**Adhesive Factors of Social Cohesion in Communities: Ethnographic Studies of Minority-Majority Relations in Jombang, Indonesia**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This article powerfully underscores the critical importance of managing diversity within a region to establish it as a role model for others, particularly in post-conflict areas. It boldly examines the key factors that underpin social cohesion within society, drawing on an ethnographic study that recognizes and celebrates sociocultural diversity. Utilizing a robust qualitative methodology with an ethnographic focus, this research describes, analyzes, and interprets patterns emerging from various cultures. The investigation delves into behaviours, beliefs, and languages that evolve, supported by comprehensive data collection through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The results of this study reveal four primary factors: the historical context of religious arrival and development, family dynamics, group perspectives on religious understanding, and the influence of leadership. These interconnected factors work synergistically to enhance and solidify social cohesion*

*Artikel ini menekankan pentingnya mengelola keragaman dalam suatu wilayah untuk menjadikannya sebagai contoh untuh daerah lain, terutama di daerah pasca-konflik. Ini dengan berani meneliti faktor-faktor kunci yang mendasari kohesi sosial dalam masyarakat, mengacu pada studi etnografi yang mengakui dan merayakan keragaman sosial budaya. Memanfaatkan metodologi kualitatif yang kuat dengan fokus etnografi, penelitian ini menggambarkan, menganalisis, dan menafsirkan pola yang muncul dari berbagai budaya. Melakukan investivigasi untuk menyelidiki perilaku, kepercayaan, dan bahasa yang berkembang, didukung oleh pengumpulan data yang komprehensif melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan empat faktor utama: konteks historis kedatangan dan perkembangan agama, dinamika keluarga, perspektif kelompok tentang pemahaman agama, dan pengaruh kepemimpinan. Faktor-faktor yang saling berhubungan ini bekerja secara sinergis untuk meningkatkan dan memperkuat kohesi sosial*

**Keywords:** *adhesive factors, social cohesion, community, ethnographic studies.*

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The existence of religious pluralism in a society does not always cause conflict. This proves that religious differences are not always a factor that causes problems in society. However, Indonesia is a pluralistic nation in terms of language, ethnicity, and religion and is very vulnerable to social conflicts due to this problem of religious pluralism.(Baharun & Awwaliyah, 2017). Religious tolerance is paramount in addressing this issue. In addition, Indonesia is also a large country consisting of thousands of islands and hundreds of millions of people who have many different religions and beliefs. Then, the Indonesian government officially recognizes six religions: Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Based on 2009 United Nations data, Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world after China, India, and the United States.

The potential for social, cultural, political, and economic wealth in a country holds significant promise for the progress and well-being of its people as long as it is managed effectively. However, this wealth also presents a potential source of conflict if cooperation, tolerance, and constructive dialogue are lacking in society. In a country as diverse as Indonesia, where there is a sensitive intersection between religious beliefs, economic struggles, political ideologies, and social inequality, the need for tolerance and continued dialogue is paramount.(Basyar, Hamdan, 2003), finding a way to regulate religious diversity and other social wealth is necessary.

Research has been carried out on the study of religious diversity and moderation(Fuadi, 2024;Kawangung, 2019;Hambali et al., 2017;Husna & Thohir, 2020) and studies of social cohesion(Delhey et al., 2022;Busłowska & Marcinkiewicz, 2023;Qi et al., 2024) and studies on conflict resolution strategies already exist (Puryanto & Siswanto, 2024), however, no one has fully explored the adhesive factors that drive social cohesion in multi-religious societies to increase social tolerance and sensitivity. This research fills the gap by observing the formation of a bond pattern in a multi-religious society in Jombang Regency amid the dominance of the Islamic majority regarding the quantity and quality of the population.

The relationship between religious majority and minority groups in Indonesia is a complex and dynamic topic, influenced by various social, cultural, and political factors. Academic studies have attempted to understand this dynamic through various approaches and local contexts such as the Research in Bali, examining the practice of religious tolerance between the Hindu majority and the Muslim and Christian minorities(Nurhidayati & Ula, 2022). The results show that although the administrative requirements for the establishment of places of worship have been met, minority groups often face obstacles due to local policies aimed at protecting Hindu identity and traditions as the main identity of the Balinese people. Another study, in the city of Banda Aceh revealed that although the majority of the population is Muslim and implements Islamic Sharia, social relations with minority communities such as Buddhists, Christians, Catholics, and Hindus are peaceful and harmonious(Halim, 2022). Religious minorities can conform to and respect the religious practices of the majority, while Muslims act as protectors for minority communities.

Many more studies on tolerance highlight the importance of religious tolerance in social practices of society(Idris et al., 2024). Despite the differences in beliefs between the majority and minorities, the local community shows mutual respect and cooperation in various social activities, reflecting harmony between religious communities. Furthermore, in their study emphasized that the Qur'an provides guidance in responding to religious diversity, emphasizing the importance of tolerance and mutual respect between human beings(Aderibigbe et al., 2023). The relationship between the majority and minorities has complex dynamics, where minority communities often face challenges such as marginalization and discrimination. Therefore, the majority group needs to create inclusive spaces and protect the rights of minorities to build a just and peaceful society. The study of the Indonesian Chinese community in Surabaya found that linguistic and social integration between the Chinese community and the majority through the use of the Javanese language contributes to wider social acceptance(Setijadi, 2016). This fluid relationship shows that despite differences in identity, harmonious interactions can be established through mutual understanding and respect. The pattern of relationships between the majority and minority religions which includes conflict, accommodation, and harmonization. Despite differences in beliefs that can trigger conflicts, local communities can achieve accommodation through a mixture of customs and interfaith marriages, as well as building harmonious relationships through tolerance and cooperation in social activities. Overall, these studies show that the relationship between religious minorities in Indonesia is greatly influenced by local contexts and local government policies. Factors such as policies to protect local cultural identities, the implementation of religious laws, and community initiatives in building tolerance play an important role in shaping the dynamics of inter-religious relations.

This article is reviewed with an ethnographic study a set of methods involving direct, long-term engagement between the ethnographer and the individuals whose lives are the object of study (FitzGerald, 2023)of the culture of tolerance in the cultural ecology of the people of the South Jombang district, which will include an in-depth understanding of the interaction between various cultural elements in the area. The etymology of a culture of tolerance in this context refers to the ability of individuals and groups to accept differences and work together with people from different backgrounds without conflict. On the other hand, cultural ecology is an approach that considers the relationship between a society and its environment. In this context, the cultural ecology of the Jombang community will consider how factors such as religion, culture, and the natural environment interact with each other and shape behavioral patterns and social structures.

This study also explores formal and informal strengthening factors that can be a tool to strengthen tolerance and harmony in Jombang's pluralistic society. This can involve analyzing the pattern of cultural ecological approaches of Islamic society, the role of religious education institutions, the role of religious leaders, and daily religious practices in shaping people's views and behaviors towards diversity. By understanding how Islam plays a role in the context of the plurality of Jombang society, this article can contribute to the development of valuable insights for more inclusive and sustainable education and strengthen social cohesion in an increasingly diverse society.

1. **METHOD**

The research method used in this study is qualitative with an ethnographic approach(Creswell, 2018). This qualitative research aligns with the topic being researched because qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meaning that several individuals or groups of society consider to come from social or humanitarian problems. The ethnographic approach is highly suitable because ethnographic research is a qualitative research procedure designed to describe, analyze, and interpret group patterns from various cultures. This process involves examining behavior, beliefs, and language development over time through the collection of observational data on the people of Mojowarno and Ngoro sub-districts, Jombang Regency. Observations are followed by in-depth interviews with informants, including families from different religious backgrounds, religious leaders, and leaders of community organizations in the two sub-districts. Additionally, the study strengthens its findings through historical document analysis and other related materials, focusing on identifying factors that influence the life processes of the Jombang people in the context of multicultural education.

To ensure data validity and reliability, this research employs triangulation techniques, including methodological triangulation, source triangulation, and theoretical triangulation(Meydan & Akkaş, 2024). Methodological triangulation involves using multiple qualitative data collection methods, such as participant observation, interviews, and document analysis, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Source triangulation is applied by obtaining information from various stakeholders, such as local religious leaders, educators, community leaders, and government representatives, to gain diverse perspectives. Theoretical triangulation is used by comparing findings with existing theories on multicultural education, religious pluralism, and social cohesion. These triangulation techniques help to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

Furthermore, data analysis follows the interactive model which consists of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data condensation is conducted by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting data from field notes and interview transcripts. The data display stage involves organizing the information into matrices, graphs, or thematic networks to facilitate interpretation(Kalpokaite & Radivojevic, 2019). Finally, conclusions are drawn by continuously verifying emerging patterns and ensuring consistency with theoretical frameworks. The combination of ethnographic observation, triangulation techniques, and rigorous data analysis methods ensures that the study provides a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of religious diversity and multicultural education in Mojowarno and Ngoro sub-districts. (Calibri Light-12)

**III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Adhesive Factors for Community Social Cohesion in the Perspective of Multicultural Education**

In the findings of this study, the social cohesion of the Jombang community can be used as a starting point in dissecting the empirical field at the research site with the theory of cohesiveness (wholeness, cohesiveness) is a strength, both positive and negative, that causes its members to remain in the group. Cohesion is a force, both positive and negative, that causes members to stay in the group. However, etymologically cohesion means the ability of a group to come together. Social cohesion is often characterized by social closeness (Delhey et al., 2022). In the great sociological theory of social closeness, we know the term solidarity, and this is what is currently happening to the people of Jombang as an object of research.

As said by the Chairman of FKUB Jombang Munif Kusnan

“As the majority of Muslims, the people of Jombang are diverse, because indeed Jombang is green, some are very religious, and there are ordinary people who do not understand religion. There are many Islamic boarding schools as a place to seek religious knowledge from various regions in Indonesia, besides that here also stands the oldest church in East Java. Various people live side by side in this district almost without any hostility in the community”

The historical discourse on the interaction between Islam and local culture has been extensively explored. In this context, numerous studies from various regions have examined the topic, including perspectives from the Balinese community (Basyir, 2019) Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) introduced the theory of solidarity, categorizing it into two types: mechanical and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity refers to the social integration of individuals within a society who share common values and beliefs, with religious principles playing a central role in this model (Supriyanto, 2024). The people of Jombang exemplify this type of solidarity. These shared values and beliefs form a "collective conscience" that operates internally within individuals, fostering cooperation. In Durkheim’s view, the force that drives social cohesion is analogous to the internal energy that binds molecules in solid matter, which is why he employed terminology from physics to describe the concept of mechanical solidarity.The organic solidarity model, in contrast, emerges from individuals' mutual dependence on each other’s services. In societies shaped by organic solidarity, the division of labor is more pronounced, with individuals operating like distinct yet interdependent organs. Rather than enforcing uniform rules for all, such societies focus on regulating interactions between various groups and individuals, often through contracts and shared legal frameworks (Britannica, 2010).

In solidarity, there is an element of interaction between individuals. This theory of interaction was further initiated by George Harbert Mead (1863-1931) and is based on the basic idea that forms the meaning that comes from the human mind, about the self and its relationship during social interaction, and the ultimate goal to mediate and interpret the meaning that exists in the community (Society) where each person lives(Ardianto, 2017). Broadly speaking, this theory has three basic ideas. Namely, the mind, self, and society (West & Turner, 2008). Mind is termed as a person's ability to use symbols that have the same social meaning, where each individual is required to develop his mind through interaction with other individuals. Then the Self is identified with the ability to describe itself to each individual from the point of view or opinion of others. Meanwhile, society is intended as a network of social relationships that are created, built, and developed by each individual during society in which, in the end, each individual can take on his or her own role in society.(Nisa & Abraham, 2012) For a deeper discussion of this interaction theory, there is a functionalist structural theory from Talcott Parsons that develops functional systems in society based on the A.G.I.L. scheme, namely Adaptation, Goal, Integration, and Latency. The adaptation intended by Parsons is a system that can adjust between the environment and its needs. The goal is intended as the main goal of the existing system. Furthermore, integration is the arrangement of the relationships of the parts of each system into one whole component. And lastly, Latency, meaning that the maintenance of patterns from existing systems must be maintained(Berger & Luckmann, 1979). In essence, the findings at the research site show that the solidarity of the Jombang community is in line with Durkheim's theory of solidarity and in line with the Parsons scheme.

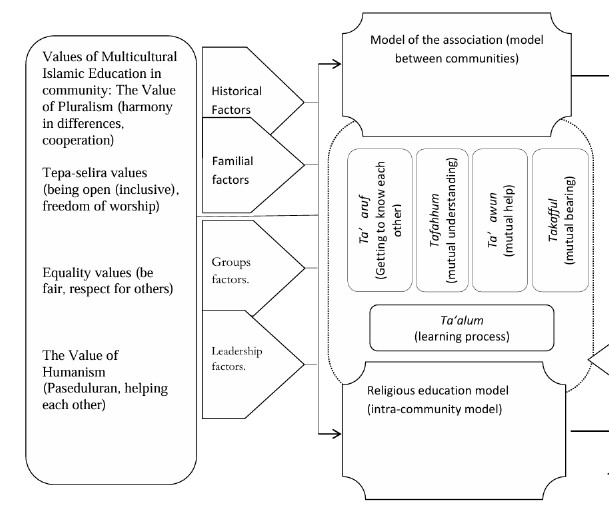


Figure 1. Model of Social Cohesion in Jombang Community

The findings about adhesive factors in social cohesion in the Jombang community were obtained from in-depth interviews and observations conducted on several elders and several families who did not want to be named. Therefore, in this discussion, the author presents the data as well as discusses it in the language that the author himself summarizes from the data that the author has obtained. In the study of cultural ecology, researchers found factors that are quite influential and are the key to the success of this process. These factors include Historical, Kinship and Family, Group, and Leadership factors. These factors will be explained by the researcher as follows:

**Historical Factors.**

This factor is one of the important factors in supporting the creation of religious tolerance in Jombang Regency. The history of the origin and development of religions in Jombang is seen as the root of the creation of religious tolerance. In the history of religion in South Jombang, Christianity has a significant influence as conveyed by Ihsan and Abdullah. Historical heritage has its own advantages. When compared to cultural authenticity, historical heritage is easier to perpetuate or nurture because it has been formed from the past (Ihsan & Abdullah, 2020)



Figure 2: documentation of the holy mass at the Mojowarno church

From the words of the elders of the residents in South Jombang, precisely in the Ngoro and Mojowarno areas, in the past, the residents who embraced Christianity were residents who joined the Dutch, or became Dutch believers. As said by one of the residents who did not want to be named (NN).

“In the past, people who embraced Christianity were people who followed the Netherlands or people who worked with the Netherlands. After that, there were indeed missionaries who came. However, indeed, its origin is from a Dutch family that opened a sugarcane plantation in the South Jombang area. Because there is a sugar factory in Cukir, South Jombang”

Historical records confirm that the roots of Christianity in Jombang, particularly in the southern region, were established as early as 1827. This development began when Dutch colonial authorities, under the leadership of Coenrad Laurens Coolen, successfully cleared forested land in the area. The introduction of Christianity in this region was closely linked to the colonial expansion and land cultivation efforts led by the Dutch. As a result, the presence of Christianity in Jombang was not merely a religious movement but also part of broader socio-political and economic transformations influenced by colonial rule.

Coenrad Laurens Coolen, who played a central role in this process, was born in Ungaran in 1773. His lineage reflects a unique blend of cultures, as his father was of Russian descent, while his mother was the daughter of Prince Kojaran, a noble figure from the Mataram kingdom. This Indo-Russian heritage positioned Coolen as a figure who bridged different cultural influences, enabling him to navigate both colonial and local dynamics. His background may have contributed to his ability to establish settlements and spread Christianity in Jombang, as he was familiar with both European and Javanese traditions.

Coolen was one of the envoys of the Daendles government (the Dutch colonial who controlled Indonesia) engaged in artillery and served as a forest guard. On July 3, 1827 Coolen obtained permission to clear forest land in the Ngoro area, where he lived with his wife and children. The area is a fertile area, so it attracts outsiders to do activities and even live in the area. Whenever he clears a forest for rice fields, Coolen invites his followers to ask for God's blessings. The initial approach used is to adjust the beliefs of the local community, namely animism and dynamism. Prior to 1850 the island of Java was essentially a "closed" area meaning an area that was officially forbidden to carry out the message of the Gospel(Kruger, 1959), but there are also those who preach the gospel individually.

This is because the Dutch colonial government did not want to take the risk of religious conflict between Christianity and Islam, considering that most Indonesian people are Muslims. They come to Indonesia as a trading body to make a profit and not experience conflicts that will cost a lot of money. However, the Dutch colonial government could not prevent Indonesians from becoming Christians because they were neutral in religious matters(Kruger, 1959). Coolen himself was one of the envoys of the J.W. Daendles government engaged in artillery who served as a ranger. On July 3, 1827 Coolen obtained permission to clear forest land in the Ngoro area, where he lived with his wife and children. The Ngoro area is a fertile area, so it attracts outsiders to do activities and even live in the area.

In every activity of clearing forests or tripe beds for rice fields, Coolen invites his followers to ask for God's blessings. The initial approach used is to adjust the beliefs of the local community, namely animism and dynamism. In East Java, there have been efforts to evangelize private evangelists independent of certain evangelistic organizations, such as those carried out by Johannes Emde in Surabaya (1856) and Coenraad Laurens Coolen (1827) in Ngoro(End, 1988). Jonathan Emde succeeded in establishing the "Londo Christians" congregation, and Coolen founded the "Javanese Christians" congregation in Ngoro. In the past, Ngoro was also a center of education, and now it is the center of the Ngoro Regional Development Subunit (SSWP).

Coolen's Christianization by accommodating Javanese culture is new and quite successful, considering that Coolen himself is one of the evangelists who is still unfamiliar with preaching the Gospel in East Java. After that, he had the opportunity to teach Protestant Christianity to the people of Ngoro and its surroundings by holding worship services on Sundays and gathering a small group of people who had become his congregation to teach Christianity to those closest to him(Salindri, 2014).What Coolen does by using Javanese culture in spreading Christianity is to facilitate delivery to the community. He also uses a puppet art performance every Sunday whose story is taken from the Bible with Coolen as the puppeteer and songs used when planting in rice fields to imitate Islamic da'wah carried out by *walisongo.*

In fact, in the past, the preaching of the Gospel that was carried out privately or organized was forbidden for people who devoutly embraced Islam for fear of conflict. What many Coolen targets in his da'wah are people who still adhere to the Javanese religion. This personal preaching of the gospel gave birth to religious leaders who influenced people's lives. One of the leaders who played a very important role in the development of Christianity, especially in East Java, was Coolen, who succeeded in clearing the forest in 1827 and ended in 1854, because the Dutch Colonial Government revoked the land lease in Ngoro.

This activity was carried out until finally producing a typical Christian congregation that is very thick with Javanese and puppets. Coolen called it Javanese Christianity or now known as “*Jawi wetan”* Christianity, which we often encounter with his *“Jawi wetan*” Christian Church (GKJW). In addition to being an evangelist in East Java, Coolen had a very important position in the Ngoro government, namely as the head of Ngoro village (now Ngoro district). In this case, Coolen took advantage of his position for the Christianization mission in the Ngoro area by establishing rules that must be followed by the community.

Coolen's missionary was quite interesting to get as many followers as possible without the baptism process in general (Christianity), so in that era, Christians in the Ngoro area began to grow quite rapidly, including in the entire southern Jombang area. Coolen determines the religious identity of the people who were born and developed under his rule. In other words, the religious identity created by Coolen at that time was formed from sociological and psychological power. In sociological and psychological theories emphasizing that one's identity is potentially many and fluid, built through experience in developing their identity, people refer to the culturally available resources in social networks that they experience directly and in society as a whole. The process of identity construction is colored and significantly influenced by the contradictions and dispositions of the sociocultural environment that surrounds it(Frosh, 2016). As Jenkins theorizes, identity contains elements of 'individual uniqueness' and 'collective part'(Jenkins, 1996). When each individual has an identity that is personal to him, that identity is formed through membership in a social group. The elements of individual identity emphasize differences, the elements of the collective emphasize similarities, but they are closely related(Søgaard, 2024) From this history, Christians in southern Jombang are actually followers of GKJW, but now it has developed into several sects along with the many sects of Protestant Christians who are divided into several groups. The spread of Christianity in its gentle style through an approach that accommodates local interests and cultures makes Christians more tolerant and respectful of the diversity of beliefs of the population and feel safer in mingling and socializing in the bonds of one citizen who has common interests.

Furthermore, the history of Islam and its development in Jombang has existed since the time of Walisongo. However, there is an important inter-regional event in southern Jombang related to the encounter between Islam and Christianity in the area where Coolen Christianization is based. Islamic da'wah in this area at that time was carried out by a figure from Mataram who was an immigrant to the community, was the son of a soldier in the Diponegoro war who escaped from Dutch colonial pursuit and later managed to become Coolen's confidant. As is known, the Diponegoro war occurred in 1820-1830, leading the resistance assisted by nobles and other people.

Furthermore, the history of Hinduism and its development, as told by the elder that: the seeds of Hinduism, in fact, have occurred since the time of "*aliran kepercayaan"* (school of belief) because the school of belief in East Java is mostly synchronistic. As stated by Subagyo: Ancient animism and "spirituality" have just been merged into Javanese religion. Buddhism, Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Islam enter into it; even Catholic and Protestant Christians are processed as side dishes in the view of the Javanese(Subagyo, 1984).

Hinduism still exists and can survive now because the main thing is that they believe this religion is their ancestral religion, and most of them have chosen the belief between Christianity and Islam. Meanwhile, people who do not feel confident in their Islam and Christianity are looking for solutions to new beliefs that make them feel calm and prosperous in meeting their spiritual needs. In the history of Hinduism in Ngoro and its surroundings, according to the village elders, Pinandita Hari Sumarso (Hindu elder at that time), in 1968 he and Nurali, Kirjan, Woko, Sakijo, and Ngatiman gathered in one place to pray according to their beliefs, under the auspices of Shiva Buddha (the religion before it was given the name Hindu). This group shared with several cities, such as Kediri, Mojosari, and Mojokerto, about the recognition of their faith. From this, it can be understood that not all religious believers understand their religion in depth, so there is a desire to study religion in its deepest form(Hadiwijono, 2009).

Historical factors in the development of religion have a considerable contribution in realizing and, at the same time, strengthening the tolerant behavior of their people, because, from history, many things can be learned and developed. The entry of existing religions without any element of coercion and the absence of violence in the process of entering and developing the three existing religions stigmatizes that religion is presented to organize a civilized society, not to compartmentalize, and ultimately cause division and dispute.

**Familial factors**

Kinship here is an important factor in instilling multicultural educational values in strengthening the tolerant behavior of the existing community as a culture that is firmly rooted in society. This factor is important because, basically the indigenous people in this hamlet are one big family, namely descendants from the same ancestor. Referring to the history of the establishment of each village and hamlet in Jombang Regency in general, by calling their ancestors "*bubak deso"* people who then developed into different religious communities. Because, in theory, the family is the main means of socialization for a person to know and learn about their culture(Goode, 1995). In addition to feeling that they come from the same lineage, the people of South Jombang, especially the Ngoro area, Mojowarno, and surrounding areas, also allow interfaith marriages. Interfaith marriages are not allowed in marriage contracts according to religious and state regulations, but various cases in this hamlet finally hold interfaith marriages. In the State regulation, as stipulated in Law No. 1 of 1974 Article 2 states that (1). Marriage is valid if it is carried out under the laws of each religion and belief. (2) Every marriage must be recorded under the applicable laws and regulations (Law No. 1 of 1974).In Islam, interfaith marriage is forbidden. However, there are exceptions where the male partner is a believer, and the female partner is a member of the book. In this kind of couple, the scholars differ in their opinion on condemnation. Rules of *ushul fiqh*"*Idza ijtama'a baina al halal wal haram ghuliba al haram*" can be used as a solution in taking the law as a form "*ihtiyaat* "or prudence in the application of Islamic sharia(Jalil, 2018).

In the findings of the research, there is a unique case, such as a Hindu youth who proposed to a Muslim woman he claimed to have converted to Islam and then married the Muslim woman with an Islamic marriage contract after the Islamic marriage contract was carried out at the woman's house, the Hindu youth again carried out the Hindu marriage contract at the Hindu youth's house. And this marriage contract continued without significant rejection from the woman's family because of the woman's love.

In this case, the Hindu youth committed fraud against the woman's family, and in Islamic law, the marriage contract was carried out by fraud. In research conducted by Putri Maulana in Kendari it was found that: Marriage fraud is usually carried out in the form of identity forgery, for example, claiming to be a virgin even though she is married. Fraud can be committed by husbands, and it can also be committed by wives. 2 (two) forms of marriage fraud occur in religious courts, namely first, status fraud, and second, identity fraud. The impact that occurs on victims of marital infidelity is trauma, physical shame (psychological), and material losses. The perspective of Islamic law on the judge's decision on the issue of marriage fraud is that if viewed from all points of view to obtain profits, it is under Islamic law, but if you look at the form and consequences of marriage fraud, it is not under Islamic law, because the nature and characteristics of Islamic law are humanity and morality, and it is obligatory to act fairly and honestly towards married couples(Maulana, 2018) and in this case, their marriage is null and void according to Islamic law.

In other cases, in society, family relationships occur not only between religions but also between religions. Because in there is a family with different religions, starting from the father, who is different from the mother, as well as the two children, one of whom adheres to the faith or the other mother who adheres to the religion of her father, which makes the religion different from the two so that it is clear that there are differences between religions in one family due to interfaith marriage.

The Qur'anic affirmation of Surah Al Baqarah verse 221 has forbidden marriage between a Muslim and a non-Muslim in the category of polytheism. A Muslim man is allowed to marry a biblical woman (Jewish and Christian) according to verse 5 of QS al-Mā'idah, as long as the quality of the faith of the Muslim and Muslim man is good, as this kind of marriage carries a high risk: "conversion or divorce"(Jalil, 2018). The marriage of a Muslim man to a woman in the Bible is only an act punishable by "mubah" (permissible), but not a recommendation, let alone a commandment. The companions of Umar bin Khattab also expressed their disapproval of the companions of Hudzaifah bin Al Yaman and Talhah who married Jewish and Christian women, for fear of being followed by other Muslims, so they would avoid Muslim women.

For example, Mr. D's family, Mr. D's father is Muslim while his mother is Christian and Mr. D himself is Muslim and Mr. D's wife is also Muslim, even though they live in harmony and peace, even in their home life they live it like a family in general, even every Sunday Mr. D invites his mother to the church to carry out routine worship, In the perspective of harmony, This is a positive thing to emulate, but on a psychological level, there will be times when the mother will feel alienated when doing religious things in her child's home. The different conditions felt by Mr. J. The grandfather of these two children is Christian, while his wife is Muslim, the two children adhere to their mother's faith, namely Islam. In choosing a partner, the two children chose not to follow in the footsteps of their parents, i.e., couples of different beliefs, so that practically only Mr. J was a Christian because they began to feel that a different religion would psychologically create a barrier of distance in their hearts, even though there seemed to be nothing in it(Schneider, 2018)

From the findings of data in the field that the demographics of the research location can be classified by religion, the residents of Jombang can be classified as adherents of six religions and *"kejawen".* The composition of the population based on religion is a consequence of the history of the development of religion itself, in the sense that the religion that developed earlier in this hamlet was the religion of belief, then Christianity, followed by Islam and Hinduism, while Buddhism came later. The adherents of the latter (Buddhism) are immigrants and do not blend in with society. Internally, the existence of groups based on religious understanding only occurs in Islam and Christianity, while Hinduism does not occur in diversity in religious understanding. Christian religious sects include the Pentecostal Church of the Prosperous Congregation, the Bethel Church of “Tuhan Baik”, and the adherents of the GKJW Ngoro church. For Muslims, there are three groups, namely Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Wahidiyah. In the theory of a Multicultural society, each group will influence each other as Parekh says every community consisting of not only one cultural community will never be neutral from another culture and will certainly be influenced by other cultures either consciously or unconsciously. Because another culture is not an outward reality of silence but is capable of defining itself and manifesting its presence secretly in a community without realizing it(Parekh, 2008).

The interaction between different groups, particularly among individuals of different religious backgrounds, involves a dynamic process of negotiation and power balance. Moran and Stripp describe negotiation as occurring within a framework defined by four key elements, known as the four C’s: common interests, conflicts of interest, compromises, and criteria (Moran, R.T. & Stripp, 1991). Within the space of common interest, the negotiation process arises because each party either possesses or desires something that the other values or claims. The conflict space emerges when disagreements arise over shared concerns, such as financial benefits, contractual obligations, or quality standards. The compromise space represents efforts to collaborate in resolving areas of contention. Lastly, the criteria space refers to the objectives that define the optimal conditions for a successful negotiation.

Although negotiations generally follow this structured framework, the specific nature of each negotiation is influenced by the political, economic, social, and cultural context of a given country. The negotiation process theory consists of several key elements: (1) bargaining characteristics, (2) situational constraints, (3) the negotiation process itself, and (4) the final outcomes (Lussier and Hendon, 2016) Differences in group backgrounds illustrate the inherent social nature of human beings, who tend to form communities by living in close proximity to one another. This tendency serves as a fundamental basis for the development of societies in which individuals coexist and interact closely (Benitez-Avila et al., 2023).

The situation that exists in different groups, tends to ask for bargaining is a conflict of interest that exists between two or more parties. Negotiations are influenced by factors such as communication and actions involved in bargaining acts, background factors of pre-existing traditions or cultural relations, and the specific situational conditions under which negotiations are conducted(Rogoveanu, 2010). By way of negotiations, the two parties try to reach an agreement on matters of mutual interest. Negotiation involves two elements: the substance of the negotiation and the process. In cross-cultural contexts, misunderstandings are possible because the negotiation process is always heavily influenced by new behaviors and social environments

The existence of these sects does not mean the breakup of Christianity, but the Pentecostal church of the Prosperous Church is the first church to be established in Ngoro and has the largest indigenous congregation. This condition does not affect the harmony of Christians in Ngoro. While among Muslims, there are also several different religious understandings, there is the Nahdliyin group better known as Nahdlatul Ulama'(Facal et al., 2024). This group is the largest base of the Islamic community, followed by the Wahidiyah group, which is a member of the Grenggeng Islamic boarding school. Muhammadiyah is the smallest base. Culture influences negotiation in three ways: by determining one's perception of reality, by rejecting information that is inconsistent or foreign to culturally accepted understanding; and by projecting meaning onto the words and actions of others.(Benitez-Avila et al., 2023)

The layering of religious people can be seen from the level of knowledge they have about the teachings of their respective religions. On this basis, religious people can be classified into educated and uneducated people(Hamdan, 2023)This group is also an influencing factor because it influences people's understanding of the importance of tolerant behavior, especially in a multi-religious society. Existing groups, both religious and education-related groups, play a major role in strengthening society's tolerance.

**Leadership factors.**

In a multicultural society consisting of several religions and religious beliefs, the leadership factor of community leaders has a very significant role. The community leaders in the object of this study show plurality so that at a certain level, it also impacts their own social interaction and the community group they lead. In other words, in the development of religious harmony among the community, community leaders occupy a decisive position(Gede Agung et al., 2024). In society, there are two types of leadership: formal and informal. What is meant by formal leadership (leaders) here is those who obtain legitimacy of power based on law (legal). Included in this type of leadership are those who manage or exercise government authority that is legitimized by the state. Non-formal leadership, on the other hand, is a charismatic or personal force that comes from "devotion to the purity, heroism, or certain exemplary traits of a person and from the pattern of order exhibited by him(Foppen & van Saane, 2024), which in local community terms is known as community leaders or religious leaders(von Bergen, 2013).

In Mintzberg's theory, there are three main roles played by each leader regardless of the hierarchy(Miftah, 2010). The three main roles are then broken down into ten other roles, namely: 1). Interpersonal Roles The roles in this role are: a) The role as a puppet. b) Role as a leader, c) Role as a liaison manager. 2). The role of information. This role consists of the following roles: a) Role as a monitor. b) Role as a disseminator. c) Role as a spokesperson, 3. This role makes leaders must be involved in the process of making strategies in the organization they lead. In this role, there are the following roles: a) The role of an entrepreneur. b) Role as a distraction handler, c) Role as a resource allocator, d) Role as a negotiator.

The type of leader in government activities is also involved in dealing with problems faced by the government, both in the field of government and society, so that there is cooperation between formal leaders and non-formal leaders in developing their regions. In its journey toward religious harmony, is always accompanied by several factors(Meynhardt et al., 2024), some that intersect directly in society, some that occur due to cultural acculturation that sometimes clashes with the rules that apply in the religion itself.

The leadership factor in realizing and preserving harmony between religious communities is very influential, and the community consciously has its own commitment to maintaining possibilities that hinder harmony between religious communities(Gebert et al., 2011). as an example contained in the findings, namely, Friday Sermons held in mosques. At that time, the khatib who came from outside delivered provocative material, meaning that the content of the sermon material blatantly offended other religions regardless of the consequences caused (the occurrence of divisions or conflicts between religions) because the delivery of the sermon used loudspeakers where everyone, both Muslims and non-Muslims, also heard it, the khatib would be reprimanded by the head of the mosque taker and given insight into plurality. This leadership factor has had a tremendous impact in creating tolerant societal behavior and upholding existing human rights. Religious leaders, such as the head of the taker, are not only religious leaders but also have a great role in maintaining tolerance and are able to analyze the possibility of conflict in their area.

1. **CONCLUSION (Calibri Light, 12 BOLD)**

The key factors identified in this study as crucial in fostering a tolerant and open-minded society significantly influence how individuals educate others about religion, promote understanding, and navigate the complexities of religious, cultural, and group diversity. The findings reveal that the absence of any one of these four factors results in a noticeable difference, manifesting as weaker social cohesion and diminished mutual respect. Therefore, it is essential not only to maintain but also to actively nurture these factors through inclusive and sustainable educational practices. The findings of this study make significant contributions to the advancement of scholarly knowledge in several key areas. First, they strengthen the theoretical foundation of multicultural education by providing empirical evidence that underscores the importance of key factors in fostering a tolerant society. This enriches the theoretical framework, particularly in its application to teaching practices that prioritize diversity and inclusion. Second, the study offers valuable guidance for educational policy development, providing a robust basis for policymakers to design curricula and programs that integrate the values of tolerance, cross-cultural understanding, and openness to diversity. These initiatives are applicable not only to formal education but also to teacher training and informal education efforts. Third, by illuminating the connection between these factors and social cohesion, the findings present a blueprint for developing social models aimed at fostering harmony within diverse communities. Finally, the study advances cross-cultural research methodologies by offering a replicable approach to identifying similar factors in varying cultural and societal contexts. Collectively, these findings affirm that multicultural education is not merely a medium for knowledge transfer but a transformative tool for cultivating mutual respect and coexistence. They position education as an essential instrument in building a more inclusive and harmonious world.

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