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## Religious Harmony in Singkil Aceh Indonesia: New Paradigms for Rebuild Religious Understanding

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### Abstract

This article explores the role of collective leadership in addressing religious challenges in Indonesia, particularly in Singkil Aceh. The study employed qualitative research to gain insights into how the leader of the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) facilitated conflict resolution between Muslims and Protestants. One key entity in this endeavor is Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB), or the Forum of Religious Harmony, which is dedicated to managing and promoting religious harmony. FKUB comprises leaders from various religious organizations, including MUI, NU, Muhammadiyah, KWI, PGI, Parisadha Hindu Indonesia, Walubi, and Matakin, who represent their respective communities. Among FKUB's initiatives are inter-religious and intra-religious dialogues aimed at minimizing conflicts. The collective leadership model of FKUB serves as an effective strategy for embracing diversity in Indonesia's pluralistic and multicultural society, fostering a spirit of harmony. Numerous programs can be developed and implemented to further cultivate peace within this context.

**Key Word:** Conflict, FKUB, Harmony, Singkil

## INTRODUCTION

Even though the case of religious social violence in Singkil, Aceh, occurred several years ago, a sense of mutual suspicion persists. The relationship between Muslims and Protestant Christians in Singkil is still characterized by this mistrust. This ongoing issue arises from the fact that fundamental solutions aimed at fostering harmony among different religious communities have not been thoroughly implemented. Consequently, the Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB) plays a crucial role in addressing this problem. Conflicts between religious communities are prevalent because Indonesian society is composed of diverse tribes, religions, races, and groups.

Indonesia, with a population of 264 million, is composed of 17,504 islands, speaks 546 languages, and is home to 1,340 ethnic groups. This diversity results in a high level of pluralism and multiculturalism, which necessitates effective management of these differences. The Indonesian people are fortunate to have visionary founding fathers who envisioned a prosperous future for the nation. Historically, the struggle of the nation's heroes has established diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Indonesia. At a crucial moment during the early days of independence, the national leaders of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI) reached a consensus to adopt Pancasila as the foundation of the country. This agreement included the removal of the clause that mandated the implementation of Islamic law for its adherents. This decision was crucial to preventing potential national disintegration and fostering unity among Indonesia's diverse population (Nur Syam, 2016: 167-180).

Through an understanding of its diversity, the national independence leaders of Indonesia agreed to build a visionary and independent nation that emphasizes tranquility, harmony, and safety for its people. Today, Indonesia is well-known for its commitment to diversity, embodied in the principle of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity), which reflects its ability to embrace plurality and multiculturalism. This foundation is inspired by the spirit of the country's founding fathers, who positioned unity as a protector of peace. Despite being home to a wide variety of ethnicities, religions, and cultures, Indonesia is unique in its collective religious coexistence, evident in family and community life. Research conducted by M. Hasyim Samhudi (2013: 1-11) illustrates how religious differences can exist even within a single household, showcasing a distinctive and genuine understanding and practice of religion in Indonesia.

The study of religious harmony in Indonesia examines various aspects, particularly the relationships and interactions between different religions. According to Yudhi Kawangung's

writing (2019), there is currently friction and horizontal conflict exacerbated by social media. The implementation of tolerance is declining, as the majority group often offers tolerance while the minority group tends to behave differently. Consequently, tolerance needs to be adapted to the context, leading to the emerging discourse on religious moderation. In their study, Muhammad Jailani and Elly Warnisyah Harahap (2019) highlight that social perceptions of this program are largely positive regarding its role in fostering religious harmony within society. However, they note that stakeholders generally have a low level of knowledge about religious harmony. To enhance this role, support from university leaders and study program leaders is essential. Dewi Tika Lestari's work (2020) discusses how *hadrah* and trumpet music can be utilized as musical instruments for religious rituals, benefiting both Muslims and Christians. The collaboration between these musical instruments can help the people of Ambon maintain religious harmony, and importantly, musical instruments can serve as tools for promoting peace in a pluralistic society.

Nanang Fahrudin, Sri Harstjarjo, and Agung Setyawan (2018) highlight that the interfaith community in the Christian Village is concerned about potential conflicts between different religious groups. To address this, they have developed strategies involving communication, integration, separation, stability, change, openness, and self-protection. As a result of the existing tensions, they have adopted a cautious approach, particularly regarding religious issues. They prefer to maintain harmony instead of discussing sensitive topics. Abdul Kholiq (2008) noted that the sense of brotherhood among the Semarang community faces challenges due to political friction, competition for religious conversion, and the rise of fundamentalism, which have all contributed to tensions in interfaith relations.

E. Armada Riyanto (2010) noted that interfaith dialogue is highly relevant to the needs of religious communities in Indonesia, especially amid ongoing social changes and evolving interests. The church must take an active role in fostering interfaith cooperation to promote harmony and tolerance. Biyanto (2010) mentioned that there has been ongoing debate among two factions of the young Muhammadiyah groups concerning the concept of religious pluralism. This idea can provoke sensitivity and controversy; for proponents of pluralism, it is viewed as essential, while opponents often consider it heretical, arguing that it suggests all religions are the same. In their writings, Abdul Halim and Arsyad Sobby (2019) observed that the Karangasem community possesses a strong awareness of the importance of living in harmony and peace. They emphasize the need for tolerance between the Hindu and Muslim communities, rooted in tradition. For this community, tradition serves as a valuable asset for fostering harmony. This longstanding coexistence among religious groups is supported by the

"nyawa Braya" tradition, which represents a mutual agreement among different faiths. Bahrul Hayat (2012) emphasized that in this context, it is crucial to rebuild the national paradigm as a framework for promoting religious harmony. A national policy is necessary to establish a cohesive system for society, the nation, and the state.

Saiful Mujani (2020) argues that although many perspectives in Indonesia highlight intolerance, the reality is that the country has a very tolerant society. Many researchers overlook the religio-political factors that actually explain the Indonesian people's attitude towards tolerance. Another study by Mallia Hartani and Soni Ahmad Nulhaqim (2019) examines the conflict between Muslims and Protestant Christians in Singkil, Aceh. This conflict arose from disappointment between the two groups due to the breach of an agreement they had previously established. The continued growth of churches among Christians led to dissatisfaction within the Muslim community, which ultimately made conflict inevitable.

Many studies focus on the dynamics of religious harmony in various regions. These studies address themes such as harmony among religious communities, tolerance between different faiths, dialogue among religious groups, social media as a catalyst for social conflict, communication between religious communities, and the role of art media in promoting religious harmony. Additionally, there are studies that provide insights into the Interfaith Harmony Forum and examine social unrest related to religious issues in Singkil, Aceh.

Among the various studies conducted, the specific investigation into the role of collegial collective leadership within the Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB) has not yet been empirically explored. Therefore, this study aims to examine how the collegial collective leadership model implemented by the FKUB can contribute to fostering interfaith harmony, particularly in addressing social conflicts in Singkil Regency, Aceh, Indonesia. The social significance of this research will provide a valuable reference for the FKUB in regions with similar social contexts to adopt this leadership approach. Theoretically, the study will analyze the leadership patterns of religious organizations in promoting social harmony among different faith communities.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Data were gathered through interviews and document analysis. Additionally, the research utilizes various documents, including books, journals, statistical data, and other relevant works. These

document sources are essential for supporting the primary data collected from in-depth interviews.

As a qualitative study with a descriptive framework, this research focuses on key informants who explain how the leaders of the FKUB (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) managed riots or social conflicts with religious undertones. The collected data undergoes a classification process for both interview sources and secondary documentation, organized into a predetermined categorization system related to the collegial leadership of the FKUB leaders. After classification, the data is analysed using qualitative research methods, which include data reduction—simplifying the information into classifications based on concepts. Each concept or classification is then described according to its corresponding field data, and conclusions are drawn in alignment with the research objectives.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Concept of Collegial Leadership*

Collegial leadership is a widely recognized pattern of leadership implemented in various fields, including politics (Thomas A. Baylis, 1980), business (Tiffany C. Wright, 2019), and education (Prakash Singh, 2012). This paper explores collegial leadership as a framework for understanding leadership within FKUB in the context of fostering religious harmony.

The terms "collegial leadership" and "collegial leaders" are interconnected. In this context, a collegial leader shares power and authority equally among a group of colleagues. A collegial style is characterized by a collaborative atmosphere where team members work together to solve problems (Tiffany C. Wright, 2019). Collegial leadership is defined by behaviors and communication patterns that promote sustained collaborative processes (Mooney, Bums, and Chadwick, 2012: 144). Integrity plays a crucial role in this style of leadership, involving the sharing of responsibilities and accountability for one's actions, which should be the ultimate goal of all institutions (Prakash Singh, 2019). This study indicates that the case of collegiality in the Swiss Federal Council suggests that collegial leadership not only aligns with modern political organizations but also provides an effective structure for decision-making in industrial society (Thomas A. Baylis, 2019).

### *The Concept of Forum of Religious Harmony*

One of the fundamental aspects for the Indonesian people is the establishment of the Ministry of Religion, which was founded on January 3, 1946. Through this ministry, the development of religious life can be carried out effectively. Recognized religions in Indonesia

receive financial support, guidance, and development resources according to their specific capacities.

Every religion is allocated a proportion of funding, coaching, and development through the Directorate General of Guidance for Religions. This process allows religious life to grow according to its potential and capabilities. By leveraging the authority, main tasks, and functions of the government, the Ministry of Religion promotes positive development in the lives of religious communities. A key focus is on fostering harmony among people of different faiths, facilitated through the Centre for Religious Harmony (PKUB).

Religious harmony is a collaborative program that involves multiple ministries and agencies. The Indonesian government encourages various ministries and institutions to participate in promoting religious harmony. Given that this is a cross-ministry initiative, it is essential to have similar efforts aimed at building understanding and cooperation among different religious communities. To achieve this, establishing coordination between the Ministry of Religion and other relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the justice system, is crucial.

The Centre for Religious Harmony (PKUB) is a leading organization in implementing programs that promote religious harmony. They have developed several strategic initiatives aimed at fostering harmony in religious life. These include inter-religious dialogue, interfaith dialogue activities, cross-religious youth camps, coordination forums for religious leaders, and multicultural dialogues. Interfaith dialogue is conducted across all provinces and districts in Indonesia, involving religious leaders in various events and occasions.

Inter-religious dialogue is a critical program for developing religious harmony. It is important to note that each religion possesses unique teachings that distinguish them from others, and adherents of each faith often believe that their religion is the sole path to truth and salvation. For instance, Islam emphasizes in Surah Ali Imron (3:19) that "the only true faith in Allah's sight is Islam" (Mahmud Y. Yazid, 1980: 36). Similarly, Buddhism describes the purpose of a holy life, stating: "Monks, this holy life is not lived for others, for idle chatter, for personal gain, hospitality, or praise; nor should one defend their own theories. Rather, the holy life is lived for the sake of restraint, relinquishment, avoidance of attachment, and the cessation of suffering" (Peter Harvey, 2017: 154).

This type of truth claim often triggers tensions and can even lead to inter-religious conflict (Budi Munawar Rahman, 2004: vii). Through dialogue among different religious groups, we can better understand these differences, fostering a spirit of mutual tolerance among believers. Each religion must assert its truth claims, for without these claims, religion

loses its meaning. All religions provide a path to salvation, and each claims that its way is the only right path that can lead to salvation. For example, Islam teaches that salvation is achieved by being a pious individual who observes both ritual and social responsibilities. In Christian and Catholic teachings, salvation is said to come only through Jesus Christ; therefore, those seeking salvation must follow the path laid out by Him. Similarly, Buddhism asserts that the way to salvation can only be attained by living according to the teachings of Buddha.

The presence of the Ministry of Religion through the Center for Religious Harmony is crucial. The Ministry's Strategic Plan includes programs aimed at improving religious understanding and practice, enhancing religious harmony, elevating the quality of religious education, upgrading hajj services, improving religious facilities and infrastructure, and advancing governance and bureaucratic reform. Promoting harmony among religious communities is a key goal given Indonesia's high level of plurality and multiculturalism, making collaboration essential for managing society as a whole.

As a country with high levels of community religiosity, Indonesia has established a mutualistic relationship between the state and religion. This means that the state relies on religion as a moral foundation, while religion depends on the state to regulate interactions among its diverse citizens. Consequently, the establishment of the Center for Religious Harmony is crucial and strategic for both the present and future. In a pluralistic and multicultural nation, the key challenge is achieving harmony at both the national and state levels, particularly between different religious groups. Therefore, the government is committed to promoting religious harmony.

Efforts to build this harmony began with the issuance of a decree by the Minister of Religion and the Minister of Home Affairs, No. 01/BER/mdn-mag/1969, which addressed the responsibilities of government officials in ensuring order and facilitating the smooth implementation of development and religious worship by adherents, dated September 13, 1969 (Atho Mudzhar, 2011: 25). This was followed by the Minister of Religion's Decree No. 70 of 1978 concerning religion broadcasting, and Decree No. 77 of 1978 regarding foreign assistance to religious institutions. These efforts were further reinforced by a joint decree (SKB) issued by the Minister of Religion and the Minister of Home Affairs, No. 1 of 1979, which outlined the procedures for religion broadcasting and foreign assistance to religious institutions in Indonesia (Atho Mudzhar, 2011: 26). Essentially, the aim is to prohibit religious broadcasting to followers in order to maintain tolerance, harmony, and mutual respect.

On June 30, 1980, the Minister of Religion issued Letter of Decision Number 35 of 1980 regarding the Interfaith Community Conference. This conference served as a platform for

meetings and dialogues among representatives of various religious assemblies. One outcome of these discussions was the formulation of a guideline, which was later documented in Circular Number MA/432/1981, dated September 2, 1981. This circular emphasized the importance of attending religious holidays within one's own faith, while also allowing for participation in the celebrations of other religions, as long as these did not conflict with the rituals or beliefs of their own faith. (Atho Mudzhar, 2011: 27). Therefore, it is clear that the government's efforts to promote religious harmony began well before the establishment of the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB).

The FKUB (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama), or Forum for Religious Harmony, was established based on a Joint Regulation issued by the Minister of Religion No. 8 and the Minister of Home Affairs No. 9 in 2006, which addresses the Harmony of Religious Communities. This regulation served as the foundation for creating the FKUB, as outlined in Chapter III, which states that FKUB should be established in provinces and districts/cities through community initiative and with support from the regional government.

The relationship between the local government and the FKUB is consultative. The FKUB consists of 21 members at the provincial level and 17 members at the district/city level, all chosen by religious leaders (Ridlwani Lubis, 2011: 245). The primary responsibility of the provincial FKUB is to facilitate internal and inter-religious dialogue, accommodate the aspirations of religious communities, and channel these interests to the appropriate governmental agencies. Additionally, the district/city FKUB carries out these tasks while also having the authority to provide written recommendations regarding applications for the establishment of places of worship and to issue opinions on buildings being used for temporary worship (M. Ridlwani Lubis, 2011: 245).

The Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) is an institution that represents all religious communities in a region and implements programs and activities aimed at fostering harmony among these groups. According to research conducted by Kustini (2009: 48-49), FKUB has effectively played its role and has shown the ability to collaborate with the government to maintain harmony among religious communities. However, further efforts are needed, as the harmony among religious groups is a dynamic phenomenon that evolves with changing times and social conditions.

In this context, FKUB serves as a strategic initiative by the government and religious leaders in Indonesia, playing an increasingly important role in promoting religious harmony and encouraging moderate religious beliefs. Many Indonesians hope that FKUB can effectively



represent the diverse religious community and provide a platform for dialogue to enhance mutual understanding among different faiths.

### *The Case of Religious Harmony Problem in Singkil Aceh*

The relationship between religious communities in Singkil, Aceh, generally reflects peaceful coexistence. Thus far, there have been no serious conflicts between these communities. This indicates that social relations among them align with their understanding of religion. The interactions between Muslims and Christians have also been characterized by efforts to build harmony. However, since 1979, relations between these two groups have experienced fluctuations, with several instances of social tension arising. These tensions were partly fuelled by the establishment of the Indonesian Church of God (GTI) and concerns about Christianization. Fortunately, this conflict was addressed through dialogues between the religious communities, culminating in the signing of the Joint Harmony Pledge on October 13, 1979.

In the 1980s, it was agreed that there would be five Christian churches established in Singkil. However, as the Christian community grew, its members began demanding the right to establish their own churches. This demand stemmed from the belief that each denomination's members should worship according to their respective pastors. Consequently, conflicts often arose between Christians and Muslims, as well as with other religious groups.

The Singkil area borders North Sumatra, which has seen an increase in migration to Singkil. Many of the migrants are Christians who come to work in the region's fertile agricultural sector. As a result, the number of churches in Singkil grew rapidly, escalating from the original five Protestant Christian churches to 25. This surge in church construction has created tensions between the Muslim community and Protestant Christians.

Daud Faqeh, the former head of the Aceh Regional Office, explained on December 8, 2020: "Every addition of a church is discussed within the FKUB (Forum for Communication between Religious Communities). If the members agree to the addition and the government issues a permit, then construction can proceed. Initially, five Christian churches were agreed upon by Muslims and other religious groups. However, the continuous demand for more churches can undoubtedly create tensions. Each year, there is a push to add more churches, despite there already being a significant number."

The establishment of a church in Singkil encountered significant issues in 2015, primarily stemming from the political landscape. This was prompted by a political promise

made by Regent Damanik, who pledged to facilitate the establishment of a church for the Protestant Christian community. Consequently, they sought to build a new church in Singkil.

Daud Faqeh stated on December 10, 2020, "The Regent of Singkil, Damanik, faced challenges in fulfilling his promise to simplify the process for establishing a church. By the end of his term, he had not realized this promise, but he assured the community he would address it in his second term. Unfortunately, Damanik was not re-elected, which meant that the promise remained unfulfilled. Meanwhile, the Protestant Christian community continued to press for the establishment of a church, leading to incidents of destruction and arson against churches in Singkil."

It is important to note that the destruction targeted churches that lacked permits. Established churches with proper authorization were generally not affected. Instead, it was the unauthorized churches, built without clear legal status, that faced damage from the congregants at that time. Daud Faqeh elaborated: "Many churches in Singkil were constructed without the necessary permission from the FKUB (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) and the government through the IMB (Izin Mendirikan Bangunan). They built these churches and began using them for worship immediately. Consequently, these establishments were unofficial, and there are quite a few of them. In fact, church construction among Protestant Christians occurs almost every year."

According to the regulations, the regional government has clear authority when it comes to establishing places of worship. These establishments must meet the requirements outlined in the Minister of Religion and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Nos. 8 and 9 of 2006, which pertain to the duties of regional heads in promoting interfaith harmony. However, it appears that the government has been lax in enforcing these regulations. Daud Faqeh stated, "The regional government should be proactive in closing down unlicensed churches rather than allowing them to operate. This lack of enforcement has led to an increase in the number of Protestant churches." He noted that the FKUB has advised the government to take a firm stance, but despite conflicts arising, the government has not acted.

The religious tensions in the area have been exacerbated by the arrival of immigrants, particularly Christians from North Sumatra, who have settled in Singkil. The Acehnese community is traditionally known for adhering to Islamic teachings. Singkil is also significant in the Islamic world due to its renowned cleric, Abdurrauf Al Singkili, who was part of the Syatariyah order. He had connections with followers of this order in Java, specifically West Java, establishing a genealogical relationship of knowledge with Sheikh Al Singkili.

Muslims in Singkil became increasingly disturbed when immigrants began seeking places of worship. As a result, various churches emerged in the area. In 1976, an effort was made to facilitate dialogue between the Muslim and Christian communities regarding the construction of a new church in Singkil. An agreement was reached that allowed the Singkil Christian community to build one large church and four small churches, known as *udung-udung*. However, the construction of these churches proceeded without considering the concerns of the Muslim community. All the churches that were built lacked official permits from the government.

The rising number of churches in Singkil unsettled the Muslim community, leading to acts of arson against the churches. In response, the Aceh Regional Government had established relatively adequate regulations, such as Governor Regulation Number 25 of 2007, which outlines the requirements for establishing places of worship. This regulation specifies that there must be 150 ID cards from users of the place of worship and at least 120 ID cards from local residents. These regulations were later updated with Aceh Qanun No. 4 of 2016, which addressed guidelines for maintaining interfaith harmony and the establishment of houses of worship. This update stipulates the need for 140 ID cards for users of the place of worship and 110 ID cards for supporters. The local government aimed to ensure that the establishment of places of worship was properly managed to prevent social conflicts. Despite these efforts, the establishment of Christian churches has continued without the necessary permits being issued.

According to Galba (12/12/2020), there are at least two external and internal factors that contribute to social conflict arising from church construction. First, the Christian community from North Sumatra struggles to understand the traditions and culture of the Singkil community, which is deeply religious and adheres closely to Islamic teachings. For instance, during the fasting month, stalls are only allowed to open after 3:00 PM. However, the Christian community often disregards this practice by holding events during the day, which conflicts with the observance of fasting for Muslims in Singkil. Second, the desire to build churches often stems from want rather than need. Each group or denomination wishes to construct its own church, leading to an uncontrolled proliferation of new churches. Many of these constructions lack the necessary permits as required by regulations for places of worship. Another point of contention between Muslims and Christians involves the desire to hold religious ceremonies at home. For example, Christmas rituals, which are typically conducted in a church, are sometimes celebrated at home due to the distance of the nearest church. When the Muslim community learns of these plans, objections arise. To address these

issues, the FKUB mediated between the two groups. A resolution was reached in collaboration with the local government, which decided to provide transportation services for Christmas services at the church. Through this facilitation by the local government, the problem was resolved, preventing potential religious conflicts. Supporting transportation financing can play a crucial role in addressing such issues (Galba, 12/25/2020).

In the Singkil area, which borders North Sumatra, efforts to foster togetherness among religious communities are prioritized. When social violence arises over the establishment of a church, the FKUB (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) steps in to mediate the situation. The FKUB employs several strategies to resolve conflicts among religious groups. First, they form a study team that includes experts and a technical field team. This team conducts a mapping of the issues at hand, and the findings are then discussed to generate recommendations for addressing the case. These discussions are forwarded to the Sub-district Head, then to the Regent, and finally to the provincial FKUB. Galba noted, "There was once a team from the National Human Rights Commission led by Ahmad Taufan Damanik, who came to mediate. However, only Christians and local government representatives were invited. I emphasized that for true reconciliation, the Muslim community must also be involved; it can't be just between Christians and the local government. All those affected must be included in discussing solutions" (Galba, 12/25/2020). Second, conflict resolution occurs during FKUB management meetings. As a functional organization with a collective and collegial character, every issue is addressed collaboratively. There is no dominance by the majority or oppression of the minority; everyone is given the opportunity to speak. When conflicts arise between religious communities, the religious leaders who are part of the FKUB advocate on behalf of their groups. Galba explained, "While it is not feasible to gather input from all religious communities, it suffices to consult their representatives in the FKUB. They serve as representatives of their communities" (Galba, 12/25/2020).

Third, it is essential to engage in dialogue between residents facing issues. Problem resolution must involve collaboration among the religious communities in disagreement; it cannot be addressed solely by the local government or the FKUB. The residents experiencing the conflict need to be included in the discussions. For instance, in resolving the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Singkil, community involvement is crucial. The primary issue at hand is the establishment of a church without a permit, and resolving this matter requires consultation among both Muslim and Christian residents, with facilitation provided by the FKUB. Subsequently, the local government will determine the course of action based on the outcomes of this dialogue. Furthermore, the role of the government is vital in addressing

conflicts between religious communities. If the FKUB serves as a facilitator and the community takes an active role in problem-solving, then the local government can make informed decisions about how to proceed. Without the participation of all parties involved, the aspiration to resolve these issues will remain just an ideal. It is important to remember: "Don't make the FKUB just a fire extinguisher. If there is a problem, get involved" (Galba, 12/25/2020).

### *Collective Leadership for Religious Harmony*

The study of religious harmony was conducted by lecturers examining various aspects of the FKUB's functions. For instance, Nadia Wasta Utami highlighted several efforts made by the FKUB in Tasikmalaya District to resolve conflicts. These efforts include: First, listening to the aspirations of both parties involved in the conflict. Second, strengthening relationships by conducting surveys before formulating strategies. This approach aims to identify the most suitable methods to address the issues at hand. Third, empowering the community economically is seen as crucial, particularly for reviving the economy of the Ahmadiyya community. This empowerment can be achieved through initiatives such as animal husbandry, fisheries, and processing bananas for snacks (Mohammad Anang Firdaus, 2014).

Additionally, Ardiyansyah (2019) notes that based on his studies of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) community (PCNU) and the Christian community (GKI) in Serang, dialogue must be conducted using communicative actions rooted in rationality. This involves using language that is mutually understood and based on shared opinions for the benefit of all parties involved. Teleological utilization is deemed very important in this context. Furthermore, normative actions should be based on mutually agreed-upon norms. Dramaturgic actions can also play a role by ensuring a consistent understanding between the front and back stages of dialogue. Achieving similarity between these stages helps build trust among dialogue participants.

There are several factors that can contribute to the "vulnerability" of religious harmony. According to Budi S. Tanuwibowo (2011: 137-182), these factors include pseudo-religious rituals, loss of mutual trust, issues related to places of worship, attitudes towards religious syncretism, political factors such as presidential elections, economic inequality, a materialistic culture, and imbalances both vertically and horizontally. Among these factors, issues concerning places of worship, economic disparity, and the erosion of trust between communities frequently trigger conflicts.

The establishment of places of worship often poses external problems for interreligious relations. For instance, the creation of a church in a predominantly Muslim area can encounter significant opposition, while mosques built in areas where other religions are in the majority face similar challenges. The issuance of Joint Ministerial Regulation No. 9 by the Minister of Religion and No. 8 by the Minister of Home Affairs in 2005 was largely a response to difficulties surrounding the establishment of synagogues (M. Ridlwan Lubis, 2011: 240-241).

Economic disparity is another common catalyst for various conflicts in Indonesia, often intertwined with religious issues. Many conflicts that appear to be religious in nature are actually rooted in economic inequality. For example, social conflicts in Situbondo have been driven by economic factors, where the Chinese ethnic community is more economically successful, leading to feelings of social jealousy. These conflicts are often mischaracterized as religious conflicts, even though the underlying issues are primarily social in nature, involving interactions between Muslims and other ethnic groups.

According to the book edited by Ahmad Syafii Mufid (2014: xi), there are 17 cases of conflict, specifically: 9 cases involving disputes between Christian communities and other groups—8 of which are between Christianity and Islam, and 1 between Christians and Hindus. Among the 8 cases concerning Christianity and Islam, 5 relate to the establishment of places of worship, 3 involve religious broadcasting and apostasy, and 1 pertains to both the establishment of religious houses and broadcasting.

Additionally, there is the case of Ahmadiyah, which includes 2 incidents related to the burning of Islamic boarding schools by other Muslims, and 1 case dealing with relations between Shiite and Sunni communities. Furthermore, there is 1 case regarding religious insults. Some highlighted cases include:

1. "Development and Rejection of the Al Munawar Mosque, North Sumatra," which involves conflicts between Islam and Christianity (M. Yusuf Asri, 2014: 1-38).
2. "Destruction of the Al Idrisiyah Islamic Boarding School in Cisayong Tasikmalaya, West Java," which involves conflicts within Islam (Wakhid Sugiyarto, 2014: 39-48).
3. "Chronology of the Case of HKBP Taman Sari Village, Setu District, Bekasi Regency, West Java," which concerns issues between Christianity and Islam (Agus Mulyono, 2014: 75-90).
4. "Religious Broadcasting in Denpasar City, Bali Province: Case Study of Alleged Conversion of Suun Workers in Badung Market, Denpasar City," which involves Christians and Hindus (Bashori A. Hakim, 2014: 313-350).

5. "Infiltration of Religious Teachings: A Case Study of Christian Broadcasting in Islamic Communities in Kampung Lio, Depok City, West Java," which deals with interactions between Islam and Christianity (Ahsanul Khalikin, 2014: 453-504).

When examining the relationships within religious communities, several typologies of actual cases emerge. First, there are issues related to the establishment of places of worship, often driven by a strong desire to create new facilities or renovate existing ones. This is particularly common between Christianity and Islam, where the multitude of Christian denominations each seeks to build its own house of worship. This desire can frequently lead to conflicts among the various denominations. Second, there are cases related to the desire to promote one's religion, which can unfortunately lead to tensions with people who are already adherents of another faith. This scenario sometimes results in inter-religious conflict, especially considering that regulations in Indonesia dictate that religious broadcasting aimed at individuals of a different faith is deemed unethical and violates laws and regulations. Third, there are internal conflicts among religious groups, particularly involving minority sects like the Ahmadiyya and Shia. These internal tensions arise from differing interpretations, or branches, within Islam and can result in acts of violence. Overall, these typologies illustrate the complexities of religious relations and the myriad conflicts that can arise from them.

The Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) plays a significant role in fostering harmony among people of different faiths. To build this harmony and minimize conflict, FKUB employs a set of effective strategies. According to Bahrul Hayat's study (2012: 164-166), there are three key strategies for promoting harmony in religious life: First, cultivating mutual respect and awareness of plurality is essential. Understanding and appreciating the beliefs of others is fundamental to developing religious harmony. To gain a comprehensive understanding of any religion, individuals require adequate education that encompasses intellectual, emotional, and willing engagement. Second, fostering a spirit of tolerance is crucial. Tolerance creates an ideal social environment where members of different religious groups respect one another's differences. Third, encouraging a cooperative or reciprocal attitude is important. Mutual cooperation among adherents of various religions lays the groundwork for recognition and respect among them. These strategies collectively contribute to a more harmonious and respectful religious community.

To achieve this goal, a comprehensive strategy is necessary, which includes the following components: 1. Developing regulations to promote religious harmony. 2. Fostering universal values within various religions. 3. Enhancing the quality of understanding and strengthening education based on multicultural principles. 4. Promoting local wisdom and reinforcing

traditional institutions that support religious harmony. 5. Strengthening social institutions to develop tolerance. 6. Establishing social agreements that embrace plurality and multiculturalism. 7. Ensuring effective law enforcement. Additionally, it is essential to develop and strengthen the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) at the provincial and district/city levels to foster religious harmony and prevent violence in the name of religion. The implementation strategy includes: Enhancing the FKUB at the provincial, district/city, and sub-district levels to facilitate communication and coordination. Then, Empowering the FKUB to promote harmony and improve prosperity through various economic programs (Bahrul Hayat, 2012: 193-198).

The various social realities involved in addressing the harmony among religious groups highlight the importance of collective collegial leadership. The Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) has effectively practiced a fundamental pattern of communication and coordination through dialogue. They not only convene to discuss issues but also work together to find solutions to common problems (Nur Syam, 2016: 125-127). The FKUB leaders exhibit communicative and coordinative characteristics, facilitating discussions within different groups through workshops, seminars, and other events. Additionally, they engage in interpersonal communication within their organizations and among other religious leaders, as well as coordinating with government officials (Elismayanti Rambe, 2014: 87). Thus, the collegial collective among FKUB leaders can be characterized as follows:

Firstly, the leadership within FKUB is representative of faith-based leaders. The members and leaders, such as kyai, priests, banta, and pedanda, are all religious figures who represent their communities. Therefore, there is no hierarchy among these leaders within their religious communities, which creates a sense of equality. This equal positioning benefits FKUB in its leadership structure.

Secondly, as a forum for communication and coordination aimed at fostering religious harmony, FKUB institutions emphasize togetherness. The roles of the chairman and vice chairman serve primarily as coordinators in promoting harmony among different religious groups, rather than as authoritative leaders commanding their members. This collaborative approach enhances FKUB's effectiveness in addressing common challenges.

The third point to note is that the meeting serves as a coordination forum, ensuring that the leadership and members of the organization are on equal footing when it comes to providing suggestions, input, or making decisions. Consequently, every decision is derived from a process that consolidates the opinions of both the FKUB leaders and its members.



Fourth, since FKUB comprises various religious assemblies, the opinions expressed reflect the voices of the community. There are no personal interests at play for FKUB leaders or members when it comes to decision-making. All decisions are made based on consensus, making them joint decisions.

Fifth, as a forum for communication and coordination, the FKUB actively involves local governments, which include various agencies connected to the harmony of religious groups. Their approach to problem-solving emphasizes clear coordination among multiple entities, such as the Ministry of Religion, the Justice Department, the Prosecutor's Office, the Police, and the Education and Culture Office, among others.

Sixth, leveraging its diverse strengths, the FKUB has made significant efforts to address various social conflicts with religious undertones. They employ a unique approach characterized by collegial leadership, which is a hallmark of the FKUB's leadership model.

## CONCLUSION

The FKUB, as an organization that unites religious leaders from various faiths, has successfully developed a leadership style known as collective collegial leadership. This style is defined by effective communication, coordination, and collaboration. The FKUB serves as a vital forum for both communication and coordination aimed at fostering diverse harmony, while also providing a space for addressing religious issues. Through this leadership approach, the FKUB acts as a catalyst for building religious harmony in Indonesia. Religious leaders who represent different faith communities are able to engage in meaningful dialogue within the FKUB, as their sole focus is on the interests of their followers and the maintenance of religious harmony. Consequently, the FKUB is capable of making decisions that are fair and free from personal interests, promoting togetherness among people of various religions. Research indicates that FKUB (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) plays a significant role in promoting multiculturalism and plurality, although it still requires more effective efforts to strengthen its institutional capacity for communication and coordination. Importantly, FKUB has made tangible contributions toward advancing the ideals of unity and sovereignty through fostering harmony among different religious communities. The balance of authority and power between FKUB leaders and their members has proven crucial, especially in conflict resolution cases between Muslims and Protestant Christians. Additionally, the involvement of regional leaders is vital. Therefore, it can be proposed that a more synergistic relationship between the authority and power of regional governments and FKUB in addressing issues or conflicts

among religious communities will enhance the prospects for resolving conflicts between adherents of these faiths.

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