

## Moderation as a Solution to Religious Harmony in Poso Central Sulawesi

Eka Firmansyah\*<sup>1</sup>, Abdelmajid Idris<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu, Jl. Rusdi Toana No.1, Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Omdurman, HCFX+4RV, Omdurman, Sudan

\*ekafirmansyah689@gmail.com

Received: 2023-November-11

Rev. Req: 2024-February-12

Accepted: 2024-March-12



10.59683/ijls.v3i1.67

---

How to cite this paper: Firmansyah, E. & Idris, A. (2024). Moderation as a Solution to Religious Harmony in Poso Central Sulawesi. *International Journal of Law and Society (IJLS)*, 3(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.59683/ijls.v3i1.67>

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

---

**ABSTRACT:** *This study aims to formulate religious moderation in overcoming identity conflicts and creating religious harmony in Poso, Central Sulawesi, which has long plagued inter-religious conflicts. Identity conflicts very often occur, both on a national and international scale. On a national scale, no one doubts that Poso Regency is a region capable of reviving and freeing itself from the identity conflicts they have experienced. At present, Poso Regency is very suitable to be used as a laboratory for studies on religious harmony. This research was conducted with a qualitative approach. The data collection was done by observing, interviewing, and reading from published literature. From this research, it was found that there are several ways to overcome identity conflicts and create religious harmony, 1) Respect the rituals of worship of other religions, 2) Implement noble morals between religious communities, 3) Build cooperation between religious communities, 4) Creating a broad-minded generation. The implications of what has been done are as follows, 1) A safe environment is formed, 2) it is free from identity conflicts, 3) religious harmony is created, and 4) regional development is more rapid.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merumuskan moderasi beragama dalam mengatasi konflik identitas dan menciptakan kerukunan umat beragama di Poso Sulawesi Tengah yang telah lama dilanda konflik antar umat beragama. Konflik identitas sangat sering terjadi, baik dalam skala nasional maupun internasional. Dalam skala nasional, tidak ada yang menyangsikan bahwa Kabupaten Poso merupakan daerah yang mampu bangkit dan melepaskan diri dari konflik identitas yang dialaminya. Saat ini Kabupaten Poso sangat cocok dijadikan laboratorium kajian kerukunan umat beragama. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Jenis pengumpulan datanya dengan observasi, wawancara, dan membaca literatur yang dipublikasikan. Dari penelitian ini ditemukan beberapa cara untuk mengatasi konflik

identitas dan menciptakan kerukunan umat beragama, 1) Menghormati ritual ibadah agama lain, 2) Menerapkan akhlak mulia antar umat beragama, 3) Membangun kerjasama antar umat beragama. masyarakat, 4) Menciptakan generasi yang berwawasan luas. Implikasi dari apa yang dilakukan adalah sebagai berikut, 1) Terbentuknya lingkungan yang aman, 2) Bebas dari konflik identitas, 3) Terciptanya kerukunan umat beragama, 4) Pembangunan daerah semakin pesat.

**Keywords:** *Moderate Islam, Identity Conflict, Religious Harmony.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Plural society is a word that means the integration of different communities. They differ in their cultural practices, languages, and beliefs. For example, in any school, admitting students from the same language or culture is not mandatory. However, it accepts students from all walks of life and any ethnic group. So that different students from different classes are gathered, this can be the basis for teaching humility and mutual respect for one another (Prerna, 2023). The limitations of a plural society compared to a unitary organization can be seen from the fact that almost all national institutions, even the most homogeneous, show significant regional, ethnic, rural-urban, and social class differences among themselves.

J. S. Furnivall's characterization of Java in the last half century of colonial rule as a "plural society" has been largely taken for granted by most scholars who support or oppose the application of the concept in Caribbean or African contexts. In the colonial Javanese "plural society," according to Furnivall, Europeans, Chinese, and natives each professed their own religion, culture, and language, meeting as individuals only in the marketplace. He argues that when he invented the term, he exaggerated the "pluralistic" features of colonial society and that the concept was quite misleading when applied to turn-of-the-century situations. On the other hand, it is suggested that colonial associations in the urban centres of Java at that time might, in many ways, also be characterized as a "mestizo society" (Barrow, 2001).

In his writings on Burma and Java, JS Furnivall describes the impact of colonialism in building a "mix of peoples" who were "mixed but not united." Furnivall writes: "In Burma, as in Java, perhaps the first thing that catches the eye of the visitor is the mix of European, Chinese, Indian, and native peoples. In the strictest sense, these are medley because they mix but do not combine. Each group adheres to its religion, culture language, and ideas and ways. As individuals, they meet, but only in the market, in buying and selling. There is a plural society, with different parts of the community living side by side but separately within the same political unit. Even in the economic field, there is a division of labor according to racial lines" (Gampbell, 2020).

Plural societies often experience partition conflicts, which are most often associated with ethnic and religious divisions. This feature of many pluralistic societies was usually shaped or at least exacerbated by colonialism, and many pluralistic societies continue to bear the burden of their colonial past. Examples of plural societies include Suriname, Ghana, Nigeria, Burma (now Myanmar), Malaysia, and Fiji (Gampbell, 2020). Indonesian people

have various traditions. Not only has religion been institutionalized, but also local beliefs (Subhanah, 2014). According to Tholkhah, the Indonesian nation is bound by the four pillars of national and state life, namely the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the state philosophy of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, which has long been known as a religious nation. The aspect of religiosity in Indonesian society is heterogeneous, not homogeneous, which generally can be referred to as plural religiosity.

Indonesia is not a secular state that separates state and religion. However, Indonesia is not a religious state based on a particular religion. Indonesia is a unitary state that gives freedom to its citizens to have a belief and adhere to a specific religion. The major religions that are recognized and have many adherents in Indonesia are Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism (Rosidi, 2011). The Indonesian nation as a plural nation is judged by the diversity of religions, beliefs, traditions, arts, and culture that have thrived and developed amid life for a long time. Local ideas that emerge and grow in an area with different backgrounds, traditions, customs, and cultures show other characteristics from one another.

That is, a local belief in an area will not be the same as a local belief living in another room. The similarity of several aspects of local ideas can occur as a spiritual expression and a form of belief practice. Still, each local belief will reveal its characteristics and characteristics (Mufid, 2012). Differences in teachings, prohibitions, and orders from various religions and beliefs make followers of these religions and beliefs argue to prove what is true and what is evident in our lives. This creates misunderstandings between religious communities and causes discrimination. This difference also makes minority groups feel insecure about carrying out their teachings and activities of these minority groups (Prakosa, 2022; Salim, 2017).

The emergence of local beliefs is caused by various dissatisfaction in facing the problems of national and state life. On the one hand, there is a need to maintain the identity of adherents of local beliefs. On the other hand, the emergence of local ideas has yet to be readily accepted nationally. Apart from these aspects, what needs to be understood is that their existence is a religious asset in the archipelago and enriches the morality of the nation's life (Rosidi, 2011). Islam is a religion and an exciting civilization to read from a global perspective. Williamson stated that religion plays a significant role in the level of social attachment (Jaya, 2012). Primordialist subjective-dogmatic social interest is evident from the re-emergence of the Islamic political order through pan-Islamism in the early 20th century (Hamayotsu, 2015; Ridlo, 2019; Suryana, 2019).

Moreover, this national situation is not very conducive with the increasing potential for intolerance, friction between religious groups, violence with religious nuances and discrimination in the name of religion is getting stronger in various regions in the country (Abdullah, 2017). The tendency of some Muslims to be extreme and strict in understanding religion (Islam) and its laws and try to impose this way in Muslim society, even in some cases by using violence. Other tendencies that are also extreme are being lax in religion and submissive to negative behaviour and thoughts originating from different cultures and civilizations (Zayadi, 2020).

This is because some Muslims misunderstand some aspects of Islamic teachings, which as a result, give birth to actions that are contrary to Islam, even though Islam was brought by the Prophet Muhammad with the grace of the Lord of the worlds, bringing revival and renewal to the far corners and even to other parts of the world. The world is based on examples and attitudes that are full of friendliness and high tolerance (Royhatudin, 2020). Promoting high tolerance requires religious values as a tradition. Even though modernity has appeared forced from the outside as practice has no other choice, it is part of the past that has also been carried over to the present so that it is entrenched together with modernity (Wahyudi, 2015).

This results in the emergence of fatalism at the level of consciousness, influencing the discourse of revival. Although there is no doubt that human knowledge develops and continues to develop, it is understood that religion, especially Islam, is absolute, immutable, and transcendental principles, which are set within a rigid framework of reference, but it must be known that faith, without exception Islam, so as not to clash and be dominated by modern knowledge, and religious principles seem increasingly old-fashioned and obsolete (Mirza, 2024; Rofiq & Hasbi, 2021). This is the disharmony of internal social relations as well as between religions, groups, and sects and even conflicts between interest groups within them (Abdullah, 2020).

Poso Regency is one of the districts in Central Sulawesi Province which is quite famous. People from the religion of Islam and Christianity inhabit this district. Several years ago, this district was known for significant conflicts between religious communities. The incident took many victims, young people, small children, parents, police officers, and soldiers. This event is known to be a conflict between Islam and Christianity. This conflict is considered very difficult to reconcile. Many vehicles, burned houses, and corpses are scattered everywhere. This conflict is terrifying. Many fighters outside the Poso district joined in and wanted to reconcile the competition, but all was in vain. The battle continued until it claimed many victims (Jumhur & Wasilah, 2023).

That was the condition of Poso Regency a few years ago. Poso Regency has revived, showing a beautiful new face, and is fascinating to visit. Communities live side by side peacefully even though they have differences, both ethnic and religious differences. Poso district, which is now extraordinary, is even said to be a laboratory for research on religious harmony. This attracts our attention to explore the laboratory to learn about human values and spiritual harmony.

## II. METHOD

This research, which was conducted in April 2023, was related to religious harmony in Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi Province. A qualitative research approach was applied in this study. This research approach is how researchers investigate how vital individual and group life are. This qualitative research process includes a variety of fundamental questions. The final report on this research has flexible structures or frameworks. The type of research that we use in this study is ethnographic (Creswell, 2016). Data analysis in this study used a single data analysis (individual case analysis), with a data analysis

model from Miles and Huberman, through three concurrent activity lines: (1) data reduction, carried out continuously during the study, even before the data was collected. Collected. (2) Data presentation, carried out to find Islamic values taught in the family, such as reciting the Koran, aqidah, worship, and morals. (3) Concluding/verification, carried out during data collection and afterwards, to conclude to find patterns in the events that occurred. Data collection techniques in this study use observation, interview, and documentation methods. The type of research that we employ in this study is ethnographic (Ikhwan, 2021).

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### The Concept of Moderate Islam in Overcoming Identity Conflict Problems and Creating Religious Harmony

##### 1. Respect the rituals of worship of other religions

Identical conflicts very often occur in society. Because humans are created with differences, be it different ethnicities, cultures, and races. Especially now that there are differences in terms of religion. Every human being has the ambition to elevate his identity to dominate among other identities. But this is what then triggers a lot of problems between fellow human beings.

Among the things that trigger identity conflicts is the presence of specific irresponsible individuals who pit them against each other between ethnic groups, even between religious communities. So there was division, fighting, and killing each other. Then, there was continued mutual revenge because, from different parties, there were already those who felt disadvantaged or members who had become victims, so the conflict lasted for a long time.

In the past, the people of Poso Regency were trapped in the valley, so extraordinary conflicts occurred between religious communities. However, everything has changed, and some people have realized the wrong thinking that once trapped them. So at this time, they have built an attitude of mutual respect between religious communities, even maintaining the freedom of worship rituals for each religion.

##### 2. Applying noble character among religious people

In general, morality is the most important thing for humans. Moreover, humans are creatures that live together and need each other. Maintaining or showing noble morals among fellow human beings is mandatory. Both when dealing with people of the same religion and other faiths. The people of Poso Regency are currently very religious, Muslims really love their Islamic values, and those of different religions love their spiritual values. To create morals or noble character, among others. Because not all religions teach peace and tranquillity to human beings.

##### 3. Build an attitude of mutual cooperation between religious communities

Humans, as social beings, cannot live or do many things individually. Instead, they need the help or intervention of others. Someone can't develop an area by using their abilities

because surely he needs the help of many people so that what he wants can be accomplished. The people of Poso Regency, in general, love mutual cooperation. This can be seen from the region's rapid development starting after the conflict. Mutual collaboration is done to bring closer between religious communities. Even though they have different religions, they still work together to develop their area.

#### 4. Creating a generation that is broad-minded

Human resources are essential in life because good human resources will lead people to do only good things. Because he is so aware of the repercussions he will face when he commits terrible behaviour. It is known that the people of the Poso Regency are highly educated. Even in Poso Regency, there are several universities, including one leading university in Central Sulawesi Province. The people of Poso Regency are very aware of the importance of broad-mindedness for humans because it can guide these people in creating unity and harmony between religious communities.

### Implications of Moderate Islam in Overcoming Identity Conflict Problems and Creating Religious Harmony

#### 1. Established a safe environment

If we now visit the Poso District, it looks much different than before when the conflict was still heating up. The district has become a developed, beautiful and safe district. Even when we go around the city of Poso, we can see the gentleness and polite attitude of the local people. The district has felt the calm and security that has been created. So going around the city of Poso makes me feel thrilled. Every one of us who once visited will feel addicted to returning to see it again. Nowadays, many places for entertainment can calm the heart. Many hangouts, cafes, and restaurants also serve unique and delicious food.

#### 2. Free from identity conflicts

Identity conflict is a big problem that often occurs in the world. We find many major conflicts today, aside from being caused by political disputes, are also caused by differences in identity. Indonesia, as a plural country, is also not free from identity conflicts, as we know that there are many conflicts between ethnic groups and also between religions in Indonesia. Poso District is one of the areas that has experienced identity conflicts. However, now times are different. Poso Regency has been transformed into a very safe and peaceful area. Poso district has been free from identity conflict. A society has been created that can create unity and create the integrity of living together. Today's society understands the situation, and it is tough to pit ourselves against each other again.

#### 3. Creating religious harmony

There are several things that we must realize in human life. Namely, humans have diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, race, and religion. In Indonesia, we can find several religions that are the people's beliefs. Those with different religions must be able to live side by side and understand each other because they live in the same area.



In Poso Regency, we can find several religions, but the ones that stand out are Islam and Christianity. The book of Jesus shows that they live harmoniously and respect each other. Even Muslims take part in maintaining security when Christmas arrives, and Christians also take part in maintaining security during *Eid al-Fitr* or *Eid al-Adha*.

This scene is an extraordinary sight, which could be formed from past experiences when they were trapped in conflicts between religious communities. The incident was a big lesson for the community, so a mind-set was created to become a society that respects one another. They realize that offense will lead to fatal problems.

#### 4. Regional development is more rapid

Poso Regency is now very different from the old Poso Regency. If, in the past, this area was a conflict area and its infrastructure was destroyed due to the impact of the conflict, now it is very different. This area is an exciting developing area to visit. This area has had many changes, starting from improved infrastructure to harmonious social relations.

Poso Regency is one of the most advanced regions in Central Sulawesi Province. It is lined up with several other areas, such as Palu City, Luwuk City, Poso, Parigi, and Donggala. These areas are known to be the most advanced areas in Central Sulawesi Province. Poso Regency has a complete shopping area. It also has the best tourist destinations in Central Sulawesi Province.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Identity conflict is a complex phenomenon encompassing differences in beliefs, norms, and expectations within individuals. While research offers insights into strategies for resolving such conflicts, including integration and compartmentalization, it often overlooks dynamics within interpersonal interactions. Psychological safety has been identified as crucial in mitigating identity conflict, yet understanding individual perceptions within these interactions is essential. Moderate Islam, exemplified by Wasathiyah, offers a balance between opposing views, promoting tolerance and adherence to Islamic teachings. Poso Regency serves as a model for reducing identity conflicts, demonstrating improvements and fostering religious harmony.

## V. REFERENCES

- [1] Abdullah, M. A. (2017). *Menengok Kembali Peran Agama di Ruang Publik, Sosiologi Agama*. 11(2), 157–184. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2017.112-02>
- [2] Abdullah, M. A. (2020). The Intersubjective Type Of Religiosity Theoretical Framework and Methodological Construction for Developing Human Sciences in a Progressive Muslim Perspective. *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 58(1), 63–102. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2020.581.63-102>
- [3] Barrow, C. and R. R. (2001). *Understanding the plural society*. In *Caribbean Sociology*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers Limited.

- [4] Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- [5] Gampbell, J. K. (2020). *Plural Societies' Inequality and the Promise of Education*. Strategic Review.
- [6] Hamayotsu, K. (2015). Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in 20th Century Indonesia by Chiara Formichi. *Indonesia*, 100(1), 125–128. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ind.2015.0022>
- [7] Ikhwan, A. (2021). *Metode Penelitian Dasar (Mengetahui Model Penelitian dan Sistematikanya)*. Tulungagung: STAI Muhammadiyah Tulungagung.
- [8] Jaya, W. K. (2012). *Mengenal Lebih Dekat Teori Ekonomi Kelembagaan Baru (New Institutional Economic)*. Majalah EBNEWS; Majalah EBNEWS. <https://feb.ugm.ac.id/id/penelitian/artikel-dosen/829-mengenal-lebih-dekat-teori-ekonomi-kelembagaan-baru-new-institutional-economic>
- [9] Jumhur, J., & Wasilah, W. (2023). Constitute-Based Religious Moderation Education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 7(2), 370–380. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.365>
- [10] Mirza, U. (2024). Islamic Scientific Critical Consciousness as a theoretical framework for Muslim science educators. *London Review of Education*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.14324/LRE.22.1.09>
- [11] Mufid, A. S. (2012). *Dinamika Perkembangan Sistem Kepercayaan Lokal di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI.
- [12] Prakosa, P. (2022). Moderasi Beragama: Praksis Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama. *Jurnal Ilmiah Religiosity Entity Humanity (JIREH)*, 4(1), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.37364/jireh.v4i1.69>
- [13] Prerna. (2023). *Plural Society Definition and Meaning*. Sociology Group.
- [14] Ridlo, M. (2019). Negara Islam Indonesia Dan Kartosuwiryo. *HUMANISTIKA : Jurnal Keislaman*, 5(2), 134–155. <https://doi.org/10.36835/humanistika.v5i2.45>
- [15] Rofiq, N., & Hasbi, M. Z. N. (2021). Mendamaikan Tradisi Muslim dan Ilmu Pengetahuan Modern: Kajian Eksploratif Pemikiran Nidhal Guessoum. *International Journal of Pegon : Islam Nusantara Civilization*, 6(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.51925/inc.v6i02.51>
- [16] Rosidi, A. (2011). *Perkembangan Paham Keagamaan Lokal di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama RI.
- [17] Royhatudin, A. (2020). *Islam Moderat dan Kontekstualisasinya: Tinjauan Filosofi Pemikiran Fazlur Rahman*. Batusangkar: Batusangkar International Conference.



- [18] Salim, D. (2017). Kerukunan Umat Beragama Vs Kebebasan Beragama di Indonesia. *Potret Pemikiran*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.30984/pp.v21i2.741>
- [19] Subhanah. (2014). *Dinamika Kepercayaan lokal di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI.
- [20] Suryana, R. (2019). Politik Hijrah Kartosuwiryo; Menuju Negara Islam Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Civilization*, 1(2), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.33086/jic.v1i2.1212>
- [21] Wahyudi, C. (2015). Tipologi Islam Moderat dan Puritan: Pemikiran Khaled M. Abou el-Fadl. *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 1(1), 75. <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2011.1.1.75-92>
- [22] Zayadi, A. (2020). *Menuju Islam Moderat*. Yogyakarta: Cantrik Pustaka.