DIGITAL THEORY, CULTURE & SOCIETY
https://journal.c-dics.com

DIGITAL THEORY, CULTURE & SOCIETY
ISSN 3031-707X
Center for Digital Culture Studies (C-DICS)

Volume 3, Issue 1, July 2025 **Page 15–22**

Efforts to prevent inter-religious intolerance in Indonesia through the wise use of social media

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.61126/dtcs.v3i1.100

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
inter-religious harmony
multiculturalism
tolerance
social media
Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The term interfaith harmony is synonymous with the term tolerance. Harmony is a term filled with the meaning of good and peace. The point is to live together in society with one heart and agree not to create disputes and fights. Living in harmony is everyone's dream. Differences on the one hand can be a strength if managed properly and professionally. However, if not, differences in worldviews between multicultural countries will become a factor in national disintegration and prolonged conflict. This article aims to find out the strategy for building religious harmony in Indonesia. The method used in this research is library research, namely tracing books and findings from interfaith harmony studies. The results of this study explain that there are 6 strategies that can be carried out in building harmony between religious communities, namely internalizing tolerance, maintaining kinship (*ukhuwah*), mutual respect and appreciation, mutual trust and avoiding prejudice, clarifying and confirming the information obtained and acting fairly.

Citation suggestion:
Habibah, S. M., Ihsan, Rumiati, S., & Gomez, A. (2025). Efforts to prevent inter-religious intolerance in Indonesia through the wise use of social media. *Digital Theory, Culture & Society, 3*(1), 15-22. https://doi.org/10.61126/dtcs.v3i1.100

Received 29 December 2024; Received in revised form 28 July 2025; Accepted 30 July 2025; Published online 31 July 2025.

Introduction

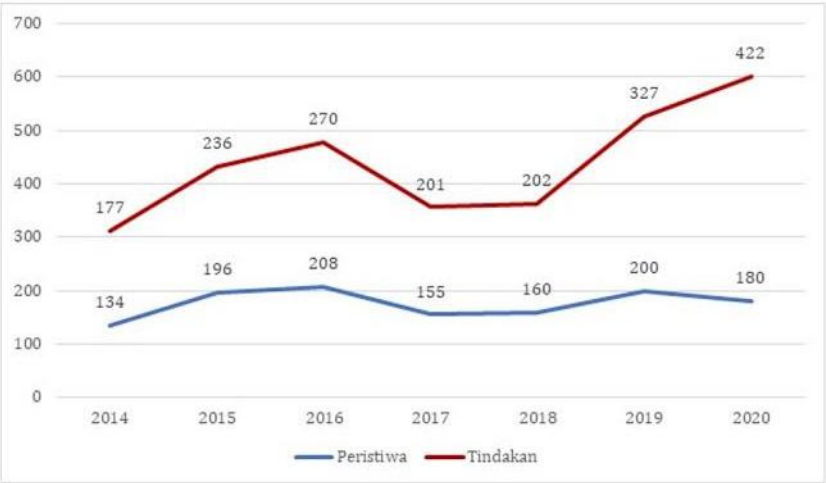
Indonesia is a country that has a high level of plurality and diversity. This high level of diversity can be the basic capital for Indonesia to be more advanced and developed. Diversity has a nature like a double-edged sword. In other words, on the one hand, diversity can be a national wealth to be more advanced and on the other hand, diversity can cause friction that has the potential to cause conflict (Arliman, L. 2018: 81). Therefore, an attitude of tolerance in Indonesia is very much needed. However, there is also an attitude of intolerance where people refuse to appreciate or respect differences. Indonesia has six religions that are legalized by the government so that an attitude of tolerance must be emphasized. However, there are still people who are intolerant of religious communities in Indonesia.

Indonesia is a country that has a very high level of diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, race and religion. Even if we look further, Indonesia is included in a *multi-religious country*. There are six religions that are officially recognized in Indonesia, namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. In addition, religions originating from local beliefs are not officially recognized by the Indonesian government, such as Sunda Wiwitan, Wetu Telu and Kaharingan.

Quoting from liputan6.com, it is stated that the diversity of society has its own positive impact, one of which is as a natural wealth. There are several factors that cause diversity in Indonesia, including; consisting of archipelagos, climate conditions, landscape conditions, differences in communication and transportation, race and class and the influence of foreign countries. This diversity is very important. Because, with the differences, every society can learn to appreciate and respect each other. In addition, diversity can also trigger society to understand different perspectives.

In line with this, the existence of diversity, especially the many legitimate religions in Indonesia, creates a fairly sensitive issue if there is no tolerance. The decreasing level of tolerance and increasing intolerance between religious communities can give rise to many crucial religious issues, including conflict and violence between religions (Subagyo, A. 2020: 15). An example is an incident when Muslims want to build a mosque for

Table 1. Trends of intolerant events and actions 2014-2020



Source: SETARA Institute, 2021

worship but there are people from other religions who reject it for several reasons. Even though the mosque is one of the places for Muslims to worship. In addition, another crucial issue is the existence of social jealousy between religious communities. This can happen anytime and anywhere when there is a religious community group that is considered stronger in the economic sector.

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that the issues and trends of cases regarding intolerance are increasing day by day. Thus, it can be concluded that the issue of religious communities is a very sensitive matter. Therefore, with the existence of these crucial issues, what needs to be considered is how people between religious communities can live side by side without jealousy and violence.

Indonesia is known as a country with a diversity of religions, cultures, and traditions. However, this diversity also brings challenges in the form of potential intolerance between religious communities that can threaten social harmony. One of the main causes of intolerance is the spread of hate speech, hoaxes, and provocations through social media. Based on data from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo), more than 800,000 negative content related to intolerance was found on social media in 2023. Social media, as a broad communication platform, can be an effective tool to support tolerance if used wisely. Therefore, efforts to prevent intolerance through digital literacy and responsible use of social media are very necessary. Referring to the description background back above , author interested For discuss more carry on about issue intolerance in the territory of Indonesia.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method aimed at analyzing efforts to prevent interfaith intolerance through the wise use of social media. Data were collected through a literature review of relevant sources, such as academic journals, official government reports, and credible media news, to establish a theoretical framework. Additionally, empirical data were obtained through direct observation of digital communities actively promoting tolerance, as well as semi-structured interviews with religious leaders, youth, and digital literacy activists to understand strategies for preventing intolerance in society. Findings from the literature and field observations were qualitatively analyzed to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of social media in fostering an inclusive and harmonious digital space.

Results and Discussion

Basically, tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for differences. Tolerance often raises various quite crucial issues. This results in tolerance being quite associated with pluralism (Muharam, RS 2020: 269). A high level of tolerance can be linked to issues in modern societies that are multi-religious and ethnic. Reporting from the kompasiana.com page, it states that tolerance between religious communities is very true. This is done so that a person's belief in the religion they believe in will not be disturbed by other religions. Therefore, it is necessary to develop an attitude of tolerance and pluralism in society so that they can maintain unity and uphold the value of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.

In line with this, according to Webster (in Subagyo, A. 2020), pluralism is part of a diverse social condition in society. With this pluralism, it will create conditions where society can live side by side with the existing diversity. Referring to this, religious pluralism means where there is a condition of living side by side even though they adhere

to different religions while still maintaining their respective teachings.

The principle of pluralism is living side by side while still emphasizing the principle of my religion is my religion and your religion is your religion. So in a society that has high diversity, the level of tolerance and pluralism needs to continue to be developed so that there is no conflict or crucial issues between religious communities.

Intolerant atitudes between religious communities

Religious intolerance is an attitude where society does not appreciate or respect religious differences in Indonesia (Muhaemin, E., & Sanusi, I. 2019: 30). Usually, this intolerance between religious communities occurs in minority religions. Intolerant attitudes arise from external and internal factors, such as personal experience, mass media and so on.

Intolerant actions have various negative impacts, including often causing terror in society. This is because there are some individuals who use the name of religion to carry out inappropriate actions against people who adhere to different religions so that they feel their lives are threatened. So that these intolerant actions are more directed towards radicalism (Muharam, RS 2020: 269).

In line with this, if acts of intolerance are not prevented and addressed properly, they will cause various conflicts in society. This attitude of religious intolerance can arise, one of which is because there are people who are too fanatical about the religion they believe in so that they feel they are the most correct. In addition, another cause is the high ego due to differences in understanding religious teachings which causes a sense of intolerance and can cause division in the Indonesian nation.

These driving factors must be addressed immediately so that intolerant attitudes between religious communities can be quickly overcome. Efforts to overcome this can be done by understanding that intolerant attitudes are not good. In addition, increasing mutual respect and appreciation and lowering egos are also very important.

Factors causing inter-religious intolerance

Inter-religious intolerance often still occurs in Indonesia. Reporting from the newsdetik.com page, it states that this is caused by four factors, including:

1. Sectarian religious views
2. Religious population
3. Politicians who exploit religion
4. The establishment of places of worship that are prohibited on religious grounds

Based on these four factors, it can cause intolerance between religious communities which causes a division in society. In addition, according to Gatot (in Kusuma, RA 2019: 276), there are three main factors that cause intolerance between religious communities, namely:

1. Globalization, the development of the global situation that has hit the whole world has caused various impacts, both positive and negative. One of the negative impacts of globalization is the erosion of eastern values such as tolerance. Therefore, the attitude of tolerance decreases and intolerance increases. So that we as a society must be able to sort out the aspects of globalization that enter so that they are in accordance with the character and identity of the nation.

2. Democracy dominated by the "Low Class", with a less than ideal democratic climate will cause a tendency to make a rapid, critical but irrational change. This will create majority and minority groups so that it will give rise to primordialism values that give rise to intolerance.
3. The development of social media, with the development of technology and information, causes information to spread globally and very quickly. This causes some information that is not known to be true to spread and cause friction between groups so that it can cause a fairly thick intolerance.

In line with this, if we look further, we can see that this attitude of religious intolerance comes from a person himself. This can happen due to high ego and fanaticism towards the religion he adheres to so that he feels the most correct. This attitude of religious intolerance must be quickly overcome. Given that Indonesia is a country that has a high level of diversity, if there is no tolerance, it will cause friction and conflict.

In addition, environmental factors can also influence intolerance. Because the issue of religion is a very sensitive matter. Therefore, the environment can be a trigger for religious sentiment issues that become the forerunner of intolerance.

Wise use of social media can be one solution to prevent inter-religious intolerance in Indonesia. First, digital literacy needs to be improved so that people can sort out correct information and avoid the spread of hoaxes. According to the Press Council (2022), only 45% of Indonesians are able to distinguish hoax news from factual news. Second, social media-based tolerance campaigns need to be intensified by involving religious figures and youth. A study by Nasrullah (2021) shows that positive campaigns on social media can increase understanding and acceptance of differences. Third, the government and social media platforms must work together to strengthen regulations related to hate speech and content moderation. This step is in line with research from Lim et al. (2020) which states that effective regulations can reduce the spread of intolerant content by up to 35%.

Efforts to prevent inter-religious intolerance

The attitude of intolerance between religious communities in Indonesia must be addressed immediately so as not to disrupt the life of the nation and state. Quoting from the kompasiana.com page, it is stated that the negative impact of the inherent attitude of intolerance between religious communities is the occurrence of friction that can cause conflict so that various national divisions arise. This can hinder the development of the country due to the harmony conflict that occurs.

This attitude of religious intolerance can arise, one of which is because there are people who are too fanatical about the religion they believe in so that they feel they are the most correct (Kusuma, RA 2019: 276). In addition, another cause is the high ego due to differences in understanding religious teachings which causes a sense of intolerance and can cause division in the Indonesian nation.

These driving factors must be addressed immediately so that intolerant attitudes between religious communities can be quickly overcome. These efforts can be done by understanding that intolerant attitudes are not good (Muharam, RS 2020: 269). In addition, increasing mutual respect and appreciation and lowering egos are also very important. Here are some efforts to avoid intolerant attitudes, including:

1. Do not impose your own will and lower your personal ego

2. Care for the environment
3. Considering all religions the same and not considering one's religion to be better than other religions
4. Do not take actions that violate norms
5. Be careful in filtering the incoming impacts of globalization

In line with the efforts made, it will increase a strong attitude of tolerance. This is done so that there is no conflict between religious communities and to increase harmony. In addition, the existence of a legal basis and an understanding that all religions teach the right path will also reduce the attitude of intolerance between religious communities.

Implementation of religious moderation for the millennial generation

Religion is an important part of the life of the Indonesian nation. To understand Indonesia, moderation in religion is important to maintain harmony between religious rights and working as a nation and state, one of which is related to the millennium. Indonesia is indeed famous for its friendliness, maintaining its culture, respecting it. Indonesian cultural values that uphold brotherhood, love, respect, gratitude are very strong. However, in recent years, the culture of hospitality and respect has begun to disappear. Crime, radicalism, hate speech, blasphemy, the spread of fake news, to the destruction of interfaith relations, are problems currently being faced by the Indonesian nation, especially for the younger generation or generation Y, which is now the best solution that must be sought directly.

Religious obedience can be used as a solution to overcome current problems. In the end, no one feels comfortable anymore so it is easy to blame, criticize, slander because of different beliefs. This is good. Because in fact every religion teaches peace and goodness. and human life. Because Islam itself teaches compassion for all creatures, which we often call Rahmatal Lil Alamin. However, many people believe that moderation in religion will increase religious understanding. good religious principles. Religious law does not mix religious teachings, but respects the various religions in Indonesia. (Karjianto, 2020).

As Prof. Dr. Ali Ramdhani there are 4 indicators of religious violence, namely prevention of violence, acceptance, cultural acceptance, and national intervention is impossible. Principles of generation Religious millennials are the most pressing because they thrive in an environment of acceptance, peace and harmony so that their thoughts and actions are rational and rational. If the environment is negative, young people find themselves in an unacceptable environment full of violence and hate speech, it will affect their thoughts and behavior now and in the future. (History et al., 2022).

Instilling religious obedience is very important among millennials because it develops better attitudes and aims to create a harmonious and non-threatening life. There is also the role of society and religious leaders who really need their involvement to create harmony and peace in the process of religious abuse. (Darmayanti & Maudin, 2021) As the millennial generation is still a nation, they should understand that having an attitude of tolerance is related to religious moderation.

Being tolerant means actively donating and contributing to supporting national unity and solidarity (Elvinaro & Syarif, 2022) For this reason, the role of educational institutions, society and religious leaders helps to realize a harmonious and peaceful life. Indonesian society. Moderation is very important to be taught and spread among millennials to prevent and reduce unwanted behavior. If you look at the dependence of the millennial generation on information

technology including social media, social media plays an important role in shaping religious activity behavior in order to achieve it. and know how to use social media. (Pujianto, 2022) It can be concluded that an understanding of religious practices must be applied to the younger generation in the hope of reducing intolerance towards oneself.

In addition, wrong thinking must also prevent extremism and radicalism and protect the younger generation from it. simplicity in religious matters to provide an understanding of religious moderation to the young millennial generation so that later the young millennial generation can implement it in community life. Instilling an understanding of religious moderation is very important so that the younger generation is not easily exposed to chaos and violence.

Conclusion

Social media has great potential as a tool to promote tolerance if used wisely. Efforts to prevent intolerance between religious communities in Indonesia can be done through increasing digital literacy, tolerance campaigns, and strengthening regulations. Collaboration between the government, society, and social media platforms is essential to create an inclusive and harmonious digital space. With these steps, it is hoped that Indonesia can maintain harmony between religious communities amidst the challenges of the digital era.

Obedience to religion develops a person's sense of religion properly, namely understanding and practicing religious teachings without burden. So that everyone can give opinions from their own perspective. In Islam, it is not right to do extreme things because it makes someone believe that he is right. Thousands people gather to maintain harmony and increase tolerance between religious communities, so that it can strengthen national unity. Millennials will be fine with receiving and responding to religious information or content that is regularly updated on the Internet to avoid conflict between religious communities. Millennials must be able to develop different cultural and religious views in society so as not to be exposed to radicalism. It is important to get rid of this religion so that it does not take thousands of years to develop. Intolerant actions have various negative impacts, includingoften causing terror in society. This is because there are some individuals who use religion as a pretext to carry out inappropriate actions against people who adhere to different religions so that they feel threatened by their lives. So that these intolerant actions are more directed towards radicalism. In line with this, if intolerant actions are not prevented and resolved properly, they will cause various conflicts in society. This attitude of religious intolerance can arise, one of which is because there are people who are too fanatical about the religion they adhere to so that they feel they are the most correct. In addition, another cause is the high ego due to differences in understanding religious teachings which causes a sense of intolerance and can cause division in the Indonesian nation.

Declaration of Ownership

This article is our original work.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

Ethical Clearance

This study was approved by the institution.

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