
THE CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION OF MUSLIM MINORITY COMMUNITY IN CHARACTER BUILDING OF WEST PAPUA SOCIETY

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Abstract:

Religious moderation is essential for all levels of society, especially students in West Papua City and Regency. This study was conducted to analyze the perceptions and constraints faced by students on the concept of religious moderation of Muslim minority communities in character building in West Papua. This qualitative research intended to explore the phenomenon experienced by the research subjects using methodological and scientific approaches. The data collection method was carried out through observation, interview, and documentation with researchers as the main instrument and supporting instruments using an observation list (checklist), interview guidelines, and media. The results showed that from the point of social relations, ordinary Muslim communities carry out activities blending with the communities, both non-Muslims and fellow Muslims.

Abstrak:

Moderasi beragama sangat penting bagi seluruh lapisan masyarakat khususnya mahasiswa yang berada di Kota dan Kabupaten Papua Barat. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menganalisis persepsi serta kendala yang dihadapi mahasiswa terhadap Konsep moderasi beragama masyarakat minoritas muslim dalam pembentukan karakter di Papua Barat. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang bermaksud untuk memahami fenomena tentang apa yang dialami oleh subjek penelitian, dengan pendekatan yakni dari segi pendekatan metodologis dan dari segi pendekatan keilmuan. metode pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kegiatan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi dengan peneliti sebagai instrument utama serta instrument penunjang berupa: daftar observasi (check list observation), pedoman wawancara, dan media. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari sudut hubungan sosial masyarakat muslim biasa melakukan kegiatan yang merupakan pembauran dengan masyarakat nonmuslim sekitar baik itu sesama muslim maupun yang lain.

Keywords:

Religious Moderation, Minority, Muslim, Character Building

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INTRODUCTION

Conflicts arising from different cultural and religious backgrounds were rarely reported in the early stages of Independence Day. During that period, most groups focus on supporting freedom and promoting national solidarity (Karim & Munir, 2017). Inter-

religious wars need significant attention from a society with diverse religions in implementing peace, not just in theory but particularly in practical terms. It is undeniable that individuals with strong religious convictions have the potential to create tensions (Amalia & Nanuru, 2018). Typically, such tensions are triggered by a few irresponsible people who cannot resolve problems. Consequently, these people form groups to address their dissatisfaction through warfare, leading to losses both in material and moral values.

In a multicultural society, human interaction is significant, so social abilities are needed for every individual to interact effectively with others. Curtis outlines three crucial aspects of these skills: affiliation; cooperation and conflict resolution; and kindness, care, and affection/empathy skills.

Different ethnicities, races, religions, languages, and life values in Indonesia frequently rise to numerous conflicts. These conflicts arising from inter-group violence, which sporadically explodes in various regions of the country, expose the fragility of the unity that the nation strives to establish in Indonesian society. It highlights the extent of prejudice between different groups and their lack of mutual understanding.

In Indonesia, violent conflicts often result in humanitarian disasters that tend to develop and involve a broader range of violence types and perpetrators. Consequently, resolving these conflicts becomes prolonged, leading to substantial social, economic, and political damages. The cumulative impact of these issues can push Indonesia into a complex emergency.

Conflict and violence have infiltrated different spheres within society. The triggers for those acts of violence primarily result from mishandled conflicts. Violence is a consequence of unresolved conflicts. When conflicts are mishandled or ignored, they can escalate to the point where they manifest as acts of violence. However, when diversity is effectively managed, it can serve as social unity by bringing together different elements of cultural identity to actively collaborate. This diversity can be a true bond of civilization.

Since its establishment, the Republic of Indonesia has been committed to being a multicultural nation-state. This is manifested in the commitment of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity), which is the motto of Indonesian, as well as one of the four pillars of Indonesian nationality. *Pancasila and Bhineka Tunggal Ika* represent a political synthesis that accommodates diverse national interests (multi-religious and multi-ethnic), encompassing the aspirations of the majority while respecting the existence and rights of minority groups.

In a diverse society, it is essential to acknowledge that religion often rises to conflicts and violence due to the radicalization of religious beliefs and practices. The phenomenon of religious radicalism is closely linked to the identity associated with specific regions. For instance, areas like Manado and Papua are commonly associated with Christianity, Bali is identified with Hinduism, and Indonesia is recognized as a predominantly Muslim country. This plurality can trigger marginalization and discrimination toward members of minority religions. The majority of adherents of a particular religion often assert a sense of ownership over the territory, which they view

as a legitimate basis to regulate the religious lives of others. The majority groups tend to control the influential sources of political power within society. In contrast, minority groups often struggle to gain access to such power. This issue frequently leads to the practices of marginalization and discrimination.

Radical groups want a religious state system based on Islam, while liberal groups lean towards a secular state system. However, *Pancasila's* ideology provides a reasonable middle ground between these two factions (radical and liberal groups). *Pancasila* embodies a synthesis of religious teachings, drawing universal values from the various religions present in Indonesia and forging them into a unifying force. By embracing *Pancasila*, religions within the Indonesian national context become a cohesive element, playing a significant role in achieving integration and social harmony in various Indonesian societies.

Conflict is regarded as a force that brings destruction and devastation. Conflict is perceived as a battle between opposing forces, such as good versus evil, black versus white, victory versus defeat, and gain versus loss. When conflict is viewed in a negative light and resolved through competitive means, it can lead to violence. Therefore, addressing conflict more earnestly to foster peace within society is crucial.

On July 17, 2015, an incident happened that should serve as a valuable lesson for the people of Papua. It involved the burning of a mosque by a group disturbed by Muslim worship (Rosyid, 2015). This event highlights the urgent need for all residents of Papua to enhance their response to religious moderation, which fosters mutual tolerance, love, and harmonious coexistence. It is crucial for society at all levels to practice religious moderation, particularly the younger generation, especially students in the cities and districts of West Papua.

Religious moderation is rooted in the principles and values of *Pancasila*, serving as a tradition to counter radicalism and uphold peace (Arifinsyah, Andy, & Damanik, 2020). It means exhibiting proper behavior, fostering openness, and actively collaborating to benefit society (Hanapi, 2014). The concept of moderation covers several aspects, including extremism; incompetence, negligence, or abuse; and a balanced path leads to a sense of moderation (Usham, 2014). Developing national awareness is the responsibility of every citizen (Johansson-Seva & Kulin, 2018; Nandan, Halkias, & Thurman, 2018). Likewise, students hold a crucial role in fostering religious moderation, as they are agents of change and have the capacity to contribute significantly to religious harmony. However, challenges arise from students who oppose religious tolerance and those who profess intolerance (Menchik, 2019).

Two universities significantly promote religious moderation in the City and Regency of West Papua. They are Muhammadiyah University of West Papua (Unamin/UMS) in West Papua City and Muhammadiyah University of Education in West Papua Regency. The special fact of these universities is despite being affiliated with an Islamic foundation in Indonesia, most of their students belong to non-Muslim religious backgrounds.

The facts mentioned above become the main reason for conducting research on the concept of religious moderation in Muslim minority communities in character building in West Papua (A case study on students of Muhammadiyah University of West Papua and Muhammadiyah University of Education of West Papua). Furthermore, this research aims to identify students' perceptions regarding the religious moderation of Muslim minority communities in West Papua in building character and obstacles encountered in implementing the concept of religious moderation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative method to gain an in-depth understanding of experiences and phenomena encountered by research subjects relating concepts of religious moderation in shaping the character of Muslim minority communities in West Papua. This study was conducted in Manokwari City, Sorong Regency, and Raja Ampat Regency in West Papua Province. These locations were selected due to their significant Muslim minority populations, making them relevant and suitable for the research topic.

This study employed two distinct approaches. Firstly, the methodological approach, precisely the phenomenological approach, who try to explain or express the meaning of concepts or phenomena of experience based on consciousness that occur in some individual. This research was conducted in a natural situation, so there is no limit in interpreting and understanding the phenomenon studied. The data analysis process is carried out in stages starting with the data collection process. Secondly, using a scientific approach, with the empirical juridical approach, involved examining the relevant legal provisions and analyzing real-life occurrences within society. In the scientific approach, observations are made of symptoms or behaviors that are of concern for problem recognition. After that, one or more tentative explanations that seem consistent with observations are developed.

The data sources in this study included verbal and non-verbal expressions, and the rest is considered additional data, such as documents and other sources that rely on primary and secondary data. The data collection process involved observation, interviews, and documentation with the researchers as the main instrument, and supporting instruments such as observation checklists, interview guides, and mobile phones or tools were used for data storage and collection from various sources. The data collected was then carried out in three stages of analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification for conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perception Regarding the Concept of Muslim Communities Religious Moderation in Character Building in West Papua

National Commitment

The idea of religious moderation within the Muslim community, as seen through the aspect of national commitment to building character in West Papua, was stated by

Bella Setiawati Ode from UNIMUDA as follows:

“Yes..., all Muslims are kind, their tolerance is good; it can be stated that they represent the complete embodiment of the Republic of Indonesia, high tolerance.”

Based on the interview, it was revealed that this student had developed a sense of national commitment since her early years, as reported by another student, Fackryanty Dwy Wulandary from Unamin/UMS, who mentioned that they had been taught about national commitment since childhood by their parents and the people around them. For life harmony, it cannot be separated from the nature of the newcomer students who negatively influence socializing, such as being lazy to know their neighbors. However, some students actively maintain good moral values among themselves.

To be actively engaged in community life, students participated in various social activities that promote mutual assistance and collaboration. These activities involved public services, such as cleaning drainage systems, roadworks, and renovating housing facilities. However, when it comes to worship matters, adherents follow their own religious beliefs without interference from others. It is usual for residents to practice tolerance by refraining from involvement in religious affairs or places of worship.

Tolerance

The concept of religious moderation in the Muslim community from the aspect of tolerance in building character in West Papua was expressed by Dian Rahmatunnisa from UNIMUDA as follows:

“During religious celebration, people visit one another without restriction. On our campus, where most students are non-Muslims, Christmas feels similar to Eid al-Fitr for Muslims. Christians also reciprocate the same gesture of visiting Muslims during their celebration.”

Moreover, Laode Muhammad Idrus, a student from UMS, provided a thoughtful explanation of the concept of tolerance, emphasizing the importance of respecting others' religious practices and refraining from blending Islamic beliefs with those of non-Muslims. Religious tolerance lies in allowing individuals to worship following their beliefs without modifying or assimilating religions to appear similar. Likewise, Andi Saputra from UNIMUDA highlighted that within the Islamic religion itself, there are several differences in addressing religious moderation. One of them allows students to make friendly visits to celebrate each other's religious celebration, contributing to social harmony within the community. Having diverse perspectives did not lead to disharmony among the communities of Malalagusa Sub-District; social life continued without any disruptions or changes.

Fair and Balance

Anggraini Setia Wahyuningrum from UMS shared her thoughts regarding the concept of religious moderation in Muslim society from the aspects of fairness and balance in building character in West Papua as follows:

“Our university teaches us to avoid extreme attitudes toward worldly issues and not neglect them entirely. Instead, we are encouraged to balance worldly affairs and matters concerning the afterlife. This balanced perspective is reflected in the behavior of our fellow students, who exhibit mutual respect in all aspects of their activities.”

Maryam Kelly, a student of Muhammadiyah University of Education in West Papua, also stated that her institution implements the principle of justice in religious moderation. Despite being an Islamic-based campus, the majority of students are Christians. However, the campus maintains excellent student services without discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, or social status. Everyone is treated equally. It demonstrates that justice and balance in religious moderation foster an environment of safety, peace, and tranquility. These principles also play a crucial role in building students' character within and outside the campus.

Mutual Respect for Traditions

The concept of religious moderation in the Muslim community from the aspect of mutual respect for traditions in building character in West Papua was expressed by La Ode Muhammad Idrus from UMS as follows:

“There is a rich diversity here regarding traditions. I was born and raised in West Papua, belonging to the Buton tribe. However, in West Papua, people of Bugenese, Makassar, Javanese, and Seram tribes practice many traditions, as well as native Papua have their traditions. It is important to note that we have developed an understanding and mutual respect for traditions. Thus far, no disputes or conflicts have arisen from these matters.”

Furthermore, Hafizah Maksumi, a student from UNIMUDA, elaborated on the mutual respect for traditions within the context of religious moderation in our environments. Her explanation is as follows:

“For instance, it can be seen during wedding ceremonies, where the concept of "rewang," which means cooperation, is practiced. This unique tradition originates from Java and involves individuals coming together to help and support during events or weddings. Despite my Bugis background, it is common for us to participate in these traditions actively.”

Challenges Faced by West Papua Communities in Implementing Religious Moderation

The implementation of religious moderation in West Papua has brought about positive changes within the community. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the journey toward this transformation has presented opportunities and obstacles. Looking at the possibilities, numerous students have come together for discussions, disregarding their ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds. Due to the favorable conditions for work and study, they find comfort in living on campus, prioritizing their academic and professional pursuits.

The interview results showed that students faced no barriers in implementing the

concept of religious moderation, as revealed by Vini Sulistiawati, in her statement as follows:

“No issues, as usual, among Muslim students and their peers from different religions are, usually, no obstacles, and no rejections. For instance, during Christmas and New Year, some friends might express curiosity on how..., how [is the celebration]. They welcome someone who wishes to join, but it is better to refrain if it contradicts religious beliefs. However, there is no pressure to come, no expectation of congratulating them, and the emphasis is on maintaining tolerance between religious communities. The essential aspect is that everyone respects each other’s’ choices and allows individuals to follow their path. Despite any religious differences, neighbors and friends remain united and supportive.”

The statements from students born and raised in West Papua further confirmed this. These students are the second generation who migrated to the region during the transmigration period.

“We are grateful that everything has been going smoothly so far, and there have been no obstacles for individuals of different religious backgrounds to practice their faith. We respect each other's space and have had no interference. This is the way things have been.”

The academic institution, represented by a lecturer, Ms. Mentari Alhikma, consistently supports her students, particularly concerning peace. During a telephone interview, she said no obstacle was encountered regarding religious worship or other aspects because the campus environment, characterized by its diversity, fosters a spirit of cooperation among individuals. The following is her statement:

“There are no barriers to religious practices at UNAMIN because the students consist of individuals from diverse backgrounds, representing not just one religion but five different religions. This plurality within the student community has contributed to the absence of issues related to religious intolerance, fostering good collaboration.”

Considering the opportunities and challenges in implementing religious moderation among university students in West Papua, there is a culture of mutual tolerance in aspects of worship, which students brought about a few years ago. Students from various regions, accustomed to practicing respectful behavior towards one another, have brought this culture with them. As a result, the ethos of living in harmony rises within the campus environment.

Religious moderation has been incorporated into the educational curriculum of formal institutions, starting from secondary education to higher levels (Hashim & Langgulung, 2008). Scholars such as Achilov & Sen (2017); Yaakub & Othman (2016) viewed religious moderation as a fundamental issue. To address this gap in the literature and gain a deeper understanding of how Muslims navigate interreligious tensions, it is essential to empirically differentiate between devout Muslims who embrace moderation and those who lean towards radicalism (Hook, Farrell, & Johnson, 2017).

Implementing religious moderation in present-day societies has sparked debates in several Muslim-majority nations like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Jordan (Ebrahimi, Yusoff, & Ismail, 2021; Gutkowski, 2016). Within these countries, most Islamic communities, particularly those adhering to moderate Islam, commonly called Washatiyah Islam, expect a balanced approach that avoids extremism (Brewster, Velez, & Foster, 2016).

The concept of religious moderation, which the government promotes as a mean to foster harmony, is widely appreciated and understood. However, as revealed in interviews, some students in West Papua are unfamiliar with "religious moderation" terms and more recognize "inter-religious harmony" despite inter-religious harmony is a part of religious moderation itself.

The manifestation of religious moderation among students in West Papua is evident in tolerance and mutual assistance. This fact is not a mere coincidence but rather a result of the values instilled in students from the early days of their transmigration lineage. To uphold the existing harmony, students actively engage in culturally inherited activities and provide advice to one another.

Islamic moderation has gained significant attention from academia and media both in the Western and modern world. Understanding Islam as a social practice that serves as a measure for promoting peace in all aspects and countering attempts to transform religion into radical movements is crucial. Additionally, it is essential to change the negative stigmatization and intimidation narrated by the media thus far (Khairil, 2018). In general, Muslim activities are similarities to those of Hindus and non-Muslims. During Islamic holidays, Muslims display their religious devotion by attending places of worship, such as mosques, and participating in religious gatherings. Sometimes Muslim holidays or Islamic activities coincide with the celebration of Christian holidays, such as Christmas.

Based on interviews conducted with religious leaders, it is evident that despite being in a non-Muslim majority environment, the Muslim community continues to engage in religious education and activities. However, when organizing these activities, it is customary for the Muslim community to inform non-Muslim residents in the vicinity to prevent misunderstandings. Regarding social interaction, the Muslim community's everyday life is not significantly different from the wider public's. They lead their lives like ordinary individuals, emphasizing kinship and familiarity rather than highlighting religious differences within their community or with people of other faiths. As members of the communities, Muslims adhere to social norms and rules.

To foster social and religious bonds among Muslims, the focus is on developing neighborhood and community relations. Within the religious domain, these connections are strengthened through regular activities and celebrating Islamic holidays organized by the Assembly Ta'lim Al-Mu'minin as an Islamic religious institution. Muslims demonstrate their sense of kinship by organizing events and Islamic celebrations. These religious activities reinforce the relationship among fellow Muslims, connecting through religious rituals and as members of the same society.

Based on the description of the religious situation, it is evident that religious activities are still carried out despite less-than-optimal conditions because those Muslim communities are from Muslim backgrounds and possess a high level of education. They are also fully aware of the significance of religious teachings in their lives.

Recognizing the significance of religious teachings in their lives, the community endeavors to prioritize religious education for the overall advancement of Muslim society. Despite the majority of the indigenous population being Christians, the Muslim community remains committed to organizing religious education activities for the broader community.

Furthermore, based on the research observations, religious tolerance is firmly ingrained within the community, despite diverse beliefs among the local population, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and others. This diversity does not hinder them from practicing and engaging in religious teachings and educational activities according to their respective faiths. However, inevitably, problems and conflicts arise occasionally, despite the community's awareness. In practice, only a few individuals consistently apply the principle of tolerance in their daily lives, resulting in occasional disputes and conflicts among them.

In the sociocultural realm, the community demonstrates remarkable harmony, solidarity, and deeply interwoven togetherness. This is evident during religious holidays, where Muslims and non-Muslims exchange congratulations and well wishes, often through greetings or banners on the roadside. It is challenging to foster a culture of tolerance among individuals with diverse backgrounds, particularly those who originate from families and regions deeply committed to their own cultural and religious beliefs. This resistance hinders the achievement of complete religious harmony, particularly with the expanding Muslim community. One example illustrating this is the conflict that occurred in 2011, which resulted in the closure of mosques and prayer halls for the Muslim community. The conflict arose due to a lack of communication between the Muslim community, which engaged in their religious activities, and the non-Muslim community, constituting the majority population and acting as administrators of the local hamlets.

The religious practices of the Muslim minority community can be seen from the level of tolerance and freedom extended by the non-Muslim majority community, as well as the commitment of the Muslim community to nurturing and advancing their own religious life. While the level of tolerance granted by the non-Muslim majority is still limited, the Muslim community acknowledges and understands this situation, recognizing that they are not indigenous to the area and represent a numerical minority.

The acceptance shown by non-Muslims towards religious matters is commendable. They allow Muslims to engage in their planned religious activities. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the Muslim community in this particular area constitutes a minority. Therefore, to prevent any potential misunderstandings that may be detrimental to Muslims, the administrators of the community strongly encourage obtaining prior confirmation and communication for even the slightest religious activities.

Furthermore, it is essential to note that the closure of places of worship following the conflict mentioned above does not imply a lack of tolerance from non-Muslim communities towards their Muslim counterparts. Instead, Muslim communities must reflect upon their situation as a minority group living in areas predominantly inhabited by non-Muslims. Consequently, they should increase caution when engaging in activities and work on better communication with other non-Muslim communities.

Religious Moderation as a Building Character Method in Minority Communities in West Papua

The students' understanding of the concept of religious moderation aligns with the practice of moderate religious beliefs in West Papua. The principles of religious moderation foster a sense of national commitment, promote fairness and tolerance, reject violence, and respect traditional customs. The research findings indicated that students had been educated on these values for several years.

Muslim students in West Papua utilize campuses and mosques as platforms to cultivate *insan kamil* (morally upright generations). This involves a concerted effort to reinforce faith and religious practices, significantly impacting worldly and spiritual realms. Regarding worldly benefits, students can coexist harmoniously despite differences in various aspects. On the spiritual side, they receive rewards for their righteous actions in the afterlife.

The history of Islamic civilization from the era of the Prophet and subsequent generations shows that the mosque played a vital role in societal development. The mosque served as a place for Islamic education and a strategic planning location during the war. Civilization emerged from the mosque, which continues today as a center for education and worship for future generations.

According to Azyumardi Azra's writings, the mosque holds a significant place in Islam, and he also discusses *surau* as a center for Islamic education in Minangkabau. Azra emphasizes that *surau* is an institution that fosters a strong faith and prepares individuals to thrive in the larger society. This is particularly relevant due to the Minangkabau people's historical tradition of trading (Azra, 2017).

The standardization of religious moderation in matters of faith and worship is outlined in the words of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Kafirun verses 1-6, as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْكٰفِرُونَ ﴿١﴾ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَا أَنَا عٰبِدُ مَا عٰبِدْتُمْ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

Translation:

(1) Say: "O disbelievers; (2) I will not worship what you worship; (3) And you are not a worshiper of the God I worship; (4) And I have never been a worshiper of what you worship; (5) and you have never (also) been a worshiper of God whom I worship; (6) for you is your religion, and for me, my religion." (QS. al-Kafirun/109: 1-6).

The verse describes genuine religious moderation, emphasizing that it does not endorse the notion that all religions are equal. Instead, it encourages individuals to worship and believe according to their respective religions, respecting the diversity of beliefs while staying true to their faith.

The historical example of religious moderation, tolerance, and non-violence can be observed during the era of Prophet Muhammad, known as the Medina Charter. This document illustrates how the Prophet established an Islamic state that coexisted with diverse communities. Despite the presence of Jewish communities close to Medina, an agreement was reached that ensured the peaceful coexistence of both parties. This historical event serves the harmony that can be achieved amidst religious and cultural differences.

The Medina Charter, regarded as the first constitution in the realm of the state, signifies the unique approach of Prophet Muhammad in establishing a state. This approach considers various aspects, including political and religious dimensions (Rustandi & Sahidin, 2019). However, according to Ali Romdhoni (2014), the Medina Charter should be understood as a general constitution of a state rather than specifically an Islamic state. This is because the agreement does not explicitly address the implementation of Sharia within the state.

Indonesia, a nation with a significant Muslim population, encounters specific obstacles when promoting religious moderation. One example of this can be observed in the case of loudspeaker usage in places of worship. Recently, the matter of mosque loudspeakers has resurfaced as a topic of discussion after a prolonged period of minimal attention. The Ministry of Religion has consistently guided Muslim residents on the appropriate use of mosque loudspeakers, signifying that this issue is not entirely new.

The Ministry of Religion, under the authority of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance, has regulated the arrangement of loudspeaker usage. It was established in 1978 through the document number Kep/D/101/1978, and its implementation was subsequently addressed in 2018 by the SE Director General of Islamic Community Guidance, as stated in B.3940/DJ.III/HK.007/08/2018 (Abdillah & Raus, 2021). In 2022, the Minister of Religion introduced a new regulation that was somewhat similar in content to the previous one. The response to this new regulation varied, with some groups representing Islam expressing support and rejection.

Ridwan Jamal conducted research in Manado. He found different perspectives regarding the use of mosque loudspeakers. In this study, the results indicated that the Muslim population in that region was in the minority. Interestingly, non-Muslim communities had no issues with the sound of the Muslim call to prayer. Instead, they viewed it as a call to worship and displayed tolerance by not raising any concerns about the sound of the call to prayer (Jamal, 2017). According to Irbah, Shofa, Georgia, and Putra (2021), for those who contradict the regulation of loudspeakers in mosques, consider that the use of loudspeakers in mosques has become a tradition of Muslims in Indonesia and these regulations can limit Islamic religious *syiar*.

In addition, Hindu religious community in Bali adheres to the principles of *Tri Hita Karana*, which emphasize maintaining good relations with God, fellow human beings, and the environment. These principles have fostered a culture of tolerance that endures today. Hindu community in Bali does not encounter any issues with mosque loudspeakers. This is due to mutual agreements regarding worship areas, which promote respect for each other's worship practices (Yantos & Putriana, 2021).

The opinion expressed by Ahmad al-Ussairi explains that Muslims are weaknesses and there is no role, whether economic, political, or social, of Muslims in a region. This opinion is reinforced by the writing of Indriana Kartini, who quotes Gerr's opinion, that the status of Muslim minorities is not only related to the number of Muslim communities that are smaller than the entire population in a particular region, but there are several other assumptions related to minority status, which are seen from other aspects including: cultural, political, social, and economic (Agustin, Saiban, & Hazin, 2022).

From the preceding explanation, it can be inferred that fostering a strong sense of tolerance is crucial. It can be achieved through quality education and a consistent focus on unity and mutual respect because societal disruptions often arise from a lack of comfort. This perspective aligns with the understanding of students in West Papua, who demonstrate tolerance in their worship practices and accept the government's regulations regarding the use of loudspeakers. One student noted that the mutual response and respect among places of worship representing different religions had been a unique phenomenon since the early period of transmigration. Students show respect towards each other in this aspect and refrain from denigrating or insulting one another's religions.

The concept of religious moderation, including the discussion of Islamic moderation, has been a topic of discussion for some time. Mahmud Arif has expressed his views on Islamic moderation, stating that it represents a balanced approach within the religion. It implies that followers of Islam should avoid extremes and acknowledge the existence of varying opinions among scholars (Arif, 2020).

M. Quraish Shihab (2020) further emphasized the significance of Islamic moderation, particularly in the context of *wasat*, or being balanced. He clarified that this did not imply a stagnation of Islam or a lack of clarity in its beliefs. Instead, it signified that a Muslim should possess a sense of fairness and maintain a proper perspective (Shihab, 2020). It can be observed in the example of the Prophet Muhammad when he encountered Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul, who openly displayed hypocrisy towards Islam. Rather than immediately passing a death sentence, the Prophet considered the potential positive outcomes. As the Prophet stated, "Later, people will say that Muhammad killed his friend" (Narrated by Bukhari).

Islam acknowledges the existence of social differences, including variations in religious beliefs considered authentic by their respective followers. Allah SWT has granted individuals the freedom to believe or disbelieve, even though Muslims may not enjoy the same freedom as non-Muslims within a given society. The faith of the Muslim community, which revolves around a God-centered approach, remains unaffected by the

disbelief of specific individuals. It often strengthens their resolve to uphold Islamic principles and laws with incredible steadfastness and enthusiasm.

This belief fosters positive outcomes by promoting social interaction and facilitating learning from past mistakes. Some of the positive effects arising from the relationship between non-Muslim majority communities and Muslim minority communities include:

1. It can foster unity and solidarity within the Muslim community itself.
2. It enables establishing effective communication and understanding within society to prevent the recurrence of conflicts.
3. Mutual familiarity leads to recognizing the benefits of cooperation, promoting acts of kindness and mutual support, and avoiding wrongdoing and animosity.
4. Good communication with the non-Muslim majority community gives Muslim communities greater convenience in practicing religious activities.
5. Cultivating solid moral values in religious life among all segments of society is facilitated by establishing positive communication and relationships.

Feelings and convictions give rise to teachings deemed unquestionable, even though these teachings may sometimes contradict reason or findings from modern scientific investigations. It becomes particularly pronounced when their followers perceive these teachings as absolute truths. Consequently, there is a tendency to view teachings from other religions as incorrect, leading to extreme fanaticism and potential conflicts.

CONCLUSION

From a social perspective, Muslim community tends to do activities that promote assimilation with the non-Muslim community around them. It includes fostering cooperation with residents. For instance, during Christmas, Muslim communities also help maintaining security, and vice versa; when Muslims carry out the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayers, non-Muslim communities help preparing places and security while the Muslim communities carry out activities in their religion. Moreover, Muslim community often play a central role in organizing events related to Indonesian independence. As mentioned by the researcher, the socio-religious dynamics between different communities unfold harmoniously, without any mutual hatred towards the religious practices of others. Each religious group carries out its religious propagation efforts while maintaining peaceful coexistence.

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