

# Application of Religious Harmony Values to Students of State Integrated Junior High School of Balaesang Tanjung

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of study is to discussed the application of religious harmony values to students of State Integrated Junior High School of Balaesang Tanjung. This research adopts a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is characterized by collecting descriptive data, including the informants' words, actions, and feelings, who serve as the needed data sources. This study found that In implementing the values of religious moderation at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, namely through the principal's policy followed by all teachers, especially Islamic religious education teachers at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung implementing the principles of religious moderation in every lesson, which includes the attitude of taking the middle path (*tawassuth*), straight and firm (*i'tidāl*), balance (*tawāzun*), tolerance (*tasāmuh*), egalitarian (*musāwah*), deliberation (*syurā*). The impact of implementing the values of religious moderation at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung is that it has a positive effect on students, including growing an attitude of mutual understanding towards each other regardless of religion, being able to show an attitude of awareness and honesty, and not worrying about differences

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## ARTICLE INFORMATION

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Religious harmony, values, religious peace

## 1. Introduction

Moderation in religion is essential so that the development of religious understanding does not conflict with national values. Religious understanding and practice must not conflict with the foundations of national and state life (Reychler, 1997). Moderation is equally vital in the context of development, both in building religious communities and families and in realizing religious moderation in current social

ideals regarding relationships. Construction is an idea and desire that is bigger than any society. Development is a condition for progress. An advanced society is a cultured society whose theology is linear with civilization (ethical values). Humans cannot have a noble civilization without religion. Culture and religion are the glue of life that must be built following the noble ideal of national and social life (Turner, 2001).

Development without civilization (values) will make life stifling, difficult, and oppressive.

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Civilization, which is deeply connected to our religious and ethical values, gives birth to culture. The culture must be linked to religion, as it's a prerequisite for the realization of a polite, peaceful, just, and democratic society (Croucher, Zeng, Rahmani, & Sommier, 2017). Islam is a tolerant religion with its creed and sharia. Because Islam is the blessing of the world, Islam always gives freedom to everyone without any restrictions regarding religion. Therefore, the entire community must be able to instill a peaceful, tolerant understanding of religion so as not to demonize other people's religions and cause violence between humans.

Strengthening moderate Islamic education can positively impact the attitudes and opinions of non-extremist students, thereby impacting the continuity of Islamic educational institutions. Muslims accept everything which respect differences in religion and other people's beliefs (Abd-Allah, 2006). As educational institutions, schools should be able to maximize student potential to fulfill life's personal and social tasks. Because of their role and function, schools are a continuation of family education as a place for primary education where future generations will form new generations who are physically, morally, mentally mature, and practical.

Educational institutions that emphasize the role of the ustadz in transforming students' knowledge should be able to guide and instill the values of religious moderation in their students because the role of the ustadz is to provide knowledge, insight, and a broad understanding of religion. *Rahmatan lil a'lamin* Islam knows how to respect differences, respect people's beliefs, and promote tolerance. Promoting moral or ethical tolerance among students is necessary to create a conducive learning atmosphere, ensuring harmony between religious communities and not discriminating between religions (Bruhn, Zajac, Al-Kazemi, & Prescott Jr, 2002). The current situation is that students' morals have deteriorated, are starting to weaken, and are almost forgotten among students caught up in the development flow. Many students are beginning to take good manners and noble morals for granted. Based on initial observations made by researchers at the Balaesang Tanjung State Junior

High School 6, it is known that we often do not respect other people's opinions. Apart from that, students do not respect differences of opinion between students and do not greet each other. Other students have different beliefs about the school environment. If no action is taken, this will have a negative impact on life in the future, both at the individual and societal levels.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Concept of Religious Moderation**

Conceptually, moderation in religion comes from the word moderation. Temperance is taken from the English word temperance, a moderate and neutral attitude. Meanwhile, the Big Indonesian Dictionary gives two meanings to the word moderation: 1. Reduce violence and 2. Avoid extreme actions. If we say "the person is behaving moderately," it means that the person is behaving naturally, normally, and not excessively (Subchi, Zulkifli, Latifa, & Sa'diyah, 2022). The word "moderate" simply means being reasonable, not deviating, not taking sides, having a complete opinion, and being willing to consider other people's opinions.

According to Sheikh Wahbah al-Zuhaili, moderation means balancing beliefs and morals and addressing the sociopolitical system, order, and government. A religious attitude that never gives up is likened to a mountain peak with climbers on the right or left side. The safest position is to take the first position while you are still at the top of the mountain.

Religious moderation is essential in Islam because it brings mercy to all of nature. A moderate attitude towards society is needed to minimize the negative impact of the dangers of extremism. Religious moderation among Muslims is better known as "*Wasatiya Al-Islam*." The terms *Vasatiye* and *Vasatiyah al-Islam* only became known to Muslims in modern times. Among the pioneers who began to popularize the term *wasatiya* were thinkers such as Muhammad Rasyid Ridla (d. 1935 AD) and Mahmud Syaltut (d. 1963 AD) from Al-Azhar University in Egypt. They use this term to refer to the word mediocrity in the Qur'an. "Mediocrity" comes from the term *Vasatiye*, which means

moderation. Later, new generations of Egyptian scholars, such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Fahmi Huwaydi, and Muhammad al-Ghazali, continued to use the term *Wasatiyya*.

In terms of terminology, religious moderation is a view or attitude where a person always tries to take a middle position between opposing and extreme attitudes so that one does not dominate thoughts and attitudes. In other words, moderation means giving the opposite of the values one deserves. Religious abstinence is a balanced attitude toward applying religious teachings internally and externally within religious communities. Moderate Islam is a religious ideology relevant to all aspects in different contexts, including religion, tradition, ethnicity, and nation. The diversity of religious understanding is clear evidence of Islam's historical existence. Some of this understanding stems from the dialectic between text and reality and from how to consider the place of reason and revelation in solving a problem.

### **2.2 Indicators of Religious Moderation**

The emergence of various religious concepts is rapidly developing from multiple groups with specific ideological agendas, both are tied to claims of understanding reality arising from narrow religious concepts and specific political-ideological agendas, requiring further study (Bose, 1929). The difficulty of religious moderation regarding the emergence of different religious concepts lies in the possibility of understanding the religious teachings themselves. In particular, the challenge of religious moderation with the emergence of various religious ideologies has recently become the focus of attention of religious moderation activists, especially the government through the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, which is in the perspective of understanding the nation and state.

Religious moderation prioritizing balance and justice in religious understanding will provide a sign when religious understanding is consistent with acceptance of values, culture, and nationality. In the Republic of Indonesia, which prioritizes harmony, differences in religious views between religious communities and

understanding of religion between followers of different religions are not maintained. This religious understanding prioritizes a tolerant attitude towards the progress of the nation and state based on a spirit of diversity. Based on this reality, the signs of religious moderation that need to be shown are national loyalty, tolerance, resistance to extremism and violence, and attitudes that demonstrate religious understanding and consider religious expressions appropriate to local culture.

### **2.3 National Commitment**

National commitment is an important index that measures the extent to which a person or group's religious views and expressions adhere to national ideology, especially their commitment to accepting Pancasila as the basis of the state (Black, 1999). Currently, the issue of national affiliation is significant to pay attention to, especially considering the emergence of new religious ideologies that do not follow long-existing values and culture, such as noble national identity. The emergence of an understanding of religion that is incompatible with national values and culture will give rise to conflicting attitudes between religious doctrine and culture because religious teachings seem to be the enemy of culture. Understanding religion in this way is less flexible and wise because religious teachings contain the spirit of fostering a sense of love for the homeland and country.

At the same time, the issue of national loyalty also needs to receive attention currently, when a new transnational religious ideology is emerging. This ideology aims to realize the ideal of creating a state system that does not rely too much on national religious situations or conditions. It is nation-based because it wants to form a global leadership system that is reluctant to recognize national sovereignty.

When these stories appear in society, they will raise concerns about the integrity of Indonesia. The orientation of religious movements and ideologies that seek to establish a state system, such as a caliphate state or an Islamic state, or the desire to develop a visible system that is contrary to the principles of the

Indonesian nation-state, is entirely invalid because it is not in line with the agreed national commitments—brought to you by the warriors and founders of Indonesia. For this reason, understanding of religion and nationality must be balanced. In this case, signs of religious moderation can be seen in a person's commitment to understanding religion in accordance with the national framework. Any religious ideology that differentiates individuals and groups of society from the national commitment to establishing a state outside the unitary state system of the Republic of Indonesia is permitted.

#### **2.4 Tolerance**

Tolerance is an attitude of surrender and not preventing other people from believing, expressing their beliefs, and expressing their views, even if they differ from what we believe. This kind of open attitude is an essential point of tolerance (Brenner & Metcalf, 2020). Tolerance, apart from being open to differences, also includes accepting, respecting different people, and expressing positive understanding. In a democratic life, tolerance plays a vital role in facing various challenges that result from differences. Democracy will be realized and implemented well if people are susceptible to all kinds of differences that arise in their lives. In a broader context, tolerance refers to religious beliefs and differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, etc.

Islam teaches tolerance because it is a gift given to all of nature. Islamic teachings guide humans to respect human dignity. Islam respects all human rights, walking together and helping each other. Islamic teachings aim to preserve world civilization, not to conquer different groups. Tolerance is related to inter- and intra-religious tolerance and social and political tolerance. Therefore, a sign of religious moderation associated with tolerance is the ability to sincerely express religious attitudes and expressions that respect the differences that arise in society.

#### **2.5 Anti-Radicalism and Violence**

Radicalism and violence in the context of religious moderation arise from a narrow

understanding of religion (Wattana, 2006). Attitudes and expressions arising from this ideology and understanding tend to create changes in the order of social and political life through violence. There is no solid theological argument that violence resulting from extreme religious attitudes and expressions is not only physical violence but also non-physical violence, such as accusing individuals and community groups of different beliefs of heresy. Religious teachings, especially Islam, prioritize human values. Islam is present on earth as a blessing (*rahmatan lil'alam*) for the entire universe. However, it cannot be denied that other phenomena deviate from the apostolic mission due to the current conservative understanding of religion. It cannot be denied that currently, there are still religious manifestations from some Muslims who seem less wise because they are rigid and exclusive in their religion. As a result, the face of Islam in society is considered to be haunted by outsiders.

The face of Islam in the public sphere has become hostile, extremist, and discriminatory. Of course, this statement is not valid because the true face of Islam is full of compassion, as the mission of Islam, as has been said, is to spread kindness throughout the universe. Apart from these elements of rigid understanding, extremism and violence also arise from an understanding of the ideology of revivalist religion with the desire to establish an Islamic state such as a caliphate, Darul Islam, and imamate. Such diversity of religious ideologies adds complexity to the atmosphere by creating harmonious conditions in society. Several groups are busy organizing religious services for their fellow believers. At the same time, some other groups are kept under control by associating themselves with dangerous religious enemies through extreme hatred towards groups of different beliefs and even encouraging them to convert to groups of the same religion. Recognize diversity and respect religious beliefs. Therefore, the characteristics of religious moderation against extremism lie in balanced and fair religious attitudes and expressions, namely religious attitudes and expressions that prioritize justice, respect, and understanding of the reality of social differences.

## 2.6 Accommodating to Local Culture

The encounter between religion, especially Islam, and culture often gives rise to long debates and leaves behind many long-lasting problems. Islam originates from revelation, which was no longer revealed after the prophet's death. Culture is the result of human creativity and can change according to the needs of human life (De Dreu, 2015). The relationship between religion and culture is very contradictory. At this stage, conflicts often arise between religious understanding, especially Islam, and local traditions that develop in local society.

In Islam, the tension between religious teachings and local traditions is resolved by *fiqh*. *Fiqh*, the fruit of the *ijtihad* of the *ulama*, opens space to become a "tool" in resolving tensions. Several *fiqh* canons and procedural jurisprudence, such as *al-'adah muhakkame* (good traditions that can be used as a source of law), have proven effective in reconciling conflicts between Islamic teachings and local traditions. The *fiqh* rules mentioned above are the basis for recognizing various problems, such as tradition and Islamic teachings, which have no textual legal basis.

The resolution of this tension shows that Islamic law is flexible and dynamic. It can adapt to space and time. Therefore, Islam will continue to be on the agenda in every context and everywhere. In the context of Islam in Indonesia, adapting religious teachings to Indonesian society, as well as traditions and local wisdom that do not conflict with Sharia law, are characteristics of Islamic society in Indonesia, or what is called Islam. Islamic indigenization is part of Islamic history in its country of origin and other countries, including Indonesia. These two levels form a large river that continues to flow and feeds secondary tributaries to keep the river flowing. This means that the indigenization process is part of resistance to historical reality without changing the essence of Islam.

## 3. Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is characterized by collecting descriptive data, including the

informants' words, actions, and feelings, who serve as the needed data sources (Nurdin & Pettalongi, 2022). The collected data is supported by textual and documentary data (files, audio, visual, audiovisual) that support the research. With this approach, the researcher aims to provide a detailed description of the phenomena occurring in the field, the nature of the phenomena, and all aspects related to the theme under investigation (Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2013).

This study is classified as a case study research. Case study research delves more intensively into the current situation to gather information (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022). In other words, the researcher must build good relationships with various individuals and entities to become sources of information within the environment, such as academic units, social groups, individuals, institutions, and communities. The researcher must also immerse themselves in the surrounding environment to gather as much data as possible. The research was conducted at a state integrated junior high school of Balesang Donggala regency, Centra Sulawesi, Indonesia.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Implementation of Religious Moderation

State Integrated Junior High School 6 Balaesang Tanjung is a public school that accepts students from various religious backgrounds, including Islam, Christianity, and Catholicism. With these religious differences, school members can behave moderately towards each other. This follows the theories of Oxford and Muhammad Qosim, which the researchers used as references in this research. In theory, it explains that religious moderation is a moderate attitude and impartiality. Religious moderation is a balanced attitude in implementing religious teachings, both internally among religious adherents and externally, among religious adherents.

This shows the importance of fostering religious moderation education by implementing the values of religious moderation among students at State Integrated Junior High School 6 Balaesang Tanjung so that the learning

atmosphere and academic activities carried out within the School environment can run well and be conducive to creating harmony between religious communities.

Prevention of radicalism is a government program that must be carried out by the entire community, including educational institutions. All parties within the State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung are responsible for implementing religious moderation education. One of the essential figures in the progress of educational institutions in the school environment in implementing the values of religious moderation is the role of the school principal in making policies, which is very necessary because a leader is responsible for the development and progress of educational institutions. Regarding diversity at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, the principal always coordinates with teachers to instill the values of religious moderation in the school.

State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung is a school with a multicultural background that uses the values of moderation as a unifier in the school. This is also in line with the values of religious moderation, where the principles of religious moderation also teach the attitudes of *shura* (deliberation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), *l'tidal* (straight and firm), *tawasuth* (taking the middle path), *musawah* (egalitarian).

State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung is one of the public schools that does not prioritize students of a specific religion to enter the school—accepting other religions into schools, which are recognized religions in the Republic of Indonesia. With these differences, it is hoped that the school community can behave moderately towards fellow students with different beliefs and respect each other. What the school is doing to implement religious

moderation at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung is as follows:

#### **4.2 Principal Policy**

The role of the school principal in making policies is essential because a leader is responsible for the development and progress of educational institutions. Regarding diversity at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, the principal always coordinates with teachers to instill the values of religious moderation in the school as stated by the principal of State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung as follows:

“As a school principal, I made a policy to strengthen moderation education, namely facilitating every child to explore their religion. Always involve teachers in determining policies in learning activities. Each person has a religious teacher to implement every religious lesson. We are following their respective beliefs or religions. And for religious holidays, we also really appreciate teachers and students who have different beliefs from the religion we follow by providing various kinds of food, drinks, and so on. We usually do this every religious holiday. With treatment like that, we feel happy, and brotherhood between religious communities becomes stronger; of course, it can minimize things that can cause divisions between religious communities in the future because we are a family that upholds diversity. Namely, we are of different ethnicities, religions, and groups but are brothers. So, this is what I always emphasize to all teachers and students.”

This statement was confirmed by Muhammad Yamin, the Islamic religion teacher at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, he explained:

“For each religious learning activity, each student enters their respective religion

class. Usually, the schedule for religion subjects is Wednesday. For example, for Islamic Religious Education subjects, from grades 7 to 9, Muslim students study in the same classroom with teachers who teach Islamic Religious Education subjects. For other religions, students are taught by their religious teachers.”

In the learning process, especially for each religious subject, the school provides a policy for students to explore their respective religions by creating religious classes taught by religious teachers according to their respective faiths. The school gives its students the freedom to choose their available religious classes. This is an implication of a democratic culture in schools. Strengthening religious moderation education is carried out by developing the values of honesty, mutual respect, and courtesy, which serve as behavioral guidelines in responding to problems that occur at school. The principal of State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung said the following:

“In making policies, I always involve teachers and school staff. I always consider it carefully so as not to hurt the feelings of teachers or other staff. I also always invite my fellow teachers when teaching and dealing with problematic children not to use violence or mention each other’s differences.”

Those responsible for strengthening the implementation of religious moderation values are all parties within the State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung. Based on the interviews, researchers see that teachers have an essential role in instilling religious moderation education because they have the ability and are professional in shaping students’ morals and character, especially those that reflect religious moderation values. The Minister of Religion said that moderation must be part of the school curriculum, and educators must be actively involved in fostering their religious activities.

From the Ministry of Religion’s statement above, teachers are required to be able to strengthen religious moderation among students, so teachers must make efforts to provide religious moderation education. Based on the research results, researchers looked at teachers’ efforts to offer moderate education through classroom learning activities and school activities.

From the results of observations carried out at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, researchers saw that the students’ attitudes of tolerance were carried out in their daily lives. However, the school has not provided a policy regarding formally implementing religious moderation. The direction from the school principal in his delivery was that every teacher must cultivate an attitude of religious moderation in every learning process. The implementation has been carried out since the beginning of the learning process. A teacher must be able to position himself and be an excellent example for his students.

#### ***4.3 Principles of Religious Moderation Values***

Teaching and learning cannot be separated from the world of education because teaching and learning are two interdependent interactions. New learning will occur if there is interaction between the individual and his environment. As an educator, the teacher is tasked with channeling, directing, and motivating students so they can develop their potential, not dictating and forcing their will, let alone curbing students’ freedom to be creative. Every student has different potential. Teachers must utilize this uniqueness to make the potential that exists or that students have so that they can develop it in the future.

In the learning process, students will think openly, that is, think about how they can respect the right to life, the right to education, the right to expression, the right to embrace religion, and not easily blame others. As a result, encounters with other worlds, beliefs, and diverse cultures will lead students to think more maturely and have perspectives and ways of understanding reality in various ways. As the nation’s next generation, of

course, we must be given a broad understanding of how to implement *Rohmatanlilalamin* Islam and make Islam a basis for interacting with other people by respecting differences. This requires a teacher's expertise in instilling the value of religious moderation. The implementation of religious moderation values in the learning process can be applied in the following learning methods:

#### 4.4 Discussion method

Discussion in the Indonesian Dictionary is a scientific meeting to exchange ideas about a problem. Discussion is a communication interaction between two or more people/groups. Usually, the communication between them or the group is in the form of knowledge or basic knowledge, which will ultimately provide a sense of good and correct understanding. As stated by the homeroom teacher, as follows:

Teachers usually invite students to discuss each subject during our learning process. We do this to train their mentality so that students become brave enough to express opinions and ideas to assess issues, especially those involving religious moderation. By having discussions, they get new views from their discussion partners and learn to respect the opinions of other friends with different ideas.

Thus, discussion is an interaction between two or more people to discuss specific problems or issues with certain desired goals. That discussion is also critical because it can encourage students to exchange ideas and learn to voice opinions and arguments. The discussion method provides many benefits for students in the learning process, namely training students to think critically and openly so that each student has broad insight from other students. Then, by discussing, students have a democratic nature because they can express their respective opinions in the discussion forum. Then, by discussing, students have an attitude of mutual

respect for other people's views. By examining, students can increase their knowledge and experience from the discussion results. By discussing, students' thinking abilities can be directed, think critically, creatively, and argumentatively, and train students' mentality in expressing opinions in public.

The teaching and learning process allows students to express their knowledge by applying the discussion method. By discussing, students can get to know each other's characters and how to respond and express a problem with a predetermined theme.

#### 4.5 Group work

Group work is the presentation of material by giving tasks to students in groups to achieve goals and do good deeds regardless of one's social status, religion, and beliefs because goodness is needed for all humankind. Group work is an activity in which people help each other learn. Students must work together to carry out the tasks given by the teacher. Help each other in solving the questions provided by the teacher. The essence of group work is cooperation, helping each other solve a problem in learning. One student said the following:

Group work or group assignments are assignments that the teacher gives us in a subject. For example, Social Sciences lessons. Teachers usually create study groups, and each group is represented by a group leader. This makes us happy because we work together, and when a friend doesn't understand, another friend explains how to solve it.

Therefore, as a researcher, I say that this group work method is part of the teacher's strategy in instilling the values of religious moderation in each subject so that students can work together to solve problems they face, especially those involving religious moderation. According to researchers, this is a very good thing

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to do so that students can be humble and not exclusive in their opinions and religion.

### 4.6 Study Tour Method

Providing direct experience to students about religious moderation is part of one way that students can apply the knowledge gained in class and then implement it in real life. One method used is a study tour. This field trip method is a learning method outside the classroom, where students visit destinations outside the school to learn directly from the target object. Mr Moh. Yamin said that:

One of the methods that we use to implement the values of religious moderation in students at State Integrated Junior High School 6 Balaesang Tanjung is to conduct study tours or field trips as a teaching method carried out outside of school by inviting students to pay attention to environmental conditions or events that are related to their learning material that is being discussed or shown directly to a particular object. So, direct student involvement can help them develop themselves, respond, appreciate, and actualize the knowledge gained in the classroom, then associate it with the surrounding environment. This activity aims to get to know each other, understand differences, and strengthen the meaning of moderation and religious tolerance.

This field trip method has several benefits, including students learning directly about the objects visited, and students can gain consolidation of the theories studied at school with the reality of applications applied to the objects visited. Students can experience the practical experience of the knowledge they have acquired, and students can obtain more accurate information by conducting interviews or listening to lectures given by local officers.

Using the field trip method in learning religious moderation is part of educators' efforts

to provide life experiences with other people of different cultures, beliefs, and social statuses. Because religious moderation needs to be practiced in the lives of students, of course, teachers must direct, guide, and show students the importance of religious moderation when making visits to places that have been determined according to the learning material explained in class.

### 5. Conclusion

In implementing the values of religious moderation at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung, namely through the principal's policy followed by all teachers, especially Islamic religious education teachers at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung implementing the principles of religious moderation in every lesson, which includes the attitude of taking the middle path (*tawassuth*), straight and firm (*i'tidāl*), balance (*tawāzun*), tolerance (*tasāmuh*), egalitarian (*musāwah*), deliberation (*syurā*).

The impact of implementing the values of religious moderation at State Integrated Junior High School Balaesang Tanjung is that it has a positive effect on students, including growing an attitude of mutual understanding towards each other regardless of religion, being able to show an attitude of awareness and honesty, and not worrying about differences. So, an atmosphere of harmony and peace will be created. The attitude of good impact is reflected in student behavior, including understanding each other, showing an attitude of awareness and honesty, and agreeing with differences because differences, as *sunatullah*, are natural laws that Allah SWT has planned.

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