MAINSTREAMING PEACE IN QURANCIC TEACHING TEXTBOOKS FOR MUHAMMADIYAH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Purpose: The article reviews whether the contents of some Quranic understandings taught in Muhammadiyah schools endorse peace or not. By taking account of the increasingly violent acts among Indonesian students, making them more seriously engaged in peace provided by schools, ranging from textbooks to classroom practices, is unavoidable.

Methodology: This study is library research intended to uncover peaceful values contained in the Quranic teaching textbooks provided for those studying at Class X, XI and XII or Senior Secondary levels of Muhammadiyah Schools in Yogyakarta. These textbooks had officially been published by the Council of Basic and Middle Education of the Muhammadiyah Provincial Board headquartered in Yogyakarta. These teaching contents are basically unseparated parts of the subject called ISMUBA (Al-Islam, Muhammadiyah Studies and Arabic). By content analysis usage, this article categorizes and elaborates contents relevant to peace issues.

Result: This article especially focuses on the content analysis of the Quranic exegesis textbooks issued in Yogyakarta. The result shows that those textbooks generally provide contents endorsing peace, interpreted from the Quran. However, they seem to have a lack of both content clarity and some relevant sources. Furthermore, the boundaries of the content might also be affected by the learning targets shaped with relatively low-order thinking skills. Therefore, the textbooks remain engaging in providing peace elements even though some limitations are found.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of mainstreaming peace in Quranic teaching textbooks for Muhammadiyah schools is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: Peace, Quranic Interpretation, Muhammadiyah, Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Violent acts perpetrated by students in Indonesia have contributed to varieties of inter-group violence. Biro Pusat Statistik (BPS) found that mass conflicts consisted of dozens of communities including inter-group of students. The inter-groups of student fightings reached 3.5% (2005), 2.72% (2008) and 3.5% (2011) to all communal fightings based on numbers of villages (Kelly, 2000). Furthermore, Plan Indonesia found that 15.3% elementary school students, 18% junior high school students, and 16% senior high schools’ students in Bogor, West Java, testified that they became victims of violations surprisingly conducted by their own teachers 14.7% and schoolmates 35.3%. Such data reveal that schools encounter serious issues of violence among students and, unfortunately, some of the culprits are teachers themselves responsible for handling teaching processes.

Like those happening in Indonesia, students, as well as teachers’ violence, also emerged in other countries. Harber has shown such violations as corporal punishment, sexual violence, racial violence and examination pressure in South African schools. Davies identified gender inequality and men's aggressivism generally received by society. Further, as quoted by Harber from Human Rights Watch, 37.7% South African rape victims said that ‘the perpetrators (are) identified their school teacher or principal’. Due to the actors of violence can be teachers, managers, as well as students in both domestic and international shapes, a question relating to values of peace, can highly be considered. Whether or not they have learned peace and had the skill to deal with conflicts and potential violations is necessary to address them.

Previous studies have shown that violent behaviors among students optimistically are able to be reduced. Contrasting to Harber stating that schools are mostly violent as well as environmentally detrimental, Davies much more believe that violence and other extremism can be reoriented if schools educate critical thinking so as to highly consider and filter information those students may receive, comprehend and believe (Alistair Ross, 2000). Harber & Sakade, in a different way, signify peaceful values taught through West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project (WMQPEP) by which, in a team, students are able to ‘self-regulate’ their classroom issues and emphasize ‘positive incentives’ instead of ‘punishments’ (Allan & Francis, 2017). Next, Vaandering takes account of ‘restorative justice’ by which students could engaged in ‘healthy, caring communication and ‘nurturing relationships’, ‘dialogue for those affected by harm’. (and) responsible for causing harm and, moreover, ‘their supporting community members in order to expose and then address the needs of all’. These interesting findings generally seem to take an emphasis on how students' needs and situations can optimally be enhanced as well as accommodated so that everyone can either be appreciated by or respect others to support peaceful circumstances.
Besides transforming teaching approaches to be friendly to students, shaping peace in schools can be seen from the contents provided. Shuayb reviewed the 1997 post-war Lebanese civics textbooks which were generally doctrinaire but fewer instances. Compared with Shuayb’s work, Arifin’s substantially shown that Islamic teaching would be enriched as well as emotionally useful if combined with Living Values Education (LVE) approach, away and content which leads students to realize, dig and develop theirs on positive potentialities (Lynn Davies, 2008). Those perspectives indicate that teaching content can be creatively designed to support comprehension.

Khan and Köyli stated that the Quran, as well as Prophet Muhammad’s paths, engagingly lead to peace, not violence, due to the meaning of Islam itself, away towards total submission to the only God and the peaceful way of life. Both are in line with the decision of wars only declared as an emergency exit when Muslims are attacked in advance and the war is finally shaped as self-defense. Thus, Khan said that the spirit of peace is the essence of Islam. Meanwhile, Amin found that Muslims’ understandings of the Quran are essential in order to respond well to various issues including their responsibilities, possible tensions, and conflicts with others. Referring to Amin, one of the verses often hijacked is that in the chapter of Al-Anfal verse 60 especially relating to the term ‘turhibuna’ (Arabic) lexically meaning ‘to vibrate’ or ‘to tremble’ extremely then translated to be ‘to strike terror’ in the forms of threatening and destroying public facilities under the banner of religion. As Amin interpreted, this particular verse is actually a universal call for Muslims to have intellectual, educational, economic and military influences, instead of terrorizing the public. Such a religious misinterpretation accordingly results in misusing religion as a means of merely getting political or economic domination. According to Purwadidada, religious education can potentially shape students’ intolerant points of view if the way in understanding their religion is misguided (Selomo, & Govender, 2016). Therefore, peace endorsement as religious orientation is considered valuable.

This article brings all together and lies upon the work of Khan, Köyli, and Amin arguing that Islam totally stands for a peaceful weltanschauung. Peace is an Islamic principle that should be struggled by Muslims for coming into existence in diverse public. This article is part of a series of research on peace within the Islamic teaching in Muhammadiyah schools. The previous work conducted by Nurwanto, Azhar, Marsudi & Ismail found that the teaching of Islamic Ethics (Akhlak) substantially provides clear foundations of peace. It has shaped positive and negative peace. However, its content needs deeply various examples, explanations and clear references (Martins, et al. 2018). In short, this article would continue this study by especially reviewing some textbooks of the Quranic teaching.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is library research intended to uncover peaceful values contained in the Quranic teaching textbooks provided for those studying at Class X, XI and XII or Senior Secondary levels of Muhammadiyah Schools in Yogyakarta. These textbooks had officially been published by the Council of Basic and Middle Education of the Muhammadiyah Provincial Board headquartered in Yogyakarta. These teaching contents are basically unseparated parts of the subject called ISMUBA (Al-Islam, Muhammadiyah Studies and Arabic). By content analysis usage, this article categorizes and elaborates contents relevant to peace issues.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The word ‘peace’ has at the beginning been defined as a situation where war does not exist anywhere. However, according to de Rivera and Fell, this term should comprehensively be studied. Both scholars state that it basically contains two related meanings. First, it refers to the negative peace which is initially defined as the circumstances without any war, rape, homicide as well as violence. Second, it shows the positive peace which highlights social processes that fit equal right enlargement, longer life expectancy, and other justice indicators. Furthermore, de Rivera quoting Galtung also stated that wars and murders can be altogether categorized as ‘direct violence’ while the second one called ‘indirect violence’ happens if, for instance, inequality, as well as injustice, occurs. In this case, it can be claimed that structural poverty includes this indirect violence. That is why Muhammad Yunus deserved a Noble Peace Prize due to his dedication to reducing the number of the Bangladeshi deprived community through his Grameen Bank service. This term ‘peace’, accordingly, consists of values and acts ranging from the absence of violations until the presence of sustainably social bettterment (Parvizian, et al. 2015).

To sustain the public good, tolerance as well as cooperation, it is likely that peace education (PE) remains central to be transformed in schools and communities. Bar-Tal elaborates that PE elements vary depending upon particular countries. According to Bar-Tal, Australia’s PE takes an emphasis on solving issues of ethnocentrism, extreme loyalty to a certain group and on promoting cultural diversity, nuclear disarmament, and conflict resolution. Meanwhile, America’s PE prioritizes to decrease group prejudice, violence, and environmental concern. However, there has not so far been clear regarding what Indonesia’s PE focus is. Because of this uncertainty, the need to shape designs of what Indonesia’s PE looks like becomes urgently decisive. Even though this article is aimed not to develop a specific model of endorsing peace in schools, it seems to be a preliminary study in how topical issues of peace have been constructed in teaching textbooks (Shirvani, et al. 2015).

Further, Bar-Tal conceptually argues that PE is endeavored to heal many social illnesses spanning from injustice, intolerance, violence to wars in order to build justice, equality, tolerance, human rights, quality environment, peace as well as other positive public principles. This work is in line with that of de Rivera and Fell classifying that PE can imply to
build a moment without any conflict as well as violence all called the negative peace, and to sustain and enhance just development, environmental sustainability, and cooperation growth all known as the positive peace encompassing both the individual and the public. By the use of Quranic terms, PE might consist of amar maruf (Arabic) meaning any instruction and value for the good fitting the positive peace and, on the other, of nahi munkar (Arabic) meaning any prohibition for the bad with regard to the negative one. Therefore, relating to the latter, according to Bajaj, PE should guide participants to have critical understandings and consciousness of social injustice. Without any criticism of this unjust reality, sustainable peace might be difficult to maintain. Given this notion, the meeting point between the normative aspect of Islam and the discourse of PE can be shaped, revealing that this religious principle also contains universal values that can be objectively accepted and endorsed to public life, irrespective of different races, religions, and communities.

In a systematic way, de Rivera introduces the theory of peace culture consisting of the three elements of peace culture (PC) namely social norms; state structure and political stability; and environment. The first component consists of PE, women respecting, social cohesion and tolerance. The next one frames democratic participation, open communication, human rights and the inclusion of all societal groups. The last shapes international security and sustainable development. This framework is potentially beneficial not only for schooling processes and non-formal education but also for the entire public sectors including a political milieu. However, in the context of a specific understanding of this study, these peace elements can be juxtaposed as being an area of the teaching materials as far as they are relevant to peace culturing. In this respect, analyzing peace in these Quranic exegesis textbooks is also back to those components as shown in the work of Rivera on peace culture.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The textbooks being explored are those informing Quranic views taught for Muhammadiyah schools in Yogyakarta especially Class 10, 11 and 12. By making use of the work of Kelly, Ross, and Ornstein and Hunkins, the writing structure of these textbooks is likely to follow the type of the objective-driven curriculum, implying that the place of a product, aim, objective and learning indicator orients other aspects such as learning experiences including contents. All of these textbooks are based on the framework of the school-based curriculum as issued since 2006 by the government, then followed by additional material standards from Muhammadiyah schools (Kondubaeva, et al. 2018).

In reference to the above classes’ competency standards, the subjects of Quranic teaching is expected to make students capable of showing their understanding of the Quranic verses linked to self-control (mujahadah an-nafs), positive thinking (husnuzan) and togetherness (akhuwwah), humans’ roles as vicegerents on the earth (khilafiah), democracy (musyawarah), and science and technology development, and able to memorize as well as understand contents of some relevant verses and Prophet Mohammed’s footsteps (Hadis). According to Krathwohl & Anderson, such objective verbs as ‘to memorize’ and ‘to understand’ are primarily the category of the low-order thinking skills. The former indicates an ability to recall what they read, heard and memorized while the latter shows an ability to absorb certain meaning from learning materials. Both of the cognitive ability levels are absolutely different from those higher such as ‘to apply’, ‘to analyze’, ‘to evaluate’ and ‘to create’. Put simply, the learning targets set up in these levels are particularly in line with the capacity of knowledge and understanding of Quranic basic concepts concerning peace (Osman, et al. 2018).

Class 10
Out of the thirteen chapters, only is there one chapter which includes peace elements i.e. positive thinking (husnuzan) and togetherness (akhuwwah). This part elucidates Q.S. Al-Anfal verse 72 teaching a social attitude to give supports and homes to others called ‘muhajirun’ or migrants. It accentuates the practice of togetherness required to construct a better society. Although shortly explained, it is a key to reveal that the inter-religious and social bound had been a pivotal pillar of the plural society.

It may be commensurate to further elaborate that Meccan people migrating to Medina were those leaving their assets such as homes, lands and established economic accesses when they stayed in Mecca. Once arriving in Medina, they became figures having nothing. In that situation, those Medinan people acted as safer for them. These Madinans called ‘Anshar’ treated those coming from Mecca to be like their blood relatives. Along with their prophet, eventually, they built the city of plural Medina city over a social contract known as the Medina Tractate.

Besides, this chapter also details verse 12 of the chapter of Al-Hujurat teaching that in diverse nations, tribes, and sexes, people are mandated to recognize each other. This verse contains a ban on conducting backbiting and negative thinking of others. These two behaviors are essentially contradictory to peace since if those are done, clashes and disharmony might happen. Backbiting (ghibah), as mentioned in this chapter, consists of fake stories (jfr) and untrue talks (buhtan) which can contribute to social disharmony.

Another verse elaborated in the textbook is a tenth of the chapter of Al-Hujurat, teaching that believers are so close as brothers that living peacefully for them would be a way out from any quarrel. However, there is no more explanation of the brotherhood values and how to deal with the possible emerging conflict. As textually mentioned in this chapter are only some keywords. It might be better to elaborate them with contextual understandings. It is fundamental to shape by taking account of the fact of Moslem communities’ internal conflicts that seem to partly happen because of religious, political or
economic clashes. It may urgent to state that the real brotherhood in the middle of some students’ brutality and mass violence is considerably needed. Unfortunately, such discussion is not elaborated further.

**Class 11**

Out of 14 chapters in this class, there are at least three chapters relating to peace culturing such as chapters 7 and 8 on trustworthiness, chapter 11 on tolerance and prohibition of being radical. First, the book illustrates that one of the trustworthy attitudes is stated in the chapter of An-Nisa verse 58 guiding people to enforce law justly. Furthermore, it is explained that, in Islam, neither different treatments nor judgments are before law to any people due to particular social-economic status and gender; and inequality before the public rule can lead to social instability. This perspective is commensurate with de Rivera’s work on gender justice as an element of peace. The chapter also clearly illustrates one of the fair statements of Prophet Mohammed, narrated by Muslim, when declaring that he would cut his beloved daughter’s hands, Fatima, if she steals.

The next significant lesson is environmental destruction prohibition briefly taken from the chapter of Al-A’raf verse 56. As long it is concerned, this ban has been seen as another effort to support sustainable development, a relatively new perspective in peace education. This part states that Allah prohibited his slaves to carry out damages on the earth after He has made it orderly and well-managed including ecosystem within. In addition, in the chapter of Ar-Rum verses 41-42, the only one God proves that many detrimental impacts on the universe are caused by irresponsible humans’ intervention. As commonly proved, extremely changing weather is likely to be caused by either policy decisions or public behaviors that are environmentally unfriendly. By quoting National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s findings, the textbook states several variables contributive to global warmings such as deforestation, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, industrial activities and fossil fuels used for cars.

Other peace-related ways are tolerance and radicalism banning. The textbook also mentions the chapter of Yunus verses 40-41 which prohibits damaging behaviors. However, its explanation is less elaborated. Further, the chapter of Al-Kafirun is also delivered, teaching about prohibition in enforcing someone to embrace particular religion. In this part, we would argue that religious diversity as God’s certain decision (summatullah) needs to be elaborated more with facts and religious doctrines at the same time. It is essential by, for instance, taking the chapter of Al-Maidah verses 48 and that of Yunus verse 99, basically inform that because religious diversity is God will so that it is certain that people could not be imposed to choose particular belief. Thus, in another verse, Allah states that there is no imposition in religion (the chapter of Al-Baqarah verse 256).

Given the above verses, it is clear that Islamic ideas as discussed in the textbook are doctrinally in line with peace as believed by Khan, Köylü, Amin and Nurwanto et. al. (2015). Basically, Islamic universality recognizes social and religious plurality and highly respect it. It means that if this pillar is also promoted and practiced by other religious standpoint, we would also argue that world peace can be lifted. It is because there would be no peace without any justice and public protests might rise if there is certain social group who feels not accommodated in the context of public life.

The textbooks then explain prohibition of being extreme in religious or social orientations especially based on the chapter of An-Nisa verses 92-93, teaching that murder is forbidden by Islamic law. This passage further argues that, by making meaning from the chapter of An-Nisa verses 40-41, Islam as a doctrine really forbids to undermine humans’ existence because it is dehumanization. However, the textbook does not clearly define the term ‘radicalism’ itself. Lexically speaking, this term, in a negative sense, refers to a movement of changing situations drastically followed by certain violent acts. The violation can basically be an action aiming to destroy property or hurt people in many ways. This textbook does not break down the concept into real examples such as terrorism which is totally contradictory to Islamic doctrines.

Furthermore, this textbook needs to deepen more about tolerance education coming from the Quran or Prophet Mohammed’s daily behaviors. As historically shown, when Mohammed in Medina, he used to organize this heterogeneous city. He and his first companion step was establishing an agreement among Jews, Ansars, and Muhajirin. These last two groups were Moslems. The most significant principle was that of religious freedom for both Jews and Moslems to practice their own beliefs without any social pressure. Unfortunately, some Jews went out of Medina due to their law violations. The next phase was Mohammed and his companions guaranteed religious autonomy of Najran Christians over their souls, property, and belief, for instance, by forbidding to destroy churches, take a tax in unjust ways and religiously enforce a female Christian who got married a Moslem. On the other hand, the Moslem community used to help the Christians in building their churches. Referring to the Quran mentioned in the Chapter of Al-Hajj verse 40, normative Islam encourages every single people to treat religious places positively and respect other religious communities. Therefore, all of those socially tolerant practices can be an Islamic basis written and educated for students.

**Textbook of Class 12**

This class provides 15 chapters which include some aspects relevant to peace issues, that are critical thinking and democratic attitudes (chapter 1) and equality, advice-giving and good conduct (chapter 8). It is urgent to state earlier that the chapter does not give clear and practical ways of critical thinking delivered by the Quran. It seems urgent for its writer to take other resources describing the ways of how critical thinking is learned and operated because Davies argued, it is considered pivotal in culturing open-mindedness as one of the peace elements.
Relating to the teaching of democracy, the textbook puts an emphasis on its similarity to *syurah/musyawarah* as delivered in the chapter of Ali Imron verse 159 and, in the process of democracy or social negotiation, human traits such as softness and forgiveness should be applied. As far as it is concerned, the terms ‘democracy’ and ‘syura’ might be claimed to have similarities as well as differences depending upon schools of thought. There are some Moslem modernists argue that, in Islamic discourses, Islam as a religion and democracy as a social system are both interplayed due to *musyawarah* (deliberation) as the key for solving different ideas and even disputes. Such recently prominent scholars as Khaled Abou el-Fadl, Ziauddin Sardar, Rachid Ghannoushi, Hasan Turabi, Khurshid Ahmad, Fathi Osman, and Yusuf Qardawi have tried to investigate and find a meeting point between Moslem and Western traditions as a way to establish more dialogues and peace.

Meanwhile, the idea of equality seems little to elaborate. In the text, none of the relevant verses are shown and discussed. Some verses quoted such as those in the chapters of Ali Imron verse 64, Lukman verse 13 and Al-Baqarah verse 83 do not actually deliver the issue of equality. Besides, clear examples such as gender equality in public life as a peaceful value are far from the textual explorations. Thus, this content inaccuracy should be corrected.

CONCLUSION

Peace notions have been popularized to encounter and anticipate extremely violent ways and, especially for religious adherents, improper understandings of their Holy Books. Through the Quran, Islam itself principally teaches and endorses peace as the way and the target of any circumstance where social diversity is a reality by nature. As shown by the textbooks being analyzed here, there are many basic tenets showing that peace is one of the essential values in the Quran, the last guidance revealed to his Prophet. Topics such as positive thinking, togetherness, tolerance, anti-radicalism, critical thinking and democracy explained in the textbooks are claimed to be relevant to the Quran and compatible with peace education. This standpoint, of course, becomes valuable investment of Islamic religious education related to peaceful messages.

Although the contents generally shape specific attitudes related to peace, the further explanation is clearly lack of clarity in accordance with definition and daily examples in educating peace practically. In addition, as the textbooks relating to the Quranic interpretation, they also seem lack the convincing learning resources, for instance, coming from respected Moslem scholars in the Quranic studies. The second pitfall is that, because of the low-level thinking skills as performance targets, the content discussion is only limited in introductory elements of the Islamic education curriculum. As criticized earlier, the basic information along with clear examples is not shaped and provided well. In order to improve the contents of the textbook, some various ways such as conceptual clarity and accuracy fundamentally needed for future publication.

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REFERENCES AND NOTES