who believe this

information is respondent with Diploma level (72.6%). Although the percentage of the unschooled category who are familiar with the resurgence of PKI has the lowest, however, amount to 51.3% believes in this information.

Furthermore, Figure 4 represents the second information about the state intentionally designed the ulama's criminalization. Similar to the resurgence of PKI, respondents who are familiar with this information increase with the level of education. Of the total 80% of respondents who are knowing the information about state intentionally designed the ulama's criminalization, more than 50% who believes this information. It can be assumed that respondent with higher education does not means they were more critical than others respondent.

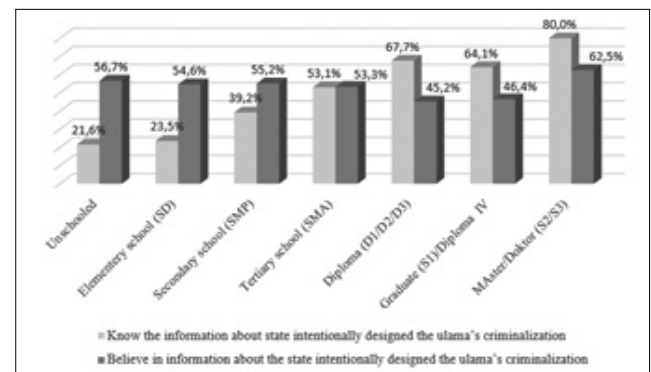


Figure 4. The proportion of respondents who know and believe in the information about state intentionally designed the ulama's criminalization

The last information that we include in this paper is about the existence of millions of Chinese labour in Indonesia (Figure 5). Like the previous two information, around 50% of respondents familiar with the information about the existence of millions of Chinese labour in Indonesia. Of the whole category, level of education from diploma until master or doctoral is the category which has around 50% and above familiar with this information. For those who know this information from each level of education, more than 50% of respondent believe in the information.

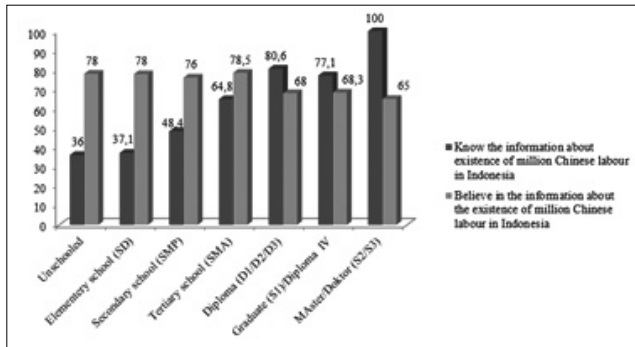


Figure 5. The proportion of respondents who are knowing and believe in the information about the existence of million. Chinese labor in Indonesia

Intolerance behaviour

In this study, there were several indicators to measure the intolerance of a person both in the social domain and political domain. Two indicators show in this paper (Figure 6 and Figure 7). First, the respondent’s perception regarding the place of residence that only had neighbourhoods from the same religion. Although the percentage not as high as the percentage of respondent who does not agree and very not agree, however, the percentage of respondents who agree and very agree to prefer live in an area with the same religion is quite high. The proportion of respondents with lower education (Unschoolad-Tertiary school) who prefer to live in an area with only the same religion is higher than those respondents who have finished diploma and master or doctoral.

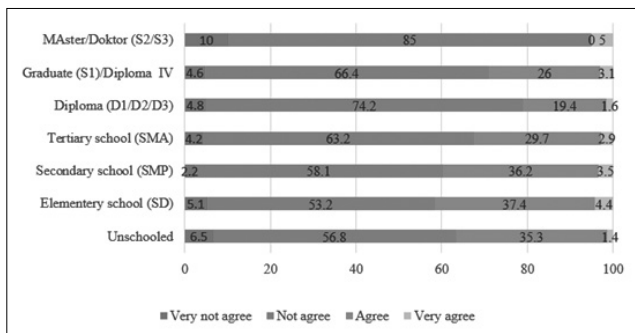


Figure 6. The percentage of respondent based on level education and the preferences place of residence that was only have neighborhood from the same religion

Furthermore, Figure 7 represents the respondent’s whether they support the prohibition of other religious activities in their private home or not. As we can see, it is also showing that respondents with lower education tend to support the prohibition of other religion than respondents with higher education. Overall, around 10% and more for each category agree and very agree to prohibit the other religious activities in their homes. Respondents who have the highest education do not mean they will be more tolerant of permitting people from different religion to do their religious activities in their home.

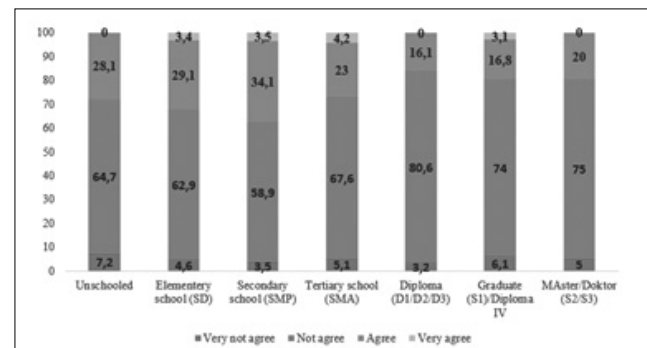


Figure 7. The percentage of respondent based on level education and supporting the prohibition of other religious activities in their home

Intolerance and radicalism phenomena in School

One of the sad tragedies happened in Bali in 2002. The tragedy caused 200 deaths. The spotlight was addressed to the madrasa because the attackers of the bomb were alumni of Islamic schools in Solo, namely Madrasah Al Mukmin Ngruki, Solo led by Abu Bakar Baasyir. The madrasa thought to teach the violence-based fundamentalism doctrine (Woodward, 2015).

Several researchers have raised suspicion of the role of educational institutions as a space for infiltration of intolerance and radicalism. School considers being a space where intolerance and radicalism internalized. Educational institutions are one of the highlights being the arena where penetration of radicalism and intolerance share to the students. Nevertheless, Muslim education such as madrasa is also one of the fields for protecting radicalization that occurs because it provides

a robust religious understanding that allows students to participate in dynamic spiritual and cultural celebrations. On the contrary, secular universities become the locus where the process of re-Islamization and development of Islamic understanding are rigidly strengthened (Woodward, et al., 2010).

Abdallah stated that even though manual books are the primary reference for students and their shape understanding of Islam. Previous studies regarding intolerance in the education space, among others: growing exclusiveness in education institutions that are associated with the prevalence of intolerant curriculum (Freedom House, 2006), exclusivist teachers (PPIM 2008, LAKIP, 2011), the Islamist movement in schools (Ciciek 2008; Maarif Institute, 2011), and Islamic schools recognized by radical movements from the outside (Rahima, 2011).

Teachers who become intolerant

Research conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta (2018) showed that teachers in Indonesia from kindergarten to high school/Madrasa have intolerant opinions and high radical opinion. The survey showed 21% of teachers did not agree that neighbours of different faiths could hold religious events at their homes. 56% of teachers disagree that Non-Muslims may establish religious-based schools around them. Then, if there is an opportunity 34% of teachers wish to sign the petition rejecting the establishment of non-Islamic religious schools around their homes. 33% of teachers agreed to encourage others to join in the fight to realize an Islamic state. 29% of teachers agreed to participate in jihad in the southern Philippines, Syria or Iraq in fighting for the establishment of an Islamic state.

This condition is an alarm for education in Indonesia because the teacher's views or perspectives on differences are very influential for student growth and development. In Indonesia, teachers still play an important role in building the perspective of their students. It is very dangerous if narrow-minded teachers teach children.

In this context, the political events that took place in Jakarta were very influential on the teacher's

perspective in addressing the political world. The Jakarta community has been split when Governor Basuki Cahaya Purnama issued a controversial statement and resulted in volumes of demonstrations. This situation caused an endless debate among teachers. The debate in cyberspace also spread to the real world, and the school community also involved from the debate contestation.

The teacher informants interviewed, must be left from the *WhatsApp* group (WAG) because they were not comfortable with some teachers who quickly spread the hoax news related to the election. On the other hand, excessive suspicion of ethnic Chinese or the suggestion not to choose leaders of different religions with false news is massif disseminated. The warming up of Jakarta's political situation had been vibrated into classrooms. What happened at the school must be a concern of the government. Moreover, teachers are central to the implementation of education in Indonesia.

Lack of meeting space in-school programs

One aspect that makes schools not play an optimal role in building tolerance is the lack of meeting space that allows various groups, ethnic, religious, and social classes to meet each other. The lack of this meeting caused children not to get enough space to apply a tolerant attitude to the differences that exist in society. This space is possible to construct in public schools that consist of various groups. These different groups should meet at school and then form strong, cross-cultural communal ties. The practice of working together can pursue in the meeting rooms initiated by the school, both through classroom learning, extracurricular activities and daily activities. Unfortunately, not all schools realize the importance of public spaces for meeting children.

Moreover, one aspect that burdens children to be free to meet is a heavy burden to complete various academic tasks. Also, school culture is not designed to make children intensely recognize a variety of students at school. Even though public schools have diverse inputs, the level of the encounter between children that allows them to know each other is very limited.

The three public schools that we interviewed in Jakarta did not have specific programs that allowed children to get to know each other intensively. These schools do not have cross-cultural programs that enable them to work together or collaborate with other schools that are different from their school setting. The initiation of this cultural encounter has not been carried out by state schools.

Not only is the meeting space in schools, in this case, but the meeting space outside the school is also very limited, especially for young people. Infid (2018) for example provides recommendations that the central and regional governments can more actively facilitate space so that people can meet well with public facilities such as squares, village halls, art studios, and others. This space can be an arena for cross-faith and cultural youth encounters that enable them to collaborate intensively (Infid, 2018).

Strategy For Countering Intolerance And Radicalism in School

Strengthening critical thinking

One of the main programs of efforts to fight intolerance and radicalism in schools is to provide adequate understanding for students about the differences that exist in the world in the form of perspectives on religion, ethnicity, and social class. Students must open their views to understand better the various ideologies and perspectives that exist in society. That differences of opinion, religion, politics, social class are commonplace in community. A diverse society is a primary necessity for Indonesia, which consists of a variety of ethnic groups. The Indonesian ideology based on Pancasila is the locus where all religious beliefs are respected, and unity is also the goal of the establishment of the Indonesian nation.

On the other hand, the most important thing is to strengthen the tradition of critical thinking among children. Critical thinking is a tool for them to be able to sort the various information they receive. They are not easy to be influenced by incitement from various groups who want to divide the Indonesian people. Moreover, education has a huge responsibility to create spaces that allow students to get used to critical thinking and also

be able to dialogue with various groups. It is undoubtedly a heavy homework for education in Indonesia.

The tradition of critical thinking can only do through progressive education, which can only be done by progressive teachers. Teachers who, according to Freire (1993), give love to students, are consistent between behaviour and words, tolerant, have clarity of political views, and can live together with different parties. They are here to invite students to think critically, build curiosity continuously, and take risks.

Quoting Maxine Greene, Giroux (1997) suggests that educators need to create public space in the classroom as a precondition for educating children in an active democratic process. In that space, children express themselves, are free to express their opinions, and learn to articulate different ideas.

Teachers (Stacie Molnar-Main, 2017) are expected to commit to bringing students to discuss various issues that exist in the community so that they can handle a variety of complex problems, consider them with multiple perspectives, and offer different solutions.

The tradition of critical thinking is only possible through liberating education. Children need to be accustomed to expressing all kinds of aspirations or anxieties in the classroom. The argument must be delivered logically and systematically and also built by substantial evidence. It is to familiarize that we are not just from talking without presenting the significant evidence.

Creating programs that encounter Students with Diverse Group

The most crucial program that must-have in the school is a space where children and teachers can meet with various groups. Some schools, especially religious-based private schools, although very limited in number, for example, already have programs that make students have to meet other schools with different religious backgrounds or social classes. They immediately faced these different groups in various events collaborated. One example, Al Izhar Islamic High School, Jakarta and Kanisius College High School have activities together with "Ragamuda" which aims to build national unity and unity among young people. They

have several programs, including joint discussion activities, visiting various religious houses, or other cross-cultural activities. These activities allow these children to meet each other, greet each other, and work together. They know each other and discuss and plan various possible collaborations.

Interviews with students at Al Izhar Islamic High School who were involved in this activity stated that meeting with various groups made their perspective on different groups change. Various information he had previously received about other religious groups could be directly confirmed to his friends. He got new understanding and methods from various activities carried out in the two schools. He became aware of how other students whose religion and ethnicity differed. The program carried out by these two schools needs to be done intensively and structured.

From the information conveyed by the informants, not all schools can establish cooperation such as the activities carried out by the two schools. Not all schools welcome plans for activities that seek to bring these cultures together. There is still a thick wall made by the school that invited to join in this activity. The stuttering of associating with different groups is undoubtedly dangerous for Indonesia's diverse future even though it is evident that schools are public institutions that are responsible for building interactions with various groups.

Conclusion

Issues of intolerance and radicalism also occur in educational institutions that require serious attention from the government. Therefore, one of the solution to prevent the increase of intolerance and radicalism in Indonesia is the schools through the better education system. Unfortunately, there are many obstacles to make the school as a media to counter intolerance and radicalism effectively. We found that school as media for countering the intolerance and radicalism issues is still not be worked out effectively because the school has not become a meeting space that allows mutual learning and recognition for students. Also, the school have not been encouraging the critical thinking of the students. In terms of countering the intolerance and radicalism

issues at school, the government needs various programs that allow children to have more meeting times with different groups through various activities. Besides that, teachers must have training to improve their abilities and skills to make a dialogue space and critical thinking for the students.

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Appendix 1

The characteristics of respondents in nine provinces

Variables	(%)	Variables	(%)
Age groups		Education attainment	
17 - 21	10.2	Unschooling	7.7
22 - 26	9.2	Elementary school (SD)	23.0
27 - 31	10.4	Secondary school (SMP)	20.6
32 - 36	13.1	Tertiary school (SMA)	36.8
37 - 41	14.1	Diploma (D1/D2/D3)	3.5
42 - 46	12.5	Graduate (S1)/Diploma IV	7.3
47 - 51	10.5	Master/PhD (S2/S3)	1.1
52 - 56	8.4	Main activity	
57 - 61	6.3	Working	60.2
62 - 64	5.3	Domestic work	29.6
Sex		School	4.4
Male	51.9	Others	5.8
Female	48.1	Expenditure (in the last month)	
Marital status		Rp<1.000.000	29.6
Unmarried	16.5	Rp<1.000.000 - 3.000.000	53.7
Married	77.8	Rp<3.000.000 - 5.000.000	12.2
Divorced	1.6	Rp<5.000.000 - 7.000.000	2.6
Widowed	4.1	Rp<7.000.000 - 9.000.000	0.6
		Rp<9.000.000 - above	1.2
n = 1800			