




# The Practice of Moderate Education to Prevent Interreligious Conflict

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## Abstract

The issue of religious moderation is back in the discussion of state elites, academics, religious leaders and the public today, because religious conflicts can trigger community divisions and even the collapse of a nation. In fact, the religious moderation movement is one of the solutions to prevent religious conflicts in the midst of society. Many ways can be done to educate the public about the importance of living in harmony, peace and mutual respect despite different beliefs. Among them is through social community activities. In fact, the prevention of inter-religious conflict based on social community activities has offered a new method for the progress of living together in pluralism. This research aims to see, analyze and describe how the model of inter-religious conflict prevention based on social community activities in West Sumatra Province. The research was conducted using a qualitative approach (multi case single-site exploratory case study). Data were collected through in-depth interviews with twenty-five informants categorized as religious leaders, community leaders, traditional leaders, administrators of the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB), university academics and government officials who take regional policies. All informants are Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus and Buddhists who were selected using the purposive sampling technique. As supporting data, the author also analyzed literature sourced from various books, religious scriptures, and scientific articles related to this research. Overall, the research findings found four models of inter-religious conflict prevention based on community activities in West Sumatra Province. The four models are: i) establishing a dialog space between religious leaders, ii) community work through social activities, iii) traditional bonds of mutual cooperation, iv) support from community and religious leaders. The results of this research are discussed with various theories and results of previous research, and can be used as one of the references to create peace, harmony, peace, harmony and uphold the principle of togetherness in the midst of pluralistic societies.

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## INTRODUCTION

One thing that Indonesian society is famous for is religious pluralism. In a plural society, the relationship between religions is dynamic and always characterized by ups and downs, both on a local, regional and national scale. Although conceptually the teachings of each religion advocate harmony, peace, harmony, mutual respect, upholding the principle of togetherness, in historical reality it turns out that these religious concepts have not been implemented as envisioned by each religious adherent (Arif, 2021; Forstmann & Sagioglou, 2020). Therefore, to realize these religious concepts so that there is no conflict between religious communities, the right instrument is needed, so that this instrument can minimize and even prevent the occurrence of symptoms of religious conflict. Various researchers from different disciplines have actually discussed or discussed issues around the prevention of religious conflict in Indonesia. Some researchers have previously (Azizah, 2021; Christover, 2021; Erviana, 2019; Farida, 2016; Hasibuan, 2019; Jati, 2013; Jufri, 2018; Kahpi & Harahap, 2020; Rahim & Muhajir, 2018; Saifullah & Aksa, 2021; Sholeh et al., 2020; Tanzila et al., 2018; Zarkasi et al., 2018), of course there are many others both researching on a national and international scale, but some of the researchers described above prove that the issue of preventing inter-religious conflict is very important and important to study and research.

The urgency of research around the issue of preventing inter-religious conflicts carried out by researchers and also the government is actually a reflection of always being aware of previous events, where religious conflicts that occurred in Poso, Madura, conflicts between Ahmadiyah and Muhammadiyah groups are dark memories for the Indonesian population not to be repeated. Of course it is inseparable from the role of researchers and the government in trying and innovating to always find solutions so that harmony, peace, harmony, mutual respect, upholding the principle of togetherness in the community are always maintained.

It is also known that Indonesia is a pluralistic country in the field of religion. Based on information from the Directorate General of the Population and Civil Registration Service (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs, it shows that currently Indonesia has a community that is 86.88% Muslim, 7.49% Protestant, 3.09% Catholic, 1.71% Hindu, 0.75% Buddhist, and 0.03% Confucian (Dukcapil Ministry of Home Affairs, 2021). These six religions, when viewed based on religious categories, are all included in the category of missionary religions (Ruslan, 2020). The same opinion is also expressed by Widjaja & Boiliu, (2019) that religions that are legally recognized in Indonesia in terms of their categories belong to missionary religions.

Missionary religions are religions in which there is a doctrine in the form of orders originating from their respective holy books about the obligation to disseminate religious teachings to all people, if the order is ignored the adherents will get sins and sanctions, otherwise if it is responded positively and implemented consistently, then the reward and heaven will be the reward (Toweren, 2018; Wibowo & Yani, 2016). However, in the implementation of these religious orders, it is not uncommon for clashes to occur so that conflicts in the name of religion due to religious broadcasting often occur, including in several regions in Indonesia (Noor, 2018; Sobri, 2019).

The government does not take part in maintaining inter-religious harmony,

of course it cannot be imagined how Indonesia will look like in the future, it could be that conflicts that start from across religions will also have an impact on conflicts across customs and culture. Keeping the lives of Indonesian people in harmony, peace, mutual respect and tolerance between the differences of each, the government through the ministry of religion has addressed this assumption by launching various programs, one of which is religious moderation. Moderate means moderation, the opposite of extreme, which means not excessive in responding to differences and diversity (Abdurrohman, 2018; Akhmadi, 2019; Fahmi, 2019; Syaifuddin & Azis, 2021; Ulinnuha & Nafisah, 2020).

Religious moderation can be defined as an attitude of promoting tolerance to differences (Aziz, 2022; Ismail, 2020). There are several characteristics related to a moderate attitude in understanding and practicing religion, namely i) understanding reality based on the fact that the dynamics of human life are always changing and developing, ii) understanding fiqh priorities, in Islam orders and prohibitions are determined in a structured manner, those at the bottom cannot defeat the position above, iii) understanding *sunnatullah* in creation, iv) making it easy for others to carry out religious teachings, but still not deviating from what has been stipulated in the Quran and Hadith, v) understanding religious texts comprehensively not partially, and vi) being open in opinion by promoting dialogue and tolerance (Hanafi, 2018).

The attitude of moderation in religion must be developed and understood together to maintain balance and prevent conflict in differences. Religious moderation is closely related to maintaining togetherness with a tolerant attitude in responding to differences (Akhmadi, 2019). By instilling the values of religious moderation, it is hoped that people can maintain an attitude of wisdom, tolerance and avoid radicalism, thus avoiding religious conflict (Hiqmatunnisa & Zafi, 2020). Religious conflict itself does not mean conflict between religious teachings and religious scriptures, but rather conflict between adherents of different religions, because religions and holy books should not teach their adherents to hate each other and kill people (Tjabolo, 2017). The point is that with this religious moderation program, the government can minimize and even prevent the seeds of conflict caused by differences in beliefs (religion) between religious adherents in Indonesia.

As for the researchers themselves in addressing this issue, it is necessary to study or conduct research on issues related to the prevention of inter-religious conflict in Indonesia. The researchers described above are proof that many of them have studied the issue of religious conflict prevention. The solutions or instruments offered also have diversity, from using the local wisdom approach for religious conflict prevention to the resolution of the behavior of the community itself (Asroni, 2020; Prasojo & Pabbajah, 2020; Riyadi et al., 2022; Ulya, 2016).

Basyir, (2018); Nardone & Salvini, (2018); Ubani et al., (2019) mentioned that in overcoming religious conflicts that occur in the community, many researchers use cultural approaches, customs, behavior and even use dialog-based approaches in resolving disputes between the two parties. But besides that, several researchers such as Andiko, (2020); Hanafi, (2018); Hartanta, (2019); Jarir, (2019); Lindawaty, (2016); Muhtadi, (2019); Wibisono et al., (2021) also revealed that the solutions or instruments offered by previous researchers, if examined further, generally could not cover the possibility of religious conflict. This is motivated by the fact that the solution or instrument has not been able to fully foster a harmonious relationship between the warring parties, a sense of affection has not been established because

the approach is carried out only around resolving conflicts between the warring parties, even though ideally the approach used should have been at the stage of mutual need (Antameng, 2021). As also expressed by Dali, (2016) that relationships are established in the context of mutual need, there is less likelihood of problems arising between the parties concerned. Therefore, the author offers community-based activities as an instrument in preventing inter-religious conflict in Indonesia.

Community-based activities are one of the instruments that are very appropriate in preventing religious conflicts, this assumption is supported by the results of the author's previous observations of three provinces in Indonesia, namely West Sumatra, North Sumatra, Bengkulu and Jambi. The results of observations show that from the six religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism), there has never been a conflict in the community in the name of religion as the main trigger, as also expressed by Islamic religious leaders in West Sumatra Province who are informants in this study that "The life of the people here, from the past until now there has never been a religiously motivated conflict".

The same thing was also expressed by the Chairman of the Indonesian Buddhayana Council, "In horizontal relations from the past until today there has never been a dispute or conflict by putting forward the issue of different beliefs, even in commemoration of religious holidays, we are accustomed to visiting each other, all of that is done by each religious community. In addition, if a family is hit by a disaster or has a celebration, other families also come and help". The same thing was also expressed by one resident that "here we have a high sense of unity and respect, when commemorating religious holidays, we have a habit of congratulating each other by visiting houses, we do it without being awkward".

The Supervisor of Hindu Communities of Bengkulu Province also stated "During the 20 years that I have lived in Bengkulu Province and was mandated to be the Supervisor of Hindu Communities, I have never encountered a conflict because of religion. If all religious adherents do not interfere with each other and worship according to their respective religions, there will be no conflict between religious communities". This means that so far, conflicts that have occurred in the community have never been triggered due to differences in beliefs, because tolerance and mutual respect are still high in each individual community itself, this is motivated by the close relationship between residents in the community.

Community-based activities are one form of program that can warm up the relationship between residents in the community, whether they are different religions, cultures, races and so on will respect each other and keep it peaceful, harmonious and mutually tolerant, because community-based programs universally show the relationship that needs each other regardless of differences in society. In fact, the question is what are the forms of community-based activities that occur in the communities of West Sumatra, North Sumatra, Bengkulu and Jambi, how are the views of individuals with different beliefs in these community-based activities, and various other questions, according to the author, these questions need to be answered academically by conducting various studies, especially related to the issue being written. So that later it can be a picture, reference and guidance for the community, academics, researchers and the government in resolving disputes or conflicts between religious communities that occur in the future.

Based on the description of the issues and problems that the author raises in this study, it is necessary to explain that research related to the prevention of inter-

religious conflict has been widely discussed and studied by previous researchers. However, after the author reads, analyzes and concludes the entire article, it is found that previous research is more focused on the local wisdom approach in overcoming inter-religious conflict prevention. Related to how a community activity-based approach in overcoming inter-religious conflict prevention has never been touched and discussed in Indonesia. Therefore, the author considers that this theme needs to be raised as a scientific study in order to enrich the literature and explore the patterns and diversity in dealing with the prevention of inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia.

## METHODS

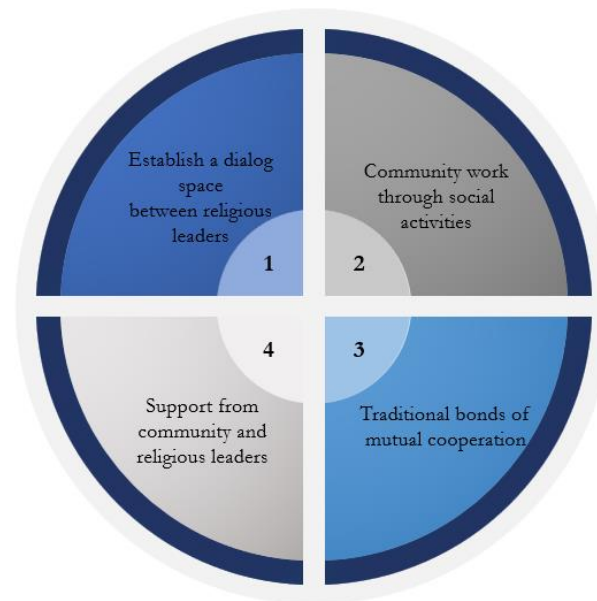
This research was carried out using a qualitative method with an approach (multi case single-site exploratory case study), according to [Elkhaira et al., \(2020\)](#); [Engkizar et al., \(2018, 2021\)](#); [Gong, \(2021\)](#); [Syafri et al., \(2020, 2021\)](#) exploratory case study research is research that aims to explore and provide a detailed and comprehensive description of phenomena, issues, symptoms or problems that occur either in a small group or a larger community of people.

Furthermore, the research data was collected through in-depth interviews using structured interview protocols with twenty-five informants consisting of religious leaders, community leaders, traditional leaders, administrators of the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB), university academics and government officials in West Sumatra Province. All informants are Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus and Buddhists who were selected using the purposive sampling technique. In addition, as supporting data, the author also analyzes literature sourced from various books, religious scriptures, and scientific articles related to this research. All interview data were thematically analyzed using NVivo 12 software, thematic analysis is one of the more flexible ways to identify, analyze, and report qualitative research data. Before all data was entered into the Nvivo 12 analysis tool, all interviews with informants were transcribed, then reduced, grouped into themes to be reported in the form of dialog or verbatim ([Braun & Clarke, 2012](#); [Creswell, 2014](#); [Engkizar et al., 2021](#); [Herzog et al., 2019](#)).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the author's interviews with twenty-five informants, the research findings found four findings (themes) of the community activity-based inter-religious conflict prevention model. The four themes are: i) establishing a dialog space between religious leaders, ii) real work of the community through social activities, iii) traditional bonds of mutual cooperation, iv) support from community and religious leaders. To make it easy to understand, the four findings in the research are described using NVivo 12 qualitative analysis software as shown in figure 1 below.





**Fig 1. Community activity-based inter-religious conflict prevention model**

Furthermore, to make the research results in this article interesting to read and easy to understand, the author will display interview quotes with informants based on the four themes that have been obtained. The interview excerpts that the author will display are excerpts of brief statements from informants when the interview was conducted. These interview quotes, although conveyed by informants in slightly different language editorials, actually have more or less the same purpose and intention.

The first theme is (forming a dialog space between religious leaders), according to informants, the first step taken to establish good relations between religious communities in Indonesia is to form a dialog space between religious leaders. This statement was expressed by all informants of different religions, where one of the solutions to a peaceful agreement will not be found except through discussion (dialog). The religious leaders of Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism form a discussion room to establish friendship, solve people's problems, and find solutions. This dialog was initiated by religious leaders and organized by the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB). Topics discussed include the construction of places of worship, celebrations of religious holidays, and regular meetings to strengthen interfaith relations. This theme was stated by all informants, but in this section the author will present some of these statements, including informants as in the following interview.

*The first form of solution that I found in the community in preventing conflict is open communication (dialog) between the religious leaders, ... (informant 1); ... I see that the harmony between religious communities here (hometown) is dominated by tolerance between each other, but behind that, previously there has been an agreement (dialog) between religious leaders in the community to maintain and convince each other of the beliefs of each, ... (informant 13); Yes ... as far as I know in Indonesia and especially in my place (village/city) when you want to hold an event related to religion, first there is an agreement communication with other religious leaders, ... (informant 16); To be sure, there is a dialogue between religious leaders, whether it is the occurrence of conflict, the holding of religious events, the form of social activities in the community, ... I see that all of that is*

*motivated by an understanding between these differences, ... (informant 8)*

The second theme is (real community work through social activities). According to informants, apart from dialogue, inter-religious harmony can also be sought through social activities, where real work such as sharing food, clothing, money and in other forms that have become a tradition in Indonesia has actually taken a position in forming good relations between fellow citizens, whether they are different religions, cultures, races and so on. This theme is stated by the following interview excerpt.

*The first social form that I found in Indonesian society is mutual help, especially in my place (village / city), when there is a disaster or other forms of ceremonies, people help each other and work together regardless of differences in beliefs, culture, race and so on, ... (informant 2); ... I feel that the culture of the people in my hometown is a benchmark in reconciling the population, ... when a disaster occurs all residents always open themselves to lend a hand to each other in the form of financial social assistance, food, clothing and so on, ... (informant 15); Yes ... I agree that social activities are a bridge in establishing good relations between individuals in the community, ... I saw that (X) although different religions, but when we held an open donation for the family of (Muslim) he still helped for that, ... (informant 9); I also saw that (Protestant and Catholic) although different from Islam, but for social activities in the community they are always together and work together, ... (informant 11)*

The third theme is (mutual cooperation ties), as it is known that one of the cultures that is deeply rooted in the personality of Indonesian society is the tradition of mutual cooperation. According to the informant, in terms of worship, let them be different, but in social life they always work hand in hand, meaning that if there is an obstacle or a problem that requires a helping hand from the community, then every community has the right to play a role regardless of their belief status. This theme is stated by the informant in the following interview excerpt.

*In maintaining peace in the community, the first solution we do is deliberation between religious leaders, as for the form of participation in it we always work together, ... (informant 4); I as a religious community (Buddhist), live in a predominantly Muslim society, so that we are always respected and not discriminated against, any form of activity in the community we always support even if we have to spend energy and costs, ... (informant 19); Yes ... as far as our knowledge as citizens (Hindus), we have never received harassment from other religious parties (Islam, protestant, Catholic, congregation, Buddhist), because whatever we do, we are always respected and not discriminated against. (informant 19); Yes ... to the best of our knowledge as (Hindu) citizens, we have never received harassment from other religious parties (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Confucianism, Buddhism), because whatever happens in the community that is social in nature we always contribute together (informant 22); In establishing inter-religious harmony, especially in this village/city, in social forms we are always together, building roads together, making seventeen events, meaning that in aqidah we are different but socially we work together and work together, ... (informant 7)*

The fourth theme is (support from community and religious leaders). According to the informants, in maintaining inter-religious harmony, the role of community and religious leaders is very necessary, as it is known that the first element responsible for the comfort of the community is the person who is elevated one step or given more authority, and they are community and religious leaders who are the mediator or connector of tongues in the community. This theme was stated by the informant as in the following interview excerpt.

*In building a safe and peaceful society, we always follow community leaders, whatever their decisions and authority we always obey them, ... (informant 2); ... in my opinion, apart from the government, the role of community and religious leaders is also much more important in forming a safe society and avoiding conflict, because they are closer to the community, ... I see where religious leaders give understanding to the community the importance of maintaining good relations even though they have different beliefs, and vice versa, community leaders play a role in disciplining all forms of social activities in the community, so that the rights of each religion are not reduced, ... (informant 3); Of course it plays a very important role (community and religious leaders) in dealing with the prevention of interfaith conflict in the community, if there is no support from both parties I am sure that peace in the community will be maintained, ... (informant 8); Of course it plays a very important role (community and religious leaders) in handling the prevention of inter-religious conflicts in the community, if there is no support from both parties I am sure that peace in the community will be maintained, ... (informant 8); Strongly agree, of course, that the parties from community and religious leaders are a section in preventing inter-religious conflicts, because as far as I know there has never been a war between religious people if it was not spearheaded by the two figures, ... (informant 14)*

Actually, research and issues related to the aspects of preventing inter-religious conflict have been studied by many previous researchers. However, previous studies, especially in Indonesia, only focused on aspects of preventing inter-religious conflict through the local wisdom approach, for example, inter-religious harmony based on local wisdom (Sabarudin & Arif, 2019); a model of religious pluralism based on local wisdom (Azizah et al., 2020); building cultural accommodation in religious conflict resolution in Indonesia (Prasojo & Pabbajah, 2020); cultural accommodation in religious conflict resolution in Indonesia (Prasojo & Pabbajah, 2020); building religious harmony through a local wisdom-based Islamic Religious Education learning model in higher education (Hadi & Bayu, 2021); a model of harmony and toleration between people of different religions based on customary law (Muslih et al., 2022); the role of *hibualamo* in resolving interfaith conflicts (Miradj & Tohe, 2021). As for others, studies on the prevention of inter-religious conflicts have also been carried out by (Erawati, 2018; F. Fitriani & Siregar, 2021; Ghufroon, 2020; Hafidzi, 2019; Hanif, 2019; Hasyim & Abdullah, 2020; Hermawati et al., 2022; Sinaga et al., 2022; Tanzila et al., 2018; Tohri et al., 2021), based on the results of the analysis of the results of the analysis of inter-religious conflicts, 2022), based on the results of the analysis of previous studies, the author has not found researchers who use a community activity-based approach in overcoming inter-religious conflict prevention, even though a community activity-based approach is also far more meaningful in overcoming or preventing inter-religious conflict.

The assumption of the meaning of community activities in overcoming inter-religious conflict is motivated by the results of the author's interviews with informants in the field, and as it is known that without realizing that social activities in the community will at least have a positive and negative impact on community harmony. But after tracing deeper and referring to the opinions of informants, so far community activities have had a positive impact, this can be seen from the involvement in mutual cooperation, dialogue between religious leaders in solving conflicts, tolerance and mutual assistance when a disaster occurs in the form of fundraising, providing food, clothing and so on. These reasons reinforce the author's desire to study this issue.



Based on the research that has been conducted, four themes of inter-religious conflict prevention models based on community activities were clearly found. In order to make the discussion of this article interesting to read and young to understand, the author will elaborate on these four themes based on theories, expert opinions, and previous research results that discuss these issues and problems in different contexts and issues.

The first theme is (forming a dialog space between religious leaders), as it is known that dialog or discussion is the first way humans use to obtain mutual agreement. Even the independence of Indonesia cannot be separated from the expertise of nationalist figures in diplomacy (dialogue), the easing of inter-religious conflict in Poso is also a form of mobilization of dialogue or discussion between the government and religious leaders. This means that the role of dialog in community activities cannot be separated, whether it is in the form of an agreement on positive or negative things, so that in this first theme the author puts dialog as a solution in preventing inter-religious conflict in the community.

Dialogue is described as an openness of views between people who have concern for each other (Nardone & Salvini, 2018). Interfaith dialog is a form of harmony and harmony because of the positive views and approaches between one party and the other (Basyir, 2018; Ubani et al., 2019). Dialogue will result in the strengthening of harmony and mutual understanding. The tendency of dialog does not stop as a lifestyle, but also becomes a way of life (Twiss & Grelle, 2018).

The orientation of dialog is not to defeat each other but to understand between one party and the other well, reaching full agreement universally. Dialogue is also oriented as a means of communication to bridge the gap of ignorance and misunderstanding in different cultures, expressing views in each other's language (Syifa et al., 2024). Dialogue is not only oriented towards living together peacefully by tolerating other religious believers, but also actively participating in the existence of other religious believers (Albab, 2019).

More importantly, the orientation of dialog is coexistence to pro-existence. Coexistence promotes tolerance. Pro-existence seeks similarities in doctrine, tradition, spirit and history, but also seeks elements of difference and areas of conflict. Dialogue is very important to reduce arrogance, aggressiveness, and other negative things in the ways religious believers carry out the task of spreading their respective religions through da'wah missions (Agustin, 2019). In fact, dialog is the main instrument that leads people to live openly in a democracy.

Interfaith dialogue is a meeting of hearts and minds between adherents of various religions, communication between people who believe in religion as a common path to achieving truth and cooperation regarding common interests (Hasan, 2018). Interfaith dialogue has actually started since 1969, this movement was first initiated by Prof. Mukti Ali. In his paper "Dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia and Its Problems" presented at the 1970 World Council of Churches, it was revealed that in November 1969 a meeting took place between Prof. Mukti representing Muslims, two Catholics and three Protestants in a Catholic collage. With the emergence of an interfaith dialogue, various interfaith organizations emerged. Continued during the new order, there was an establishment of an interfaith deliberation forum (WMAUB) and an institution for the study of interfaith harmony (LPKUB). Finally, during the reformation period, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Center for Religious Harmony (PKUB) and an Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB) emerged again. So the point is that

dialog is one of the efforts that can be used in preventing inter-religious conflict in Indonesia (Karisma et al., 2018; Mantu, 2018; Zarkasi et al., 2018).

The second theme is (community work through social activities). According to informants, apart from dialogue, inter-religious harmony can also be sought through social activities, Farida, (2016); Fitriani, (2020); Nuwa & Wahyuningsih, (2024) stated that the form of cooperation that can be sought by the community in establishing good relations between each other is sharing food, clothing, money and in other forms, where the tradition has actually become a habit in the community and has taken a position in forming good relations between fellow citizens, whether they are different religions, cultures and races.

With these social activities, it has an influence on the community to take care of each other and care for each other. In this activity, it provides a sense of mutual love and compassion for each other in accordance with the third principle of Pancasila, namely the unity of Indonesia which illustrates that we are all one united in the country of Indonesia and bears the slogan *Bhineka tunggal ika* even though it is different but still one too. Therefore, religious people must respect each other, look after each other and respect each other (Isdayanti et al., 2020; Ruslan, 2018).

Based on the above opinion, the findings on this theme prove that community work through social activities can be a model of inter-religious conflict prevention based on community activities. The author determines this theme is worthy of being a finding in this research based on informant statements and the strengthening of the results of studies from previous research.

The third theme is (the bond of the gotong-royong tradition), as it is known that one of the cultures that is deeply rooted in the Indonesian people is the tradition of gotong-royong. According to the informant, in terms of worship, let it be different, but in social life we always work together, meaning that when there is an obstacle or a problem that requires a helping hand from the community, then every community has the right to play a role regardless of their belief status. A similar description was also stated by Kurniawan, (2018) that inter-religious harmony can be carried out by mutual cooperation activities, visiting each other during celebrations or when there is a disaster that befalls individuals in the community, the *silaturrahmi* built through these activities can foster close emotional relationships and brotherhood between religious communities, so that it will be easy to achieve togetherness in the community (Wekke, 2018).

The role of gotong royong activities in preventing inter-religious conflict is undoubted. Kusnadi, (2018) says that one of the best ways to establish relationships between individuals in society is the existence of mutual need, mutual cooperation is one way to make it happen. As revealed by the informant during the interview that “in the past, we and our neighbors did not know each other, apart from the differences in beliefs in the background in the community, it was also spearheaded by their respective busyness, but after there were activities in the community that needed a helping hand together in overcoming them, between us and our neighbors became familiar and familiar”. This means that living together in the community not only has a positive impact on the ease of work, but also brings the grace of improving relationships for the individual.

Based on some of the research results above, it is increasingly clear that aspects of social activities such as mutual cooperation have proven to be very impactful on conflict prevention in the community, especially between religious communities. The author believes that if the community can take positive values

towards the existence of each other, then differences are not something that should be an injustice in the community, there will be values or benefits from the other side that can be worked on together and agree to do so.

The fourth theme is (support from community and religious leaders). According to the informants, in maintaining inter-religious harmony, the role of community and religious leaders is very necessary, as it is known that the first element responsible for the comfort of the community is the person who is elevated one step or given more authority, and they are community and religious leaders who are the mediator or connector of tongues in the community.

Religious leaders are prominent people who have deep religious knowledge and experience and are used as role models or role models in society (Al Ikhlas et al., 2022; Burhan, 2017; Eriyanti et al., 2020; Kasmar et al., 2019). Religious leaders have a role as religious announcers, spiritual leaders, God's mandate bearers, coaches of the people, role models for the people and enforcers of truth (Engkizar et al., 2021; Fahham, 2016; Kaputra et al., 2021; Maputra et al., 2020).

Imran & Lubis, (2019) revealed that there are at least six main tasks that must be carried out by religious leaders in society, the six main tasks are: i) Developing various thoughts as a reference for the people in living their daily lives, ii) Guiding, and being a reference in explaining halal and haram things, iii) Being able to communicate well with the people, iv) Maintaining, preserving and enforcing teachings in accordance with the demands and rules of religious teachings, v) Wanting to defend and defend the rights of the people for the common good, (vi) Fighting against religious enemies. In addition to the above, religious leaders also play a role in minimizing conflicts or clashes between groups of followers of different religions, because what religious leaders teach will usually be easily accepted and believed by their followers (Imran & Lubis, 2019).

As stated by the informants, religious leaders (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism and Protestantism), community leaders and government officials always give advice or advice to the community on various occasions, such as in their respective houses of worship, at the implementation of wedding parties, or at moments of village deliberations, always starting with an appeal by the leaders not to be easily provoked by irresponsible issues. On the contrary, religious leaders and village government leaders invite them to always intensify activities that are in the nature of togetherness, such as social gatherings, death rallies and village mutual cooperation.

Community and religious leaders are parties who play an important role in realizing peace in the community. Like religious leaders, they are the first spearhead in shaping harmony between people in society (Irama & Zamzami, 2021). However, sometimes to realize this, various challenges must also be overcome, such as: i) religious leaders must be responsive and wise in utilizing and using technological developments in preaching, because they can be seen by everyone from various religious backgrounds, ii) religious leaders must be wise in communicating and disseminating information related to religious teachings, iii) the community is not entirely ready to face the challenges of the digital era, especially in communicating and using social media, iv) the emergence of religious leaders who do not fully understand religion, so that the information circulating cannot be confirmed, v) the lack of wisdom of the community in receiving information about religion that is not necessarily true, so that it can cause hoaxes and conflicts between religious communities (Burhan, 2017).

In addition to the challenges above, there are also some obstacles in creating harmony of inter-religious moderation, namely i) the greater desire of a religious community in increasing the number of adherents of their religion rather than improving the quality of religious people, ii) socio-cultural conditions that are easily tinkered with by the community, so that harmony can still be achieved but the religion loses its meaning, function and meaning, iii) the will to establish houses of worship without seeing the situation and conditions of the number of local religious adherents so that it offends religious people, iv) using the majority as a means of settlement so that it will cause problems, for example the ownership of funds and educational facilities to impose its will on students who learn, v) the shift in the way of life that is based on kinship or mutual cooperation towards individualistic life.

Based on the research results above and the reinforcement of the opinions of previous researchers, it is increasingly clear that community and religious leaders are the first to contribute to building good relations in the community, they are the ones who pioneer and prevent inter-religious conflicts in the community. The author determines their role in the results of this study, of course, has gone through clear considerations, one of which is the results of the author's interviews with informants, all informants agree that community leaders and religious leaders are the most appropriate answers in answering questions according to the theme of this research.

## CONCLUSION

All forms of differences such as religion and ethnicity do not become obstacles in the community to love each other. This research shows that interfaith community activities are one of the effective instruments for conflict prevention among communities. Positive interactions through interfaith community activities must be maintained and preserved continuously. So that the possibility of conflict due to religious and ethnic differences can be avoided as a preventive effort. All parties are aware of the boundaries, both permissible and impermissible, of each religion. In this context, religious leaders and officials should provide clear guidance on the true meaning of interfaith dialog, so that there is no mixing of *aqidah* (syncretism) between religions as something that is prohibited by each religion.

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## DECLARATIONS

### Author contribution

**Bayan Okenova:** data curation, writing-original draft preparation, **Wenxin Xu:** conceptualization, methodology, visualization, **Samiullah Adel:** editing, analysis.

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The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

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