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Asep Dahliyana¹
Dasim Budimansyah²
Encep Syarief Nurdin³
Ace Suryadi⁴

The Challenges of Civic and Moral Educations for Young Muslim Indonesian

Abstract

Civic education in Indonesia is a general compulsory subject within the scope of general education. Theoretically, civic education has to instill the values of nationalism and patriotism. However, in its implementation, civic education faces several obstacles. The obstacles are not only in terms of material, method, and evaluation, but also from the students who are mostly Muslims. In obtaining the data, qualitative approach was applied. As a result, several challenges were faced in the implementation of civic education either from the Muslim students or the environment such as the poor morality, the separation of curricular narratives of civic education and religion, the rejection of nasionalism and patriotism value, the weak tolerance, the development of increasingly liberal human rights, and the spread of sexual behavior. Such condition represents civic education as a subject that tries to create good citizens that do not have a connection with moral teaching based on religious narratives that have become a belief and are ingrained in Muslims.

Keywords: Civic Education, Moral Education, Character Education, Islam.

Introduction

Civic education is either integrated or separated curriculum which aims to create good citizens (Kennedy, 2012; Colceru, 2013). It is an effort to improve the quality of students' behaviour inside and outside the education space (Nogueira & Moreira, 2013). The picture of good citizens is not only polite in personal life, but also has a connection with public life through an active role as a form of humanizing people through the education system which is one of the solution to a long-standing structural value crisis (Cogan & Derricott, 1998; Dimitrov, 2011). Therefore, civic education should include orientation of the values of political knowledge and skills (Moldovan et al., 2014).

According to Kennedy, the implementation of civic education in the curriculum in some countries seems to be dominated by local perspectives rather than the global ones. This view illustrates that in addition to preparing

citizens for the future, it also prepares for strengthening the citizenship of each country (Kennedy, 2012). One of the countries implementing civic education on its curriculum (Dimitrov, 2011) is Indonesia, which population are mostly Muslims. The subject is taught in every level of education (Belenchuk & Nevskaya, 2016).

In Indonesia, civic education is stated in the Act No. 12 year 2012 concerning the implementation of civic education in schools or colleges. Another regulation, article 37 paragraph (1) of Act No. 20 year 2003 also suggests that the compulsory curriculum of primary and secondary education includes "... b. civic education;" ... and in paragraph (2) article 37 of Act No. 12 year 2012, it is stated that the curriculum for higher education must contain: "... b. civic education;". From the two laws, civic education that Indonesia wants to develop is for citizens who have the character of a sense of nationality and love their motherland.

However, in its implementation the concept of civic education is overlapping. This is because

Asep Dahliyana¹, Doctoral Student and Lecturer in Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia.

Email: asepdahly@upi.edu

Dasim Budimansyah², Lecturer of General Education and Character in Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia. Email: budimansyah@upi.edu

Encep Syarief Nurdin³, Lecturer of General Education and Character in Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia. Email: encep.sn@upi.edu

Ace Suryadi⁴, Lecturer of General Education and Character in Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia.

the teaching is tied to the concept of moral education and/or character education. (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). The results showed that most Lebanese children find civic education materials and lessons are delivered in a boring way. In addition, the essence given is irrelevant to the facts they live in real life and they do not find a common thread for the benefits of civic education, or why they have to learn it (Jabbour, 2014). Other research results stated that civic education remains optional, fragmented, and has poor resources since it is teacher-centered learning. It also does not have a strong theoretical foundation and is taught by untrained educators. Further, students feel too easy to get good grades. This condition also occurs in civic education in Indonesia (Rowe, 2000; Kerr et al., 2010).

Apart from the weaknesses above, there are still many challenges which should be faced by civic education in Indonesia considering that the majority of the population is Muslims. Therefore, according to Kokom Komalasari (2012) civic education is influenced by socio-cultural values. Meanwhile, in the view of Snouck Hurgronje (Gobée & Adriaanse, 1990) in his research conducted in Aceh, he explained that cultural values will be very close to the religion of the citizens, although not all are identical with it. Thus, it is interesting to discuss about what are the challenges of civic education for Muslims in Indonesia.

Method

This research applied qualitative approach with phenomenological method to obtain the data. The techniques used were interview and documentation. Interview is considered to be sufficiently representative to obtain data, given that the focus is the statements made by informants. In addition, documentation study in the form of research results and relevant articles was carried out to strengthen the statements of the informants. The subject of the study consisted of two informants namely, informants from the students (10 people) and from Nahdatul Ulama figures (2 people). The selection of informants was carried out based on motivation and evaluation results from the civic education courses, those whose score were smaller than the standard achievement are chosen. There were two informants from the figures of Nahdatul Ulama west Java in order to confirm the controversy statements in the social life as Indonesia is actually a multicultural country. The process of data analysis was carried out in accordance with the prevailing tradition in a qualitative approach.

Results and Discussion

Weak Morality of Muslim Youth in Indonesia

The emergence of crime and violations shown by individual Muslim youth in Indonesia illustrates their weak morality. This happens because of the lack of moral education in the family, school, and society. In fact, Islam has provided a clear concept of how Muslims should behave. There are three main types of values: (1) morality, showing the duties and responsibilities that have become the provisions of sharia and Islamic teachings; (2) adab, showing a series of human behavior as a good glorification; and (3) the example of the Prophet Muhammad is a picture of the quality of a good Muslim character (Halstead, 2007). The implication for Muslims is that faith and character behavior are an inseparable unit, where character behavior is a form of good faith and good faith will produce character behavior (Read, 1985). As Fazlur Rahman (1985) pointed out, character behavior in Islamic teachings is not expressed in the form of proposition, but is expressed in the form of commands and divine behavior. However, religion should not remain controversial for some adolescents because of the lack objective effectiveness or subjective value for teenagers. Based in that, other studies show that the relationship between religion and adolescent character should be investigated more deeply. Including examining the meaning and religious practices associated with a more contextual circumstances, such as religious practices in school, internal factors of individual and religious practices. Further, researching comparative religion with social phenomena particular, so as to internalize the character values that motivate internally for good character (Moulin-stozek et al., 2018).

Separation of Civic Education Curriculum and Religious Narration

In Act No. 20 year 2003 on the National Education System, and Act No. 12 year 2012 concerning Higher Education, it is clearly depicted that the implementation of civic and religious educations is separated. Meanwhile, to embody such "good citizens" civic and religious educations can be integrated in the context of narrative rather than material. This is to provide similarities in keys, symbols, doctrines, practices, speech, characters, and metaphors (Prothero, 2007). Noddings (1984) explained that to provide a religious perspective to students in public schools, it is not necessary to separate practice and rational theory. In line with that, civic education as a democratic education also requires an understanding of religion. Therefore, without a basic understanding of the faith,

literature, symbols and practices of various religious traditions in the world, there are a lot of history and culture which are difficult to be understood. In addition, understanding the basics of the principles and structures of religions that exist in the world is important for the implementation of democracy, especially in today's increasingly multicultural era (Moore, 2007). According to Prothero (2007), so that citizens are able to participate actively and fully in political, economic and social life, the teaching of religion must be taken into account. Thus, understanding of religion cannot be separated from its context and relationships with other aspects that arise in public schools (Noddings, 1984). Furthermore, Noddings explained that religious or metaphysical questions can arise anywhere including in civic education. In the culture context, religious commitment to be a strong commitment to bring the behavior and moral principles, so that religion should be a significant part in the development and main teenage characters (Moulin-Stozek, 2011).

Rejection on Nationalism and Patriotism Teachings

In an interview conducted with a student, he explained that he does not like the civic education since it emphasizes nationalism and patriotism. He argued that Islam is insulated and divided in the concept of nationalism, so that the religion is no longer a wholeness, Islam has already scattered. At the same time, he does not want to pay respect to the national flag because he thinks that it is similar to worship idols. Considering the results of the interview, a holistic understanding of nationalism and patriotism must be developed in accordance with the development of the era (Haynes, 2009). In addition, religious understanding in relation to civic education is also necessary (Nuridin & Dahliyana, 2017). Therefore, the development of a civics education curriculum must be able to provide the ability for students to identify and give meaning to things that are human and non-human (Olibie & Akudolu, 2013). Although the view is different with those the youth who are considered in conservative in the religious contexts, Nord & Haynes (1998) argued that there is no such conservative things between traditional and secular religions. This shows that the relationship between people in the country is formed by this network of trust that may be more connected.

Weak Tolerance

The emergence of the term "kafir" (infidel) to mention non-Muslims in Indonesia led to another story. A research conducted by one of the major organizations in Indonesia, Nahdatul Ulama concluded that that term hurts the feeling of

non-Muslims. However, the word "kafir" is stated in the Holy Qur'an. For this case, Moore (2007) argued that "the ignorance toward the religion itself and the religious traditions in the world promotes misunderstandings that damage people's respect to diversity". This occurs along with the lack of reading ability of Muslim youth towards world development. In the teaching of social relation (hablumminannas), prophet Muhammad exemplified a very noble act towards non-Muslims by providing good protection. Therefore, it is necessary to do several ways in developing civic education in Indonesia. Kunzman (2006) stated that to deal with religious ideas in general schools can be based on the following arguments: (1) mutual respect is a characteristic of a good society. (2) in the midst of ethical conflicts, mutual respect requires one to understand the ethical framework of others. (3) many of the ethical frameworks of well-informed people come from religion. (4) dialogue that is conducted ethically needs to develop an understanding of various religious perspectives. This was confirmed by David Carr (2007) who stated that if there are no such awards then there is actually no education. Furthermore Lovat (2016) proposed that teaching Islamic morality is an important task if moral education is not such urgent. It offers an opportunity to inform students about the historical development that is vital in the formation of moral thoughts and actions; to challenge and compensate the blind spot in Western thinking about Islam in general; to challenge the ease with which the radical Islamic view of Islam has captured the minds of Muslim and non-Muslim viewers; and, due to the controversial nature of the topic, to provide strong debate that goes along with moral pedagogy in general. In addition, moral motivation needs to be given as an effort to encourage students to take seriously all forms of life or thought that is called as morality, to appreciate those things for themselves, and to make them part of their life (Wilson & Cowell, 1987).

A More Liberal Conception of Human Rights in the Context of Sexuality

In Indonesia the changes in understanding human rights are very alarming recently. This is due to the change on the paradigm of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) which in some countries is authorized to get married. Indonesia does not accept that concept because it contradicts the principles of Pancasila, especially the first principle of the Almighty God. In Western view, such cultural behaviour in Indonesia should not be disturbed as expressed by D'Oyen (1996) that "Muslims should not attack homosexuals". Even, Islam & Rahman (2008) condemned those who look for homosexuals in order to persecute them (Khan et al., 2020;

Ashraah et al., 2013). However, in the research by Halstead (2005), argues that for Muslims to set a critical religious view on homosexual acts without accusations of homophobia, homosexuals criticize Islam's teachings on sexual behavior without being accused of Islamophobia. Furthermore, it was revealed that every effort to force Muslims to accept the West's attitude towards their sexuality behavior is an illustration of the form of cultural domination that is being emphasized by the West.

Kant explained, moral rules must be fully 'universalized' or be free from personal biases or 'special defenses'. Therefore, for those who are considered to be liberal, civil law needs to be formed from an impartial perspective (Rawls, 1999) which identifies an assessment from the 'original position', or from the eyes of the 'innocence'. From this point of view, culturally formed characters and character conditions which by end-time communitarians will not be identified with moral virtue, are considered to reflect local value that are not appropriate for the foundation of liberal civil law or education policy. Their key point is that the cohesion, maintenance and development of anything worthy of being called civil society depends on the inculcation of moral and social values as well as a commitment that is not exhausted by the duty to respect rights (Carr, 2006).

Gates (1990) has long explained that religion is always disputed when it comes to politics and morality. However, in the eyes of Islam, the moral truth that is passed down socially will not replace moral ideals that are able to maintain and awaken the spiritual self into a unified whole as a creature. Muslim Scholars fear the loss of what has always been associated with the Western approach of cultivating personal discovery and timeless sacred principles. The modern Muslim approach has presented the core of the conversation about how moral education is valued and understood differently which raises a question about the implementation of the Western-style moral education model (Hussain, 2007). One example in Asia, Malaysia for example, implements this type of education to anticipate these differences. Muslim students are taught Islamic education and non-Muslim students are taught moral education. In addition, students are also taught to strengthen the values of unity to encourage and foster good relations between students and each other. Second, the implemented subjects are developed to complement each other's school curriculum so that students become complete individuals, for the betterment of the nation and country. Through this illustration, it can be conveyed that the moral education developed by Malaysia has been shaped in an Islamic environment and infused with fundamental Islamic values. Malaysia with its jargon of 'the real asia' must be able to develop moral education beyond the indoctrinated values

(Balakrishnan, 2017). In addition, faith in the afterlife is also the key in preparing, providing, and carrying out morality with a strong basis and purpose (Maududi, 1966). This is the key to the morality of Muslims which is rooted in Islam, piety, and ihsan as a concept of faith in the context of Muslim citizens.

The Spread of Sexual Behavior among Muslim Youth

Sexual behavior among Muslim youth in Indonesia is alarming. According to the research's findings, 4 out of 6 Muslim women lost their virginity by their boyfriends, and 2 out of 6 Muslim women lost their virginity by their friends. This phenomena cannot be separated from the spread of the development of sexual behavior concepts such as one night stand and friends with benefits. Even in reality, there are Muslim boys and girls who live in one house for 3 years in a row without marriage. This situation illustrates that the virtue of character does stand on religious values (Kristjánsson, 2013). It is because recently the importance of religion as an indicator of religious action on individuals somehow goes to mitigate only functions purely in terms of social control (Regnerus, 2003). Although religion has a positive impact on the reduction of the factors associated with various sexual health problems, but in some groups, religions can not substantially berkontribusi against sex education (Moulin-Stozek et al., 2018). Religious teachings and religious practices, can be used as weak predictors of positive behavior than the importance of religion. This shows that the religious communities that have promoted various moral choice through religious education have limited impact because it has not been considered more thoroughly and completely the intrinsic moral motivation individual as a whole (Moulin-stozek et al., 2018). This reflects that the teaching of religion and religious practice is a predictor for sheer moral reasoning test score (Walker et al., 2017). Muslim citizens know about morals, but have poor moral actions or character.

Moulin-stozek et al., (2018) explained that religion does not protect people from risky behavior, and promotes positive lifestyle choices not only based on the involvement to religious communities, but also based on personal commitments and choices which can be taken by the teenagers. This finding shows that religion as social control, as expressed by the functionalist view, is unable to provide an explanation of the importance of humans as individuals who are the main factors in making moral choices. Regnerus (2003) explaining observations about risk behavior and religion in adolescents implicitly that religion acts as a form of social control that can stop teenagers from various acts that they might do. The results of these observations, according

to the functionalist tradition that religion has a social benefit to the community (Durkheim, 1995).

However, the relationship between religion and risk behavior was not explored through educational evaluation programs. Research in North America show that the teachings of religion and religious practices can protect youth from risky behaviors such as early sexual initiation, pornography, use of alcohol and drugs (Sinha et al., 2007). In Indonesia, sex education is still considered taboo so that the values of religion and culture was seen as a barrier to educate teens about sexuality scientifically as a form of prevention of exploitation (Khubchandani et al., 2014).

Thus, further investigating the above factors among adolescents is important to understand the impact of local moral norms on adolescent behavior that may be overlooked in the field of moral education (Dasen & Akkari, 2008). By investigating these factors, adolescents will find it easy to identify religious values so that they are able to commit to certain moral values, while religious practices are able to influence levels of well-being and self-confidence through certain rituals and moral codes (Mckay & Whitehouse, 2015).

Conclusion

Civic and moral educations as well as religion are ways to direct citizens to have good intentions, speech, and behavior in accordance with the expectations of the government in the framework of creating "good citizens". However, if civic education is separated from religious narratives, while Indonesian citizens already have the power to believe in their religious values, then education will never touch what they should feel, think, and do. Therefore, civic education must have the power of religious narratives so that it can be used as a moral education needed by Muslim citizens to face the development of the time. This is a principle of education contained in the teachings of Islam, "teach your children in accordance with their times, because they live in their day, not yours. Indeed they are created for their time, whereas you are created for your time". It gives direction that civic education must constantly gives direction to Muslim citizens who are in public schools in order to face the challenges of survival, the challenges in getting along with others, the challenges in studying, the challenges in using technology, and other challenges that will soon appear.

Asep Dahliyana ID <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2396-6601>

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