

The Existence and Relevance of Ahmadiyya Theology in Indonesia in the Perspective of Islamic Religious, Social, Political, and Education

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is a country with a high level of religious diversity, making pluralism an inseparable social reality in societal life. Although Pancasila guarantees freedom of religion, differences in belief still have the potential to generate conflict, particularly when related to divergent theological interpretations within Islam. One group that frequently provokes debate is Ahmadiyya, whose presence has generated controversy in religious, social, political, and Islamic educational spheres. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a library research method. Data were collected from scholarly books, journal articles, official government documents, religious fatwas, and relevant prior studies, and were analyzed through content analysis within a social constructionist paradigm. The study discusses the history of Ahmadiyya's arrival and development in Indonesia, the characteristics of Ahmadiyya theology and its relevance in religious, social, and political contexts, as well as Islamic education perspectives on Ahmadiyya theology. The findings indicate that Ahmadiyya entered Indonesia in the early twentieth century and expanded through missionary networks, yet faced widespread rejection due to theological differences, particularly regarding the concept of prophethood. In the socio-political context, Ahmadiyya is positioned as a minority group vulnerable to discrimination, while in Islamic education it is understood as an object of critical study aimed at strengthening creed while fostering moderation and tolerance. The conclusion emphasizes that although Ahmadiyya theology is rejected theologically, it remains relevant as a socio-religious phenomenon that should be understood critically and with civility.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that has abundant diversity, including in terms of beliefs. The religions that have been recognized by Indonesia consist of Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism where Islam is the majority religion in the country. Indonesia as a country with a very high religious diversity puts pluralism in a meaningful position. The foundation of Pancasila, especially the first precept, emphasizes the importance of recognizing the existence of various religions. However, the existence of pluralism does not necessarily eliminate potential conflicts due to differences in beliefs. In this context, pluralism functions as an important means to foster tolerance, strengthen dialogue, and build mutual understanding for the sake of creating harmony in society (Nendissa, 2025).

Islam is one of the largest monotheistic religions that has a wide spread around the world with more than one billion adherents. This religion has a great influence on the history, civilization,

and social and cultural development of mankind. Etymologically, the term Islam comes from the word *aslama yuslimu islaaman* which means submitting, obeying, and accepting the teachings of Allah. The root of his words, *salima*, means salvation and prosperity, so that Islam can be understood as a religion that teaches submission to the will of Allah for the sake of achieving salvation and welfare (Prasetyo, 2023). Islam in Indonesia is divided into several schools that of course have different procedures for conveying their beliefs to Allah SWT. So that various views are given by the community about the streams that live in the community. These sects are Sunni, Shia and several other groups such as Ahmadiyya. These differences give rise to new problems that need to be solved by the community and the government to minimize the division of the nation through differences of views related to religion or belief. One of the schools that has caused debate in Indonesia is Ahmadiyya. The existence of Ahmadiyya often gives rise to controversy, both in the religious, social, and political spheres. Some people consider Ahmadiyya teachings to deviate from the mainstream of Islam, while on the other hand, this group asserts its right to practice its beliefs in accordance with the constitutionally guaranteed principle of religious freedom. This condition makes Ahmadiyya a unique and problematic religious phenomenon in the context of pluralism in Indonesia.

From a social perspective, polemics about Ahmadiyya often cause friction between citizens to lead to horizontal conflicts. From the political side, the Ahmadiyya issue is also often associated with state policies related to the recognition, protection, and supervision of religious minority groups. Meanwhile, in the realm of Islamic education, the existence of Ahmadiyya theology presents its own challenges in an effort to build a moderate, inclusive, and in line with the values of Pancasila. Thus, the discussion of the existence and relevance of Ahmadiyya theology in Indonesia is important to be analyzed not only in the theological aspect, but also in relation to Islamic social, political, and educational life. To describe the historical flow of the entry and development of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. To analyze Ahmadiyya theology in Indonesia and its relevance in the religious, social, and political spheres. To examine Ahmadiyya theology from the perspective of Islamic education in Indonesia, especially in relation to the values of moderation, tolerance, and diversity.

This article is titled "*The Existence and Relevance of Ahmadiyya Theology in Indonesia in the Perspective of Islamic Religious, Social, Political, and Educational.*" Based on the focus of the study, the formulation of the problems in this study is: (1) how the historical flow of Ahmadiyya came and developed in Indonesia; (2) what are the characteristics of Ahmadiyya theology in Indonesia and its relevance in the religious, social, and political spheres; and (3) how Ahmadiyya theology is viewed in the perspective of Islamic education in Indonesia.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, because the aim is to provide a deep and systematic understanding of the existence and relevance of Ahmadiyya theology in Indonesia by using narrative descriptions. This approach was chosen to comprehensively describe the Ahmadiyya religious phenomenon in the context of pluralism, as well as to elaborate its relationship to the religious, social, political, and educational aspects of Islam based on available textual data.

The paradigm used in this study is the social construction paradigm, which is an approach that views social and religious reality as the result of the construction of meaning formed through social, historical, and discourse interactions that develop in society. Through this paradigm, Ahmadiyya theology is understood not only as a normative doctrine, but also as a social reality that is variously interpreted by community groups, religious institutions, and the state. The type of research used is *library research*. This research does not involve the collection of field data, but focuses on searching, studying, and analyzing written sources that are relevant to the object of study. The data sources in

this study consist of scientific books, journal articles, results of previous research, official government documents, fatwas of religious institutions, and other sources that are directly related to the history, theology, and socio-political dynamics of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia.

Research data is divided into two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is in the form of scholarly works and main documents that directly address Ahmadiyya, both from a theological and socio-political perspective. Meanwhile, secondary data includes supporting literature such as textbooks, research reports, and other references that reinforce the analysis and provide additional context to the discussion. The data collection technique is carried out through several stages, namely: (1) Inventory of library sources, by identifying and collecting literature relevant to the research theme. (2) Data classification, which is to group sources based on the focus of the study, such as aspects of history, theology, socio-politics, and Islamic education. (3) Content analysis, which is carried out by critically reading, interpreting, and comparing various views contained in library sources to obtain a complete and objective understanding. Data analysis was carried out in a descriptive-analytical manner by interpreting the literature data critically and contextually, so as to obtain a comprehensive picture of the position and relevance of Ahmadiyya theology in Islamic religious, social, political, and educational life in Indonesia.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. History of the Arrival of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia

The history of Islam shows the emergence of various schools or sects that developed due to differences of views, thus giving birth to a variety of religious ideas. These differences often intersect in the practice of worship, jurisprudence, history, and understanding of the faith. Apart from its positive and negative sides, the dynamics of Islamic thought since its inception have developed rapidly and crystallized into certain sects, streams, or organizations of Islamic society. Ahmadiyya was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the late 19th century during the Muslim regression of India in 1889. This movement spread to almost all over the world, including Indonesia. Its spread in Indonesia is rooted into two Ahmadiyya sects, namely Ahmadiyya Qadian and Ahmadiyya Lahore. The difference between the two lies in the perception of both sides in looking at Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Qadian recognized him as the Prophet while the Ahmadiyya of Lahore recognized him as a reformer/mujaddid. Despite their differences in religious basis, they share the same goal of reforming Islamic sharia (Wismala, 2024).

Ahmadiyya was first known in Indonesia through three young men from Sumatra Westerners who studied in India in 1922 were Abu Bakar, Ahmad Nuruddin, and Zaini Dahlan. The sect that developed in Indonesia was the Ahmadiyya Qadian, which was brought by Maulana Rahmat Ali and first entered Tapaktuan in 1925. A year later, this teaching began to enter West Sumatra, precisely in Padang in January 1926. The arrival of the Ahmadiyya missionary was welcomed by the family of Daud Bangso Dirajo at the Port of Muara Padang, then he lived in the Pasar Miskin area (now a Supermarket). In Padang, Maulana Rahmat Ali actively spread the teachings of Ahmadiyya by preaching to Bukittinggi, Padang Panjang, Batu Sangkar, and Solok. However, such da'wah often receives rejection, ridicule, and even harsh treatment. In Solok, for example, there were conflicts in the form of the killing of Ahmadiyya members, the destruction of rice fields, and the burning of mosques. Even so, the missionaries remained enthusiastic about spreading the teachings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

In 1954, another missionary from Pakistan named Mirza Rafi Ahmad arrived. At that time, Ahmadiyya was already growing rapidly in Indonesia with 26 branches and about 10,000 members, including 9 branches in West Sumatra. The visit became a new encouragement as Ahmadiyya began

to be accepted without much rejection. This happened because the community and the government at that time did not really care about the existence of Ahmadiyya. Ahmadiyya in Indonesia is known as one of the religious organizations that has a neat and well-organized leadership structure. This system consists of central leadership to branches spread across various regions, so that it is able to reach various communities more effectively. The existence of a clear structure does not only function in the management of da'wah activities, but also in coordinating various social programs that are carried out. This shows that Ahmadiyya does not only prioritize the mission of spreading teachings, but also seeks to make a real contribution to the social life of the people.

In addition, Ahmadiyya has a distinctive method of da'wah through community organizing with certain segmentations according to age, gender, and social roles. Some of the communities formed include Ansorullah, Lajnah Imaillah, Khaddam, Nashirat, Athfal, Abna, and Banat. Each of these communities has a focus on da'wah and activity programs that are tailored to the needs and characteristics of its members. For example, communities for adult men, women, youth, and children are all directed to play an active role in the development of the organization as well as to be a means of spreading Ahmadiyya teachings in a more targeted manner. With this systematic structure, Ahmadiyya in Indonesia is able to maintain its existence while strengthening the relevance of its movement in religious and social aspects (Kuswanto and Suparto, 2024). The Ahmadiyya sect believes that after the Prophet Muhammad there are still other prophets so that the Prophet is not the final prophet in the history of Islam. This received a rejection response by most Indonesian people, causing this stream to be banned in Indonesia. However, the existence of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia is still maintained, especially in the West Java region and can still carry out their worship and those who join in alleging allegiance to Ahmadiyya still exist. The biggest force that affects the existence of the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Community (JAI) in response to the problem is the strong personality of an Ahmadi (a nickname commonly used by Ahmadiyya members).

Some of the ways that members of the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Congregation (JAI) do to survive in the midst of society are divided into two, namely internal survival strategies and external survival strategies. What is meant by internal strategy is the efforts made within the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Congregation (JAI) organization to maintain the existence of Ahmadiyya. First, obey and obey the leader or caliph. The caliph is the highest office in the Ahmadiyya organization. Since 2003 the Ahmadiyya Caliph has been held by the fifth Caliph, Hazrat Ghulam Mirza Masroor Ahmad who is based in London. Third, the running of member contributions in the organization. Fourth, internal da'wah. And the fifth is the activity of Jalsa Salanah (Pramestiara and Fakhruddin, 2021).

3.2. Ahmadiyya Theology in Indonesia and Its Relevance in the Religious, Social, and Political Spheres

Ahmadiyya is one of the sects in Islam that has different theological views and has caused debate among Muslim communities. According to Muhammad Shodiq in Riski Ayu Amalia et al, Ahmadiyya believes that Islam is a perfect religion and applies throughout time until the Day of Judgment. They carry out the five pillars of Islam like Muslims in general, namely shahada, prayer, Ramadan fasting, zakat, and hajj for those who can afford it. In addition, Ahmadiyya also acknowledges the six pillars of faith: faith in Allah, angels, holy books, apostles, the Day of Judgment, and the destiny of Allah. This similarity does not preclude the doctrinal differences that characterize Ahmadiyya. One of the main ones is the concept of revelation. Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya, asserts that revelation does not stop at the Prophet Muhammad, but rather continues in a certain form. This understanding is based on a number of verses of the Qur'an, such as QS. al-Nahl: 68, QS. az-Zalzalah: 5, QS. Fushshilat: 12, QS. al-Anfal: 12, and QS. al-Maidah: 111. Ghulam Ahmad claimed to have first received the revelation in 1881, although it was only publicly communicated in

1888. Furthermore, on March 23, 1889, he performed the first baiat in Ludhiana, India, which marked the birth of the Ahmadiyya movement.

The most controversial issue related to Ahmadiyya is the question of prophethood. The Ahmadiyya Qadiani group recognized Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet, although it did not bring a new sharia. They understand the term *khatam al-nabiyyin* in QS. al-Ahzab: 40 as the "prophetic seal," so that the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is still seen as the most perfect prophet, but the prophetic door is still open. This understanding is rejected by the majority of scholars who affirm that the Prophet Muhammad is the last prophet. Quraish Shihab, for example, interprets the verse as an affirmation that prophethood has ended in the Prophet Muhammad, so that recognition of the prophet after him is not acceptable in the Islamic creed (Monica, 2023). In addition to prophetic matters, Ahmadiyya also have different views on al-Mahdi and al-Masih. For them, al-Mahdi and al-Masih are one figure who is promised to re-establish the sharia of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and fight against error. The majority of Muslims believe that the Prophet Jesus is still alive and will come down at the end of time, while the Ahmadiyya argue that Jesus has died, as understood from the Qur'an. al-Maidah: 117. Therefore, they believe that the promised figure of the Messiah is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a Muslim with traits that resemble the Prophet Isa. Confession as al-Masih was made public in 1891.

These views show that Ahmadiyya seeks to maintain an identity as part of Islam while developing a theological doctrine that differs from the mainstream. This difference then causes misunderstandings, rejections, and even conflicts in the Muslim community, including in Indonesia. Politically, the Ahmadiyya sect in Indonesia has been rejected by the government. Since the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued a fatwa in 1980, which was later reaffirmed through a fatwa in 2005, Ahmadiyya has been declared a heretical sect and is outside Islam. This view was strengthened by the issuance of the Joint Decree (SKB) of the three ministers in 2008. Since then, the intensity of violence against the Ahmadiyya community in various regions has increased.

The main reason for the rejection of the Ahmadiyya is their belief that they recognize Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet. Therefore, the MUI in Fatwa Number 11/Munas VII/MUI/15/2005 clearly states that Ahmadiyya is a heretical teaching and is outside Islam. This fatwa is one of the triggering factors for the emergence of various intolerance events, such as the attack and destruction of Ahmadiyya houses in East Lombok in 2019, the destruction of Ahmadiyya houses of worship in Sintang on September 3, 2021, and several other discriminatory acts (Dagur, 2021). In addition, a number of local governments in provinces such as East Java, Banten, West Java, South Sumatra, West Sumatra, and South Kalimantan have also issued regulations prohibiting Ahmadiyya activities. This regulation is a follow-up to the Decree of the Three Ministers in 2008 (Minister of Religion, Attorney General, and Minister of Home Affairs) which contains warnings and orders to the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Jamaat (JAI) and the general public. In the sixth point of the SKB, central and regional government officials are asked to take steps to coach, secure, and supervise the implementation of the decision.

3.3. Ahmadiyya Theology in the Perspective of Islamic Education in Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the largest multicultural countries in the world, the truth of this statement can be seen from the socio-cultural and geographical conditions that are so diverse and wide. As a developing country, placing education as a strategic means in building the nation's identity is the right and promising step. One of the approaches that is considered relevant and appropriate to support the development of the nation is multicultural education (Ayub et al, 2022). This educational model provides an alternative through the application of learning strategies and concepts that are based on the use of diversity in society, especially the diversity owned by students.

In the context of Islamic Education, the existence of Ahmadiyya is positioned not as a teaching worthy of being followed, but as part of a critical study in understanding the dynamics of Islamic thought. This is in line with the orientation of Islamic Education which affirms the principle of khatam an-nabiyyin, namely the prophetic finality of Muhammad SAW, so that any teaching that claims the existence of a prophet after him is considered contrary to the Islamic faith. Therefore, the discussion of Ahmadiyya in the educational space is directed to strengthen students' understanding of the faith so that they are not affected by deviant teachings. Nevertheless, as a socio-religious phenomenon, Ahmadiyya still has relevance to be studied within the framework of Islamic education. Learning about Ahmadiyya can be focused on the historical aspects of its entry into Indonesia, its organizational structure, and the response of the community and the government to its existence. Thus, students and students gain a complete understanding of the diversity of religious expressions while being able to position themselves wisely in the face of differences. In addition, Islamic Education also emphasizes the aspect of religious moderation by teaching tolerance. This means that even though Ahmadiyya teachings are theologically rejected, their adherents are still treated as fellow human beings and citizens with social rights. This value is important to prevent the birth of intolerance that leads to violence, as is the case with many cases of attacks on the Ahmadiyya community in various regions. Thus, the perspective of Islamic Education in Indonesia towards Ahmadiyya is critical-theological as well as social-educational: it clearly affirms the limits of the Islamic faith, but also builds social awareness that differences in beliefs should not be a reason for discrimination or persecution.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research results is that the history of the entry of Ahmadiyya into Indonesia shows that this school was present through the intermediary of students from West Sumatra in the early 20th century, then developed rapidly through the role of missionaries from India and Pakistan. Although it initially gained acceptance in a number of regions, Ahmadiyya's journey was inseparable from the strong rejection of the community due to differences in theological views that were considered contrary to mainstream Islamic teachings. Since then, Ahmadiyya has continued to try to maintain its existence by building a neat organizational structure and carrying out da'wah through internal communities. The theological aspect, Ahmadiyya has caused serious debates in the religious, social, and political spheres in Indonesia. The doctrine of the continuity of revelation and the recognition of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet is the main reason for rejection by the majority of Muslims. This gave birth to a response in the form of a heretical fatwa from the MUI, a ban through the Decree of the Three Ministers, and additional rules from the local government. The rejection also has an impact on the increasing practice of intolerance, discrimination, and even violence against Ahmadiyya adherents in various regions. From the perspective of Islamic Education, Ahmadiyya is not placed as a teaching that can be followed, but as an object of critical study to strengthen students' understanding of the faith. Islamic education in Indonesia affirms the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad PBUH as the main principle. However, on the other hand, the discussion of Ahmadiyya is also important to foster awareness of plurality and build an attitude of religious moderation. In this way, students not only understand the limits of faith, but are also able to be fair, tolerant, and wise to differences.

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