

## THE INCLUSIVE VILLAGE OF INDONESIA (INTERFAITH TOLERANCE MODEL IN BALUN VILLAGE, LAMONGAN)

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Article History: Received on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019, Revised on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, Published on 05<sup>th</sup> October 2019

### Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper is the result of field research that aims to describe the model of tolerance among Muslims, Christians, and Hindus in the Balun Village Turi District of Lamongan Regency Indonesia. In addition, this research wants to encounter the International opinion which thinks that Lamongan as Terrorist Village.

**Methodology:** The data are analyzed using multidisciplinary science, meaning depending on the data obtained, if obtained religious data then the analysis used is the study of religion and so forth.

**Result:** The results of the study are: the first, Balun's religious paradigm in understanding his religious doctrines is an inclusive sub-paradigm. The second, the cultural background of tolerance in Balun is the factor of understanding the inclusive, sub-inclusive religious doctrines, pluralist political policies, tolerant socio-cultural traditions, the different religious traditions of marriage. The built tolerance models are: the first is the Plural Village Structure (Tool). The second is Multicultural (Democratic) Family, the third is "Ngaturi / Kenduri" Multicultural, the fourth is Inclusive Da'wah and the fifth is Multicultural Tombs. Balun village can be seen as an inspiration and a mirror for the people of Indonesia which are prone to conflict between people, so our hope to build a united, tolerant, progressive, peaceful and harmonious Indonesia can be realized.

**Applications:** This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

**Novelty/Originality:** In this research, the model of the inclusive village of Indonesia is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

**Keyword:** *Interfaith Tolerance Model, Islam-Christian-Hindu, Balun Village Lamongan.*

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multicultural country with diverse religions, race and society groups (SARA). Diversity is high value for a nation if it runs harmoniously, but if the diversity becomes a hostile (catalyst) enmity, it certainly affects on social division or disintegration, ultimately endangering national unity. Indonesia recognizes and guarantees religious freedom which articulated in the 1945 Constitution of Article 29 (the State guarantees freedom of religion, association, and assembly), but it does not guarantee the occurrence of social hormones. In society, we are still witnessing conflicts in the name of a particular religion so it is often assumed that religion is a source of conflict. This opinion is not completely true or false. It means that the phenomenon can be true if carved from the data of violence on the religion's name, at the end of 2012, based the record of National Commission of Human Rights (KomNasHAM), the level of tolerance in Indonesia is really concerned. The intolerance is characterized by the horizontal conflict of ethnics, religions, races, and inter-group in society. Meanwhile, based on the report of The Wahid Institute in 2012, throughout 2012 there were 274 cases of violations of religious freedom with 363 actions. Regions of religious violence spread in 13 provinces in Indonesia. The provinces of violations of religion are West Java province (43 cases), Aceh province (22 cases), and East Java and Central Java (15 cases). Conflict over the name of religion also occurs between Moslems and Christians regarding the establishment of houses of worship (Church) which is rejected by citizens (which the majority is Moslems) in Bogor West Java. FPI (an Islamic organization) asked the Municipal Government of Tanjungpinang regency, Kepulauan Riau, to delay the inauguration of Eka Dharma Vihara (Hindu). However, there is another phenomenon of religious beliefs (Islam-Christian-Hindu) which becomes the process of tolerance, so that they live harmoniously, in Balun Village Turi district of Lamongan Regency Indonesia (Lobão, J., & Pereira, C. 2016; Machado, A. D. B., Souza, M. J., & Catapan, A. H. 2019).

Generally, religious differences are often used as legitimacy or incentive for conflict and hostility in society. But this opinion is not always true, religious differences can be a catalyst for the cultural development of tolerance among religious people, one of which occurred in the Balun Village. In Balun, there are three religions (Hindu-Christian-Hindu) that live in a peaceful and tolerant way, so that Balun village is often referred as "Pancasila Village" or "Inclusive Village", while in other villages the difference becomes the trigger of enmity and conflict. This phenomenon describes the culture of tolerance among religious communities well developed in Lamongan, so the opinion that Lamongan is considered as a terrorist village and anti-tolerance is less precise. Violence over religion leads to inconsistencies and insecurity, especially for minorities, which has an impact on the integration and the unity of the nation. This phenomenon is interesting to be examined, especially on how the tolerance model developed by multi-religious Balun societies which are able to develop a culture of tolerance.

The approach used in this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research focuses on the observation and understanding of people in the language and the terms. So the ultimate research goal is to understand the social phenomenon and its nature in the process. A qualitative approach is used to explore individual understanding of the Islamic, Christian, and Hindu figures who determine their objective reality in society. This type of research is field research-phenomenology. The theoretical framework used is the theory of symbolic interactionism developed by Blumer with three principles, 1) Man acts on the meanings that exist in a certain thing. 2) The meaning comes from social interaction of someone with others. 3) The meanings are enhanced when the process of social interaction takes place. The data are collected through participant-observation techniques, depth interviews, and literature review. The data are analyzed through multidisciplinary analysis of science, it means that the analysis will be done based on the obtained data. For example, if the data is a socio-religious data, it will be analyzed through Islamic Studies technique. The result of research is not considered as a final result, because the result is still continuing in a process. So the conclusion of the research will be done based on the saturation of data and facts in the field. And the results of the study are always confirmed to the research participants if the results have been justified by the participants, the final conclusion of the research can be done immediately.

### INTERFAITH ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE DISCOURSE

The existence of the diversity of religions and cultures can not be denied (sunnatullah). Quraish Shihab noted that "diversity in life is a desire of Allah SWT including differences and diversity of opinion in the scientific field, even the diversity of human responses concerning the truth of the scriptures, the interpretation of its content, and its form of practice" (10). As support, Syafii'I Ma'arif points out that from the beginning it is recognized that the phenomenon of religious and cultural diversity among mankind from ancient times to the present day is an impossible fact to be denied. To deny this fact is like not acknowledging the sunlight in broad daylight ([Zare, Z. 2015](#); [Bakhshandeh, M., Sedrposhan, N., & Zarei, H. 2015](#)).

According to this context, it does not talk about religious or cultural diversity but the most important is how to give the response to these differences. According to the writer, an attitude that must be developed in the religious life is the attitude of tolerance. Tolerance is an attitude of patience and wisely allow others to believe and behave based on their principle. In other words, tolerance is a chest-grained attitude toward the principles of others. Tolerance does not mean a person should sacrifice his belief or principle. Tolerance can also be termed in a socio-cultural and religious context which means as attitudes and actions that prohibit discrimination against groups that are different or unacceptable to the majority in a society. Tolerance will be constructed if among different parties willing to communicate (dialog) with an open mind and mutual respects with the principle of agreeing in disagreement (agreed indifference) ([Nisawa, Y. \(2018\)](#)).

### MODELS OF TOLERANCE AMONG VARIOUS BELIEFS IN INDONESIA

The model tolerance is a pattern developed by society in its social-religious relationships which have different beliefs and socio-religious traditions. The culture of tolerance among religious people was built very well in the village of Balun, Turi district, Lamongan regency. In this village, three religions (Islam, Christian, and Hindu) live peacefully and harmoniously. Majestic places of worship (Masjid, shrine, and church) are built side by side. Based on the results of the study, there are several models (patterns) built by the Balun community in socio-religious relationships among the diversity of beliefs. To be more practical, these are expressed in the form of the table below:

**Table 1:** Models of Interfaith Religious Tolerance

No	Models of Tolerance	Description
1	Pluralistic Village Officials	The construction of this pattern is the distribution of power by embracing and providing equal space for all the groups in the village, without any discrimination by the majority of Muslims toward the Hindu-Christian minority. According to Rohim (the secretary), this aims to maintain the harmony of the village as a joint responsibility.
2	Multicultural gathering (Kenduri)	The construction of this pattern is to give space for socio-religious traditions inclusively regardless of the background of belief. This ritual is commonly done in the stages of human life, began to conceive, give birth, having rizqi, marriage, and death, by inviting all citizens of the three religions (Islam, Hindu, and Christian) led by religious figures. For example, in tahlilan (salvation prayer for the deceased, for Muslims) Christian neighbors helped and attended to the event.
3	Multicultural Families	The construction of this pattern is a family structure of "one house three Gods". This is one family in one house but there are different believers (Islam, Christian, and Hindu). Multicultural family building is derived from the tradition of different marriages of religion that is not prohibited but also not recommended in the Balun community. The tradition of religion converting in a family is common and never been contradicted. According to

		Mr. Sutrisno this pattern is based on the guidelines, "for you your religion, for us our religion". So we run our own worship.
4	The Inclusive Da'wah	The construction of this pattern is to invite people to always do good and to prevent people from doing bad in a polite manner and understanding of substantive religious doctrines by emphasizing on similarities rather than differences among the three religions, so the da'wah of the three religions never offend or blaspheming of other religious doctrines, all people understand the value of religious doctrines meaningfully with the principle "for me my religion and for you your religion".
5	Multicultural Tombs	The construction of this pattern is to make the village cemetery area becoming a place for all citizens to be buried regardless of their religion.

The tolerance among religious communities is well and strongly built because there are several supporting factors that lie behind. The results of the study obtained several factors, according to Mr. Rokhim. First, the religious paradigm is substantive-inclusive. According to Mr. Suwito's (Islamic figure), the concept of Gentile-Muslim is not on the physical form of people of different faiths, but rather on the behavior of people. This means that as long as the non-Muslims are good and do not disturb the Muslims, they should not disturb the non-Muslim (Cristian-Hindu), even they should be respected or protected. As a reinforcement, Mr. Sutrisno (Christian figure) "nganut kuwi yowes dadi urusane dewe-dewe, ojo dipekstone agamo nang wong liyo" (following the religion is a matter of its own, do not impose religion to others). The second is the policy of inclusive-democratic politics. This policy is practiced by a system of distribution of power among the village's different religious devices. All groups (Islam-Christian-Hinduism) are given positions in village governance structures. This concept, according to Mr. Rohim (the secretary), aims to build community harmony, so that if there is a potential conflict then the village can provide advice or can prevent it ([Garden, M. \(2006\).](#)).

The third is an inclusive socio-cultural relationship. The socio-religious relationships built in the Balun community really appreciate the differences. For example, Muslims are very appreciative of Hindu who celebrates Nyepi Day by calling Adzan Sholat with no loudspeakers. In the fasting month, the Hindu changes night worship into daytime worship to avoid clashing with taddarus Al-Qur'an. The fourth is different marriage tradition of religion. The practice of marrying different religions in Balun society is not taboo, and it is acceptable in society. The consequences of this practice are the widespread change of religion (murtad) which is considered normal. According to Mr. Suwito, different marriages of religion can be established one family ties assume still a "dulur (relatives)" though different religions. So it is not possible to belittle, hostile, insulting among families even though they are different religions. This condition shows that marrying different religion, although in religious perspectives (Islam) is still a mubah (questioning) atau haram (forbidden), sociologically pointed out that marriage of different religions can be a catalyst for the development of tolerance for multicultural society in Indonesia.



**Figure 1:** The facts of the culture of tolerance in Balun community

### BUILDING A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE NEEDS PROCESS

As a reflection from the discussion above, it can be described that building a culture of tolerance between religious communities among diversity requires a long process, can not be instantaneous. And not always different confidence is always a trigger of conflict, but the difference can be the capital to build the tolerance as long as the approach used is the socio-cultural approach (local wisdom). This is because Indonesia as a multicultural country and has a variety of Language, Tribe, Race, and Religion (SARA). In Indonesia, there are 6 official religions: Islam, Christian, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhist, and Confucian countries. Religion differences are often accused of contributing to triggering conflict or even as a source of conflict that occurs among religious people in the community. The accusation is not always wrong but also not always true as well. Indeed, we often see the action of violence (conflict) between groups of people triggered by religious differences, so that religious differences are often regarded as a source of problems in the community. Like the case of Poso, Ambon, Church destruction, Mosque burning, religious minority discrimination and so on. These facts are often the reinforcement of the opinion that different religions are the trigger and the source of conflict in society ([Novikova, I. N., Popova, L. G., Shatilova, L. M., Biryukova, E. V., Guseva, A. E., & Khukhuni, G. T. \(2018\).](#)

The above opinion is not always true, because it is not always the difference of religion as a trigger or source of conflict (violence) in society. However, on the contrary, religious differences serve as a catalyst for the development of a tolerant culture and an inclusive attitude among differences in society. This condition can be found in the village of Balun, better known as "Kampung Pancasila", this name is derived from socio-religious relationship of multi religions, but they are able to develop inclusive and tolerant attitude among the differences. The tolerance built-in Balun Village is a reflection of their understanding of their religion. According to the writer's opinion, the construction of a growing religious paradigm is the understanding of inclusive religion-substantialist. An understanding of religion that understands religious doctrines on the meaningful side (value substance) rather than the formal symbol of a religion. It is this kind of religious understanding that makes the formal symbols of religion a mere identity rather than at the very core of the doctrines of religion itself, so in their attitude to society they are more likely to share the value of the ultimate goal than the formal belief symbol. Religious identity may be different (Islam, Hinduism, Christianity) but the value of humanity in the form of brotherhood, love, respect for each other is the core of religion that must be maintained and practiced. One of the factors of religious intolerance is the understanding of literal-formalistic religious doctrines. Thus causing narrow thinking and closed behaviors against different understandings. According to Qomaruddin Hidayat, in many cases of violence in society, religious understanding and conviction even gave ammunition the spirit of fighting and passion to destroy different groups of religions and beliefs in the name of God. The phenomenon becomes very sad in the middle of the majority of Indonesian citizens who are religious/ believe in God, all of whom teach peace and harmony. As Qomaruddin Hidayat points out, that all religions teach peace and anti-violence, as well as Islam, when the beginning of Islam actually brings the doctrines universal to all mankind (rahmatallil'alam) ([Novikova, I. N., Popova, L. G., Shatilova, L. M., Biryukova, E. V., Guseva, A. E., & Khukhuni, G. T. 2018](#); [Nisawa, Y. 2018](#)).

The substantive core of religious doctrine is the sacred shade that protects people from chaos, a doctrine of salvation, peace, brotherhood (ukhwah). For the followers, religion teaches the supreme and absolute truths of human existence and the instructions for survival in the world and the hereafter, as human beings who are cautious to their Lord, civilized and humane who are different from the ways of living animals or other creatures. So religion should not be the cause of the conflict. Because religion itself as a system of belief can be a core part of the existing value system in the culture of society and is the driving force and controlling of the actions of certain members of the community to keep in line with the cultural values and religious doctrines.

The tolerance also builds on the pluralist political policies developed in Balun society. Based on the data (village profile), it is clear that if they build political policy by distributing political power to all elements of the existing community without the discrimination of minority (Christian, Hinduism) or single majority (Islam). Political policy is written in the arrangement of village structures by involving all elements of the group becoming a village official. It is done with the aim that all elements of the community response to a village and be given the same place even though they are a minority, so they are mutually guarding and respecting each other. The action of intolerance (violence) that occurs in society one of the factors is the marginalization of political policy between majority to minority or vice versa. According to Said Al Asymawi, the term extremist is commonly used to describe a community group that seizes power by using religious issues. It is mentioned that the most prominent factor in the emergence of extremism is the crisis of trust in state institutions, religious institutions, and political institutions. ([Widayati, E. \(2019\)](#))

In addition, the cultural strength of tolerance in Balun society is the growth of the tradition of marital in different religions. Different religious marriages resulted in a plural family arrangement, the writer termed as the "Multicultural Family". According to Balun community leaders, the marital tradition of people in different religions becomes significant in constructing tolerance among people of different religions and can prevent conflicts. Therefore, for them, "presupposition" or fraternity is more important than questioning the differences of religion, how we can mutually be grieving, humiliating, injuring, hostile even though we are in different religions "however" we are still a family. Their principle is "for me my religion is for you your religion", all people have beliefs that must be respected. Marriage in different religions based on Islamic law is still a debate of sharia law by some Islamic scholars whether it is Mubah (allowed), Makruh (warned) or Haram (forbidden). However, which is sociologically clear and based on the facts in the field (Balun Village), different religion marriage can become a catalyzer of tolerance culture among different religions. So, how to respond on the marriage of different religions is dependent on the point of view of what we will use Shari'ah-Fiqih (Islamic law), sociological-cultural, or political and surely it results in different conclusions ([Elfandari, N. \(2016\)](#))

Multicultural spaces are widely available in Balun communities that have been in the hereditary process for generations. Among the long-established multicultural spaces are "Kenduri / Ngaturi", a hereditary activity undertaken by the Balun community in the form of a celebration to address the human life cycle (pregnancy, birth, marriage and death) by inviting all neighbors (Muslim-Christian-Hindu) Headed by religious figures, reading the prayers of salvation and thanksgiving of the presence of God, supplemented by a "blessed" food dish given by the participants to be brought home. Kenduri used as a dialogue room between different religions, as a result, there are intertwined communication and intense relationships. It can decrease the difference and minimize friction, so the communication barriers can be opened. One of the factors of inter-religious intolerance is caused by an inappropriate communication among people of different religions because of no multicultural space to build communication to bring them together. In the dialogue (communication), not only debating other's arguments but also defending our respective opinions that are considered as true. Because basically the dialogue of



this religion is a free conversation, frank and responsible based on mutual understanding in tackling the problem of life of the nation both in the form of material and spiritual. It is hoped that with this religious dialogue there will be no misunderstanding that can trigger conflict. The goal of religious dialogue is to seek the similarity of the substance of religious doctrines rather than the formal distinction of religious symbols or identities. Because for them the principle of religion is "for me my religion is for you your religion" or in the Islamic concept of "lakum dinukum waliyaddin". The above facts, asserting that having a difference does not mean as conflicts but it can harmoniously coexist together, and this all needs a process instead of instant.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the study can be concluded several things:

1. There are several factors that can drive the tradition of tolerance built-in society: First, an understanding of the religion in substantive-inclusive way. Second, an inclusive socio-cultural relationship (open- mutually respect) between the members of religions. Third, a democratic-pluralistic political policy that gives the same political space without minority-majority discrimination. Fourth, the tradition of marrying different religion members is commonly and sociologically accepted.
2. There are several models (patterns) are built by the community member in Balun to keep the tradition of tolerance: First, "Kenduri / Ngaturi Multicultural" (Multicultural gathering), for example, celebrating a life cycle event (Pregnancy, Birth, and Death Getting a fortune) or important moments (the Independence day, Fasting, Feast) by holding a celebration led by religious leaders with prayer ritual with offerings of food and can be "berkat (food)" celebration, by inviting all citizens regardless of religious background (Islam-Christian-Hindu). Second, by having a "Multicultural Family", for example, a family consists of a father, mother, children, and relatives of different religions, living in a house as a family. Third, "Multicultural village Device", for example, the officials of the village government are derived from all existing religion groups (Muslim-Christian-Hindu). Fourth, Inclusive Da'wah, is a way to invite people to do good and warn people not to do a bad thing in a politeness way, tolerance, respecting and honoring different group of cultures and/or religions with the principle of seeking similarities rather than differences with the slogan lakum dinukum waliyaddin and laa ikraha fiddin. Fifth, the Multicultural Cemetery, the village cemetery area is placed in the same location regardless the religious differences.
3. The discussion confirms that: First, differences in religions not always trigger or become a tool of legitimacy for hostility or conflicts. Second, the facts above show that Lamongan which known as a place of terrorists and anti-tolerance among religions is no longer valid. Lamongan is inclusive village that respects differences and the people can coexist in harmony despite different beliefs.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author confirms that the data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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