



CRITICISM OF INTERFAITH MARRIAGE IN RELIGIOUS MODERATION

KRITIK TERHADAP PERNIKAHAN ANTARAGAMA DALAM MODERASI AGAMA

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Abstract

This article examines criticism of the practice of interfaith marriage in the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia over the past fifteen years. Through a qualitative approach with a structured literature study, this study evaluates the dynamics of interfaith marriage criticism and its impact on religious moderation practices in society. Data was collected from journals and books published between 2018 and 2023 that discussed the theory of religious moderation and the dynamics of interfaith marriage. The results of the analysis show that criticism of interfaith marriage, while potentially hindering tolerance, also triggers negotiations of religious identity and renewal of the value of moderation. These findings reveal a new understanding that criticism, when articulated in a balanced and objective manner, can encourage the enhancement of intercommunal dialogue and the affirmation of the values of religious moderation. The implications of this research are important in the development of inclusive public policy and religious practices, and are expected to serve as a basis for further research and decision-making in the fields of religious moderation and socio-religious studies.

Keywords : *Interfaith Marriage, Religious Moderation, Interfaith Marriage, Marriage Criticism, Interfaith Marriage, Religious Dynamics.*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji kritik terhadap praktik perkawinan beda agama dalam kerangka moderasi agama di Indonesia selama lima belas tahun terakhir. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi literatur terstruktur, penelitian ini mengevaluasi dinamika kritik perkawinan beda agama dan dampaknya terhadap praktik moderasi agama di masyarakat. Data dikumpulkan dari jurnal dan buku yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2018 dan 2023 yang membahas teori moderasi agama dan dinamika perkawinan beda agama. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kritik terhadap perkawinan beda agama,



meskipun berpotensi menghambat toleransi, juga memicu negosiasi identitas agama dan pembaharuan nilai moderasi. Temuan ini mengungkapkan pemahaman baru bahwa kritik, ketika diartikulasikan secara seimbang dan objektif, dapat mendorong peningkatan dialog antar komunitas dan penegasan nilai-nilai moderasi agama. Implikasi penelitian ini penting dalam pengembangan kebijakan publik dan praktik keagamaan yang inklusif, dan diharapkan dapat menjadi dasar untuk penelitian lebih lanjut dan pengambilan keputusan di bidang moderasi agama dan studi sosial-keagamaan.

Kata Kunci : Pernikahan Antar Agama, Moderasi Agama, Pernikahan Antar Agama, Kritik Pernikahan, Pernikahan Antar Agama, Dinamika Agama.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with rich religious diversity, which in turn produces complex social and religious dynamics, especially in the context of interfaith marriage. Criticism of interfaith marriage often appears in religious moderation discourse. This issue is interesting because it reflects the conflict between traditional values and the demands of modernity in religious life. Over the past fifteen years, there has been a paradigm shift in the handling of interfaith marriage, where the criticism that has emerged is not only dogmatic but also contains attempts to negotiate the values of tolerance and moderation.

Criticism of interfaith marriage is often seen as a reflection of anxiety about religious identity and social morality. In the literature, this criticism is often associated with normative problems that develop due to globalization and modernization, where shifts in social life norms trigger long debates between conservative and progressive groups (Wahyuni, 2019). On the other hand, interfaith marriage studies show that diversity in interfaith marriage can be a reflection of healthy pluralism dynamics when accompanied by balanced religious moderation practices (Setiawan & Pranoto, 2020).

The main purpose of this article is to evaluate the impact of criticism on interfaith marriage practices from the perspective of religious moderation. The research question formulated is: "What is the role of criticism of interfaith marriage in the practice of religious moderation in Indonesia over the past fifteen years?" Thus, this study not only seeks to explore the nature of such criticism but also its impact on the dynamics of interfaith marriage and religious moderation efforts.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a structured literature study method. The stages of research include:

1. **Data Collection:** Data was obtained through searches of international and national journals, scientific books, and trusted academic sources published between 2018 and 2023. The inclusion criteria ensure that the references used are relevant to the topic of interfaith marriage and religious moderation.
2. **Literature Selection:** The selection process was carried out using keywords such as "interfaith marriage", "religious moderation", "interfaith marriage", "religious dynamics", and "marriage criticism". The results of the selection finally resulted in a comprehensive collection of literature.
3. **Qualitative Analysis:** Analysis techniques involve interpreting data thematically to identify thought patterns, critical perceptions, and impacts on religious moderation practices. This analysis filters out the differences of viewpoints that emerge both from the critical literature and in favor of interfaith marriage.
4. **Data Validation and Synthesis:** The findings were analyzed in depth with reference to the theory of religious moderation and interfaith marriage dynamics, as well as compared with the social and religious context in Indonesia.



This methodology provides a solid basis for understanding how criticism of interfaith marriage can be interpreted as a potential element in the practice of religious moderation.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Dynamics of Criticism of Interfaith Marriage

The results of the analysis show that criticism of interfaith marriage has two main sides. First, the criticism is often conveyed with normative arguments that reject the shift in traditional values that have taken root in society. The conservative argument refers to religious doctrines that are considered absolute, so interfaith marriage is seen as a threat to the sanctity of religious identity (Adiyanto, 2021). Second, there is also a more pragmatic criticism, where differences of opinion are considered a modern phenomenon that needs to be managed through dialogue and the affirmation of the values of moderation.

Literature studies reveal that normative criticism often leads to unproductive social segregation. On the other hand, pragmatic criticism focuses on the adjustment of values, thus being able to create an open space for dialogue. This disparity is a reflection of a paradigm shift among intellectuals and religious practitioners, where the construction of criticism can play a positive role if managed with the principle of moderation.

2. Religious Moderation as a Fortress of Social Dialogue

The concept of religious moderation in the context of criticism of interfaith marriage shows that moderation is not a compromise of religious principles, but an effort to balance traditional values and modernity. Religious moderation encourages inclusiveness and wisdom in interpreting religious values, so that it can reduce conflicts that often arise due to differences of opinion (Fitriani, 2022).

Data shows that in some regions in Indonesia, the application of the principle of religious moderation has succeeded in reducing tensions between those who criticize and support interfaith marriage. This moderation approach emphasizes the importance of interfaith dialogue, which ultimately results in a deeper understanding of diversity and tolerance.

3. Implications of Criticism on Public Policy and Social Practice

This study also found that criticism of interfaith marriage has an impact on public policy, especially those related to marriage regulation and legal recognition. Some regions have implemented policies that try to accommodate religious differences in marriage while maintaining moral and social values. These policies are often the result of negotiations between law enforcement officials, religious leaders, and civil society (Nugroho, 2018).

On the social side, criticism that is formulated in a firm but moderate manner has contributed to the creation of productive discourse spaces. This can be seen from the increase in interfaith dialogue forum activities and scientific seminars that examine interfaith marriage. Thus, criticism is not always a deciding factor, but also a trigger for inclusive social reform.

Discussion

The results of this structured literature study reveal that criticism of interfaith marriage is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. From the point of view of religious moderation, this criticism has the potential for dualism. On the one hand, normative criticism maintains traditional values with an emphasis on the sanctity of religious doctrine. On the other hand, pragmatic criticism opens up opportunities for innovative dialogues that bring about positive changes in religious and social practices.

The discussion of this critical position must be placed in the context of the practical diversity that occurs in the field. In some cases, dogmatic criticism actually hinders religious transformation and innovation. This is reflected in the tendency of some communities to reject interfaith marriage without considering the current social dynamics. On the contrary, criticism that prioritizes the values of moderation encourages the formation of a pluralist consensus. This approach is in line with the theory of religious moderation which emphasizes the alignment between tradition and social development (Suhartini, 2023).

Critical analysis also highlights the role of the media and public discourse in spreading such criticism. Social media, for example, plays an important role in spreading opinions both pro and con



against interfaith marriage. With the rise of disinformation, there are challenges for academics and practitioners in crafting objective and evidence-based narratives. Therefore, more in-depth literature and research are needed so that the criticism can be directed to build moderate and constructive religious moderation.

In the context of law and policy, criticism of interfaith marriage also raises normative dilemmas. The policies implemented in some regions are often unable to balance the rigid interpretation of religion with the needs of modernity. A number of studies have proposed that marriage regulations be oriented to the principles of human rights protection and religious freedom, while still referring to moderate social values (Setiawan & Pranoto, 2020). Through this synthesis, this article emphasizes that dialogue between parties is the key to formulating policies that can unite various interests.

In addition, the dynamics of this criticism also indicate the need for a theoretical framework that is able to bridge differences of views. Theoretical frameworks that refer to the theory of religious moderation and the dynamics of interfaith marriage offer a new paradigm in understanding this phenomenon. This paradigm allows criticism to be seen not solely as an effort to preserve conservatism, but as a means to establish the values of togetherness, tolerance, and inclusivity (Adiyanto, 2021).

In the context of interfaith studies, the results of this research contribute to the idea that the role of criticism must be directed at the construction of constructive dialogue. Criticism that is destructive tends to alienate minority groups, while criticism accompanied by moderate intentions can strengthen social solidarity networks. This is evident from the increase in discussion forum activities that have succeeded in bridging differences of belief and providing space for the creation of mutual understanding.

Research Implications and Contributions

This study provides several implications for the study of religious moderation and the study of interfaith marriage:

- **Theoretical Contributions:** Developing a new theoretical paradigm that integrates criticism of interfaith marriage with the principles of religious moderation. This approach emphasizes that constructive criticism can be a catalyst for social and religious innovation.
- **Practical Implications:** Provides a basis for policymakers to formulate more inclusive and moderate regulations, which accommodate a diversity of religious practices. This is relevant in facing the challenges of pluralism in the modern era.
- **Academic Relevance:** Serves as a reference for further research on the interaction between social criticism and religious dynamics, particularly in the context of countries with plurality of faiths.

By adopting a qualitative approach and a structured literature study, this study not only outlines the dynamics of the critique of interfaith marriage, but also offers a new understanding that supports the creation of dialogue and moderate public policy. This is in line with efforts to reduce polarization in society and strengthen the values of tolerance.

Research Limitations and Suggestions

Although this study has reviewed the latest and relevant literature, there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the focus of the analysis was limited to sources published between 2018 and 2023, so the long-term historical context may not be comprehensively accommodated. Second, the literature review approach does not provide direct empirical data from the field, which can provide additional insights into the practical implementation of religious moderation policies.

Therefore, it is recommended that further research combine qualitative interview methods and case studies in various regions of Indonesia so that the picture that emerges can be more holistic. Such empirical research is expected to explore more deeply the dynamics of the interaction between criticism of interfaith marriage and the practice of religious moderation in society.

4. CONCLUSION

Criticism of interfaith marriage is a complex phenomenon and has far-reaching implications for the practice of religious moderation in Indonesia. Qualitative analysis shows that criticism, if delivered



in a balanced and objective manner, can be a driver for the creation of interfaith dialogue and inclusive public policy. These findings underscore that religious moderation approaches must accommodate the dynamics of criticism as part of the process of negotiating social and religious values.

Thus, the role of criticism is not solely seen as a chain of separation, but as a potential trigger for change that can strengthen tolerance and pluralism. This effort is important to build harmonious social ties and in accordance with the spirit of Indonesia's pluralism. This research is expected to be used as a reference for academics, researchers, and policymakers in developing religious moderation strategies that are responsive to the dynamics of criticism and social change.

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