Christian Religious Tolerance in Maintaining Peace in Tangerang Regency

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Abstract: Indonesia's cultural and religious diversity poses significant challenges, particularly in fostering harmony and reducing the risk of racial and religious conflicts, as observed in Panongan District, Tangerang. This study investigates the manifestations of religious tolerance among Christians in Tangerang Regency. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study focuses on understanding societal issues through observation and literature review. The findings reveal that, within the context of Christianity, tolerance is expressed both passively—by accepting differences—and actively—through collaborative efforts. In Panongan District, interfaith tolerance is well-preserved through diverse activities that promote mutual respect and understanding among religious communities. This study concludes that fostering tolerance requires continuous engagement in inclusive practices. Its contribution lies in providing insights into the dynamics of interfaith harmony, offering a model that can be adapted to other multicultural contexts.

Keywords: Christianity; diversity; interfaith activities; multiculturalism; religious tolerance.

1. Introduction

Indonesia is known as one of the countries with a very high level of diversity in the world. The country is home to more than 270 million people from different ethnicities, religions, and cultures (Yuminah & Si, 2024). With around 1,300 ethnic groups and more than 700 regional languages, Indonesia's diversity is a distinctive feature that distinguishes it from other countries (Suprijatna, 2008). In terms of religion, Indonesian people adhere to six main religions: Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. These religions have become the moral and spiritual foundation for Indonesian society to create an orderly, orderly, and peaceful life (Hidayah et al., 2024).

However, behind the beauty of this diversity, great challenges also emerge. It is not uncommon to find religious and cultural differences that trigger conflicts, both horizontally between community groups and vertically between the community and the government (Fitriani et al., 2020). This phenomenon shows that there is a gap between religious teachings that support peace and the reality of people's lives. Not a few individuals formally adhere to a certain religion, but their daily behavior and actions do not reflect the religious values they adhere to (Fanani, 2019). This indicates that diversity, which should be a strength, often has the potential to be a source of conflict.

Geographically, Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world, with more than 17,000 islands spread from Sabang to Merauke. This geographical condition strengthens the complexity of the diversity of the Indonesian nation (Suprijatna, 2008). The crystallization of culture, religion, language, and ethnicity in each region creates unique social dynamics. On the one hand, this diversity creates a great opportunity to enrich national identity (Nurohman &

Gunawan, 2019). However, on the other hand, this diversity also poses challenges in maintaining social and political stability, especially when there are misunderstandings or conflicts between groups.

For example, several regions in Indonesia have experienced social conflicts based on religion and ethnicity, such as Maluku, Poso, and Sambas. These conflicts show how vulnerable Indonesian society is to sensitive issues related to diversity (Nutfa et al., 2016). However, the experience also provides important lessons about the importance of building harmony and tolerance in a pluralistic society.

Diversity is not only a challenge faced by Indonesia. Other countries such as India, the United States, and South Africa also have a long history of managing diversity. India, for example, is known as a country with a high religious plurality, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Sikhism (Simmons, 2009). Despite often facing tensions between religious communities, India has succeeded in creating an inclusive model of democracy. Similarly, the United States, which is a melting pot of cultures, shows how multicultural integration can drive innovation and economic development (Arend & Patel, 2020). South Africa, with its history of apartheid, provides lessons on the importance of reconciliation and dialogue in building an inclusive society (Kocadal, 2024).

In the international context, the approach that has been successfully implemented in these countries can be an inspiration for Indonesia to strengthen national harmony. Interfaith dialogue, multicultural education, and inclusive policies are some of the strategic steps that can be adopted to maintain diversity as a national asset (Sukenti & Hermawan, 2024).

In the midst of various diversity challenges, there is a real example that shows success in creating harmony between religious communities, namely Panongan District in Tangerang Regency, Banten Province. This region is an example of how people with different religious backgrounds can coexist harmoniously. In Panongan District, Christianity, as a minority religion, is able to live peacefully with the majority of Muslims. This harmony reflects the implementation of Pancasila values and the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which emphasizes the importance of unity in diversity (Muchtar, 2009).

This success cannot be separated from the active role of community leaders, religious leaders, and local governments in promoting dialogue and cooperation between communities. In addition, education also plays an important role in building awareness of the importance of tolerance and mutual respect (Riyanto, 2022). Schools in Panongan District are actively integrating the values of tolerance in their curriculum, so that the younger generation grows up with a better understanding of the importance of harmony.

Research on inter-religious harmony in Panongan District has strong relevance in social, political, and academic contexts. *First*, this research makes an important contribution to understanding the dynamics of diversity at the local level, which can be a model for other regions in Indonesia. *Second*, this research helps to identify key factors that support the creation of harmony, such as interfaith dialogue, education, and the role of community leaders. *Third*, this research is also relevant in supporting the government's efforts to strengthen national unity in the midst of increasingly complex globalization challenges.

2. Research Method

This type of research uses a qualitative approach, namely research that emphasizes a deep understanding of problems in social life based on holistic, complex, and detailed conditions of reality or natural settings. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning of the observed phenomena, rather than just measuring certain variables (Rahman, 2025). Qualitative research is descriptive and tends to use analysis with an inductive approach, where general patterns or themes emerge from the data collected (Murdiyanto, 2020). The data collection technique used in this study is a normative research method carried out through literature studies. This method uses secondary data as a basic material to be analyzed by browsing

various regulations, documents, or other literature relevant to the research topic. This secondary data includes materials such as books, scientific articles, research reports, legal documents, and other reliable sources related to the problem being researched. This method is also known as literature research because researchers use library sources as the main basis for data collection (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). Furthermore, the results of data analysis in this study will be presented descriptively to describe the main findings, emerging patterns, and relationships between variables that are relevant to the phenomenon being studied. With this approach, research is expected to contribute to understanding the social and cultural context comprehensively and presenting recommendations that can be implemented practically (Mustari & Rahman, 2012).

3. Research Results

3.1. Religious Tolerance

Religious tolerance is one of the important foundations of maintaining social harmony in the midst of diversity. According to Umar Hasyim, tolerance is the granting of freedom to fellow human beings or citizens of the community to practice their beliefs, regulate their lives, and determine their respective fate as long as these actions do not violate the conditions of order and peace in society (Hanif, 2020). This definition affirms that tolerance is not only about accepting differences but also respect for the rights of individuals to practice their beliefs without pressure or threats (Rizal, 2023). In the context of community life, tolerance is a crucial element that bridges differences and encourages the creation of mutually respectful relationships between individuals and groups (Ibda et al., 2024).

Religious tolerance has a role that cannot be ignored in modern life, especially in countries with ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity like Indonesia. As one of the pillars of a democratic system, tolerance ensures that every citizen has the same right to exercise his or her beliefs without discrimination (Abdurrazak & Wanda, 2022). This is in line with the view of Akbar (2022), who stated that tolerance helps maintain social cohesion despite being faced with intense conflict (Akbar et al., 2022). When the principles of tolerance are applied consistently, communities can manage conflicts through peaceful dialogue and mediation, thus avoiding an escalation of violence that is detrimental to all parties (Sulaiman et al., 2022).

A deeper definition of tolerance can also be found in various international literature. According to Webster, tolerance is sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own, or the act of allowing something (Naik et al., 2014). This definition underscores the importance of an attitude of empathy and respect for beliefs that are different from our own. Meanwhile, Wood defines tolerance as an indulgence of belief or conduct other than one's own (Wood, 1993). Both of these definitions highlight the essence of tolerance as the ability to accept and appreciate differences, both in beliefs and behaviors, as part of the inevitable diversity of human beings.

In the Islamic tradition, tolerance has strong roots which is reflected in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. One of the verses that is often quoted in this context is Al-Baqarah (2:256): There is no compulsion in religion. This verse provides a theological basis for religious freedom and shows that Islam respects the right of every individual to choose his or her beliefs (Mustofa & Syarifah, 2021). In addition, the Prophet PBUH gave a clear example of tolerance through various agreements and practices of living together with non-Muslim communities, such as in the Medina Charter (Klar, 2015). This document is one of the earliest examples of how multicultural societies can coexist peacefully by respecting each other's rights and obligations.

However, although the concept of religious tolerance has been widely recognized, its implementation often faces complex challenges. At the local level, for example, stereotypes and prejudices between religious groups are still the main obstacles to the creation of harmonious relationships (Suhendra, 2022). Lack of understanding or lack of education about other

religions often exacerbates this situation, creating a deepening chasm between different communities (Riyanto, 2022). On the other hand, at the global level, the rise of religious extremism and nationalism has become a serious threat to tolerance. This phenomenon is often exacerbated by the irresponsible use of social media, which accelerates the spread of hatred and misinformation (Bule & Suswakara, 2024).

For example, conflicts in the Middle East are often triggered by differences in religious interpretations that are then used by certain groups to achieve their political agendas. This situation shows that religious tolerance is not enough to be recognized as a value, but must also be supported by real efforts in the form of education, interfaith dialogue, and inclusive policies (Hermawan & Muhlas, 2025). In Indonesia, for example, the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) has become one of the important initiatives in promoting dialogue and cooperation between religious communities. FKUB aims to prevent conflict by providing a platform for religious leaders to dialogue and resolve differences peacefully (Miharja & Mulyana, 2019).

The relevance of religious tolerance is becoming increasingly evident in the era of globalization. Increasing human mobility and global interconnection have created an increasingly diverse society (Kumara, 2023). In this context, tolerance is the key to maintaining harmony in the midst of increasingly complex differences. Countries such as Canada and New Zealand have shown how policies of multiculturalism can encourage social integration without eliminating an individual's cultural or religious identity (Safdar et al., 2023). However, globalization also brings challenges in the form of cultural homogenization that can erode local values (Balogun & Aruoture, 2024). Therefore, tolerance is not only about accepting differences but also respecting and preserving the uniqueness of each cultural and religious group.

To strengthen religious tolerance, a multidimensional approach involving education, policy, and community participation is needed. Education plays a vital role in shaping tolerance from an early age (Supardi, 2014). A curriculum that is inclusive and teaches the values of diversity can help the younger generation understand the importance of peaceful coexistence (Riyanto, 2022). On the other hand, government policies must also support tolerance efforts. Regulations that protect religious freedom and crack down on discrimination are important steps that must be taken by the state.

Religious tolerance also has a practical dimension that can be applied in daily life. One of them is to build empathy and mutual understanding through direct interaction with individuals from different backgrounds. This approach allows people to see differences as wealth, not a threat. In addition, the mass media also has an important role in promoting an inclusive narrative and rejecting all forms of extremism.

In general, religious tolerance can be divided into two types, namely passive religious tolerance and active religious tolerance. According to Hasse (2016), passive religious tolerance is an attitude of accepting differences as something factual. In this type, individuals or groups tend not to be directly involved in building closer relationships with other religious communities (Hasse, 2016). In contrast, active religious tolerance involves active engagement with others amid differences and diversity. Active tolerance reflects the essence of the teachings of all religions, emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect (Herman et al., 2024).

Yusuf al-Qardawi provides an in-depth perspective on religious tolerance. According to him, tolerance is not passive but dynamic and involves three levels (Al-Qardawi, 2006). The first level is to give freedom to others to embrace the religion they believe in without coercion. The second level is to ensure the right of others to practice their religious teachings without pressure or prohibition. The third level is not to narrow their space of movement in carrying out things that are considered halal by their religion, even though it may be contrary to the views of other religions (Al-Qardawi, 2006).

Religious Tolerance in Christianity In Christianity, Jesus' attitude toward people of other religions is an important guideline in understanding tolerance. Jesus showed universal love and acceptance, as reflected in his encounter with the Samaritan woman (John 4:7-26). This event shows that tolerance does not only mean accepting the existence of others but also building a deep dialogue to understand differences (Nikodemus & Endi, 2023).

This approach is in line with Pope Francis' teaching, which emphasizes the importance of interreligious dialogue to build peace. In the Fratelli Tutti document, Pope Francis called for global solidarity and mutual understanding as the basis for interfaith harmony (Piscos, 2021). This view reinforces the idea that active tolerance is the essence of relevant Christian teachings in a global context (Sakallı et al., 2021).

The Relevance of Religious Tolerance in a Global World In an increasingly globalized world, religious tolerance is not only a matter of ethics but also social and political stability. Studies show that countries with high levels of tolerance tend to have better human development indexes. For example, the World Happiness Report shows that Nordic countries such as Finland, Denmark, and Sweden, known for their inclusive approach, have high levels of happiness (Connolly et al., 2024).

3.2. The Concept of Tolerance in a Christian Perspective

In Christianity, tolerance is rooted in the principle of love taught by Jesus Christ (Kaunda & Ejike, 2024). This love is not only for fellow believers but also extends to all human beings regardless of their background (Arifianto et al., 2021). This principle is reflected in Jesus' teachings that emphasize the importance of loving enemies and doing good to those who are different (Silalahi et al., 2023). Thus, tolerance in Christianity is not only limited to respecting differences but also includes active actions to create positive relationships with others.

Furthermore, tolerance in Christianity emphasizes the importance of dialogue and cooperation between groups as a way to create peace and social harmony (Syafitri, 2025). Although it acknowledges the essential differences between individuals and groups, it highlights peace, coolness, order, and security as the dominant symptoms of life. In this context, differences are not seen as a source of conflict but as an opportunity to give, enrich each other, and complement each other (Pamuji, 2024).

In the context of a multicultural society, the teaching of tolerance in Christianity has a very important relevance. In the midst of increasing cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity in various countries, the values of tolerance are key to maintaining social harmony (Shalahuddin et al., 2023). Christian teachings that emphasize the importance of mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation can contribute to efforts to build inclusive and peaceful societies (Mala & Hunaida, 2023).

Although tolerance is a value explicitly taught in Christianity, its application in daily life is not always easy (Karim et al., 2021). One of the main challenges is the existence of stereotypes and prejudices that are still deeply rooted in society (Manuain et al., 2024). This is often exacerbated by polaristic political rhetoric and the dissemination of inaccurate information through social media. In the face of these challenges, Christian churches in various places have sought to raise awareness and education about the importance of tolerance through sermons, seminars, and training programs for congregations (Ritonga & Saleh, 2024).

However, behind these challenges lies a great opportunity to strengthen the values of tolerance through innovative and collaborative approaches. For example, the use of digital technology to spread messages of peace and tolerance has opened up new opportunities to reach a wider audience (Ulfa, 2024). In addition, cross-religious and cross-cultural cooperation in humanitarian projects can also strengthen solidarity and mutual trust among various groups.

The value of tolerance in Christian religious education is not only theoretical knowledge or understanding but must also be reflected in real actions and acts of faith in daily life (Marjani,

2023). Tye mentioned that Christian education involves four important aspects that are interrelated. *First*, Christian education requires people to study Christian stories, both historical and contemporary (Tye, 2000). This illustrates the importance of in-depth knowledge of religious teachings as a basis for every individual to interact with others, especially in the multicultural and multireligious context that is developing in today's society. *Second*, Christian education does not stop at cognitive understanding alone but also requires Christians to develop the skills needed to practice their faith in daily life (Tye, 2000). This shows that tolerance is not just about understanding differences, but also about acting in a way that respects those differences.

Furthermore, Tye emphasized the importance of reflection on the Christian story so that each individual can live with a deep self-awareness of the truth of their faith (Tye, 2000). In this context, reflection is not only about understanding religious teachings but also about their application in increasingly complex social life. Christian education is expected to be able to form individuals who not only understand the truth of their religion but are also able to think critically and reflectively about their role in society (Díaz, 2021). This is in line with the views of theologians and other religious educators who emphasize the importance of self-awareness in responding to life's diverse challenges. In this case, the value of tolerance is taught not only in the framework of interaction between individuals but also in a broader sense, namely in relationships between groups that have different beliefs.

Fourth, Tye emphasizes the importance of sensitivity in living together as a covenant community (Tye, 2000). Tolerance in this context is not only interpreted as acceptance of differences but rather the ability to cooperate and coexist in one community despite having different backgrounds. This leads to an understanding that living in a Christian community requires the development of empathy and understanding for others, as well as an open attitude toward the various views and beliefs that exist around us (Siregar & Nurmayani, 2022). Social theories, such as those developed by experts in religious education and sociology, suggest that good religious education must be able to build social attachments that are not only limited to religious groups but also able to open up space for interreligious dialogue (Hasan & Rozaq, 2023).

In addition, tolerant Christian religious education also needs to pay attention to the development of student's character (Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022). The character formed in Christian religious education is not only about obedience to religious teachings, but also about the development of positive attitudes such as empathy, understanding, and mutual respect (Zakso et al., 2021). As Nelson Mandela said, Education is the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world (Mandela, 2014). Therefore, good Christian religious education must be able to produce a generation that not only understands its religious teachings but also has the ability to interact well in a pluralistic society.

Thus, Christian religious education that focuses on the value of tolerance can play a very important role in creating a peaceful and harmonious society. This education not only teaches religious knowledge, but also teaches how religious values can be applied in daily life to build mutually respectful relationships between individuals, between groups, and between religions (Mahmud, 2023). Tolerance, in this context, is not just about passive acceptance of differences, but rather about active action to create space for differences to interact with each other positively. Thus, Christian religious education that focuses on the value of tolerance can contribute greatly to building a more inclusive and loving society.

3.3. Tolerance of Christians in Tangerang Regency

Religious tolerance in Tangerang Regency, especially in Panongan District, is a clear example of the importance of cooperation between various parties to create harmony in a multicultural society. Creating harmony between religious communities is a shared responsibility involving citizens, the government, and religious leaders (Hidayah et al., 2024). This includes various aspects,

such as peace, security, order, and also facilitation to realize harmony based on the principles of mutual understanding, respect, and trust between religious communities, including the regulation of houses of worship.

Panongan District is an example where religious tolerance is going well, with a community consisting of various religious backgrounds, including Christianity, Islam, and other religions. Interfaith harmony in the region is formed through various joint activities, such as interfaith celebrations and dialogues, which aim to strengthen understanding and cooperation between them. Although social and cultural challenges remain, the Panongan community in general tends to maintain mutual respect and harmony. However, these dynamics can vary depending on the social and cultural context in each village, which requires sustained efforts in encouraging dialogue and multicultural education (Firtikasari & Andiana, 2024).

Christian communities in Panongan District, such as the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI), the Baptist Church, the Catholic Church, and the Indonesian Bethel Church, have an active role in social activities and cooperation between religious communities. They participate in interfaith dialogue, where religious leaders from different religions come together to discuss social issues and find common solutions that strengthen mutual understanding. In addition, joint social activities, such as social services and humanitarian programs involving various religions, are a means to strengthen interfaith relationships. Multicultural education is also a focus in schools in Panongan, by teaching the values of tolerance and mutual respect to the younger generation so that they can grow up with a better understanding of diversity (Shalahuddin et al., 2023). The joint celebrations that often involve people of other religions in the moment of religious holidays also show the inclusive attitude applied by the Christian community in this region.

As part of efforts to strengthen tolerance between religious communities, Panongan District also has a religious moderation village that functions as a center of activities that support social harmony. On September 24, 2024, the Head of the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Tangerang Regency, Mr. H. Ade Baijuri, inaugurated the Rawat Bumi: Spreading Moderation activity, which is part of the religious moderation village development program. This program aims to strengthen harmony between residents through concern for the environment and strengthening unity by respecting differences (Shalahuddin et al., 2023). Previously, Ciakar Village was also appointed as a pilot project for the Religious Moderation Village in July 2023, which involved various elements of society, such as the village government, religious leaders, and security forces.

In addition, various activities that support Christian religious tolerance in Tangerang Regency continue to be carried out, such as fostering religious moderation, conflict mediation, and socialization of tolerance. For example, when there was tension regarding the ban on worship in the Thessalonian Church, the local government provided temporary places of worship as a form of mediation. In addition, the Kesbangpol Agency also held socialization activities involving various religious organizations, with the aim of increasing harmony between religious communities

Building harmony between religions is a shared responsibility that must be carried out by every citizen, with support from various government agencies and elements of society (Awalita, 2024). This harmony not only includes aspects of peace, security, and order but also how religious people can understand, respect, and work together to achieve a harmonious life (Ziaulhaq, 2020). The government has a very important role in facilitating the creation of this condition, including by providing facilities that support dialogue between religious communities, as well as ordering houses of worship so that they do not become a source of tension (Junaedi, 2019). In this context, Tangerang Regency, especially Panongan District, is an important example of how religious diversity, including Christianity, can coexist by respecting each other and prioritizing the spirit of tolerance.

In Panongan District, which is located in Tangerang Regency, the community consists of various religious backgrounds that are very diverse, including Christianity, Islam, and other religions. Religious tolerance in this area can be said to be quite good, although challenges in achieving it remain. Each religion has its own beliefs, but in Panongan, religious people try hard to maintain harmony and respect each other. Interfaith activities such as interfaith dialogue, joint celebrations, and cooperation in social activities are often carried out to strengthen interfaith relations. This is in accordance with the principle of tolerance which is understood as respect for differences and freedom to carry out worship according to their respective beliefs (Abror, 2020). However, in John Locke's perspective, although religion is a personal domain that must be respected, the biggest challenge in plurality is how to ensure that religious freedom does not disturb social order and harmony among citizens (Silalahi, 2023).

It is important to recognize that although the people of Panongan generally maintain tolerance, this situation is not always the same across all villages or regions. Different social and cultural conditions in each village affect how religious tolerance is implemented in daily life. Some villages may have a higher level of harmony due to historical factors, inter-communal relations, or the existence of strong religious institutions. Meanwhile, in other villages, tensions between religious communities can arise even on a small scale. Therefore, it is important to continue to conduct open dialogue and multicultural education as part of efforts to maintain and increase tolerance in the midst of this diversity (Tilaar, 2002).

Panongan District itself has several Christian communities that have enriched religious life in the area, including the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI), the Baptist Church, the Catholic Church, and the Indonesian Bethel Church. These communities not only carry out their respective worships but also play an active role in social activities involving all religious people. In this case, the concept of religious moderation introduced by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is relevant for further analysis. Religious moderation refers to the ability to maintain a balance between religious freedom and social responsibility, by avoiding extremism and sectarianism (Junaedi, 2019). This moderation not only leads to a deeper understanding of religion but also to social practices that can foster respect and togetherness between religious communities (Abror, 2020).

One form of religious moderation that has been successfully implemented in Panongan District is the existence of interfaith dialogue activities. In this activity, Christian religious leaders and other religious leaders regularly meet to discuss and share views on developing social issues. This dialogue not only strengthens the relationship between the Christian community and other religious communities but also opens up space for each party to understand different perspectives (Hermawan & Rahman, 2024). Activities like this are very important in creating a deeper understanding between religious people and reducing the potential for social tensions that may arise due to miscommunication or ignorance about other religious beliefs (Abror, 2020).

In addition, many Christian communities in Panongan are involved in social activities together. This activity involves social service, humanitarian assistance, and cooperation in social programs that pay attention to the needs of the community regardless of religious background. This joint social activity not only strengthens relations between religious communities but also shows that Christianity in Panongan is not only seen as a separate religion but also part of the solution in dealing with social problems in the community. In Durkheim's perspective, this solidarity is a force that allows communities to work together to achieve common goals, despite having different backgrounds (Courpasson et al., 2021).

Multicultural education is also one of the important pillars in building tolerance between religious communities (Supardi, 2014). In schools in Panongan, the values of tolerance and mutual respect are taught from an early age to students. This allows the younger generation to grow up with a good understanding of diversity, as well as the ability to work closely with

people from different religious backgrounds. For example, some schools hold student exchange programs, seminars, and workshops that raise issues of multiculturalism. This kind of learning is very important to form a tolerant attitude in children, which will have a positive impact on society in the future (Abror, 2020).

Multicultural education in schools in Panongan District is one of the main strategies for instilling the values of tolerance in the younger generation. This strategy reflects Paulo Freire's views in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which emphasizes that education is not only aimed at transferring knowledge but also freeing individuals from prejudice and discrimination (Freire, 2020). In this context, multicultural education helps students understand diversity as a cultural wealth that must be valued. Through an inclusive curriculum, the younger generation is taught to make differences a social capital that strengthens common life in a multicultural society (Busthomi & Wahyuni, 2024).

In Hick's perspective, all religions have intrinsic value in creating harmony and peace. The implementation of this theory is evident through interfaith dialogue, joint celebrations, and social activities involving various religious communities (Hick, 1992). For example, the active involvement of the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI), the Baptist Church, and the Muslim community in social service programs shows that the Panongan people view differences in beliefs as a source of strength, not an obstacle. This approach emphasizes that every religion has an important role to play in creating a better life for humanity. In supporting this, multicultural education applied in local schools is an important pillar in creating a more inclusive and inclusive young generation (Firtikasari & Andiana, 2024).

Multicultural education in Panongan also plays an important role in building an understanding of tolerance from an early age. Schools in the region teach the values of tolerance through a curriculum that emphasizes the importance of respecting diversity. The younger generation is taught to see differences as something that enriches their lives, not as a threat. This reflects the principle that multicultural education is an important tool to create a more inclusive society (Tilaar, 2002).

In addition, the concept of civic pluralism proposed by Bhikhu Parekh provides the view that a multicultural society like Panongan can thrive if all groups are respected and given space to contribute to a common life (Parekh & Parekh, 2019). In this context, religious moderation villages and various interfaith activities in Panongan are concrete forms of the implementation of civic pluralism. By creating a space in which every religious community can participate, Panongan shows how pluralism can be managed to create harmony.

Multicultural education also plays an important role in building collective awareness of the importance of tolerance. According to Paulo Freire, liberating education is education that encourages students to think critically and understand the world around them (Freire, 2020). At Panongan, multicultural education not only helps students understand diversity but also prepares them to become agents of change that promote tolerance in society. By teaching values such as mutual respect and cooperation, schools in Panongan create a young generation who are able to face the challenges of multiculturalism with an inclusive attitude (Junaedi, 2019). Through interfaith dialogue, multicultural education, and social programs, Panongan shows that diversity is not an obstacle, but an opportunity to create harmony. By continuing to strengthen open dialogue and multicultural education, Panongan can be a model for other regions in building inclusive and tolerant societies

4. Conclusion

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that religious tolerance in Panongan District reflects how the theory of religious pluralism, social solidarity, and tolerance can be implemented in real life. Through interfaith dialogue, multicultural education, and initiatives such as religious moderation villages, the Panongan community has succeeded in creating harmony in diversity. However, the sustainability of this tolerance requires a concerted effort from all parties

to continue to strengthen the values of inclusivity and respect for differences. The relevant theories of experts provide a strong analytical framework for understanding these dynamics and provide strategic direction to strengthen harmony in the future.

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