

THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS IN CREATING INTERNAL TOLERANCE OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN KARAKAN VILLAGE, WERU DISTRICT, SUKOHARJO REGENCY

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Abstract

Harmony between people in general, both of the same religion and outside the religion, can be realized if each other can respect and appreciate each other. Every religion teaches about peace and harmony in life, reality shows that religious pluralism can trigger its adherents to clash with each other and conflict occurs. Religious conflicts do not only occur between different religions or what is known as inter-religious, but conflicts often occur between people in one religion. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of organizational leaders in creating internal tolerance among religious people in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, by collecting data through observation, interviews and documentation. This study uses the theory of persuasive communication strategies. Research Results The role of Islamic organizational leaders in Karakan Village as agents of change in promoting tolerance cannot be underestimated. Through example, dialogue, and collaboration, they have succeeded in overcoming various obstacles, including differences in theological views and minimal formal communication.

Keywords: Leader, Organization, Tolerance, Religious Community.

Abstrak

Kerukunan antar umat manusia pada umumnya baik seagama maupun luar agama dapat diwujudkan apabila satu sama lain dapat saling menghormati dan menghargai. Setiap agama mengajarkan tentang kedamaian dan keselarasan hidup, realitas menunjukkan pluralisme agama bisa memicu pemeluknya saling berbenturan dan terjadinya konflik. Konflik agama tidak saja terjadi antar agama yang berbeda atau yang dikenal dengan istilah antara agama, tetapi sering terjadi konflik antar umat dalam satu agama. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengetahui peran pemimpin organisasi dalam menciptakan toleransi internal umat beragama di Desa Karakan Kecamatan Weru Kabupaten Sukoharjo. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, dengan mengumpulkan data melalui observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teori strategi komunikasi persuasif. Hasil Penelitian Peran pemimpin organisasi Islam di Desa Karakan sebagai agen perubahan dalam mempromosikan toleransi tidak dapat dipandang sebelah mata. Melalui teladan, dialog, dan kolaborasi, mereka telah berhasil mengatasi berbagai kendala, termasuk perbedaan pandangan teologis dan minimnya komunikasi formal.

Kata Kunci: Pemimpin, Organisasi, Toleransi, Umat Beragama.



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INTRODUCTION

In social life, an individual will be faced with groups of people with various skin color differences, one of which represents religious differences.¹ Given that Indonesia is a multicultural country and a pluralistic society, it has many cultures and various religions that grow in this country.² For this reason, the leadership of a religious figure is needed to achieve harmony between religious communities. Religious harmony is a relationship between people of other religions that is based on an attitude of tolerance and mutual respect for their differences so that equality is created in society fairly.³ As social beings, humans need relationships and cooperation with other humans to fulfill their needs.⁴ Humans are said to be social beings also because in humans there is a drive and need to relate (interact) with other people, humans also cannot live as humans if they do not live in the midst of other humans.⁵

Religious harmony is very necessary, so that we can live our religious and social lives in Indonesia with a sense of peace, prosperity, and free from suspicion of other groups, so that cooperation between religions must be carried out, such as eradicating poverty, fighting ignorance, preventing corruption, forming a clean government, and advancing the nation can be done as well as possible.⁶

Harmony between humans in general, both of the same religion and outside the religion, can be realized if each other can respect and appreciate each other.⁷ Every religion teaches about peace and harmony in life, reality shows that religious pluralism can trigger its adherents to clash with each other and cause conflict.⁸ This conflict can have a very deep impact and tends to be widespread. The implications can be very large so that it poses great social, political and economic risks. Religious conflicts do not only occur between different religions or what is known as the term between religions, but often occur between people within one religion.

Indonesian society consists of various tribes, races, cultures, and religions, making it an example of plurality that includes not only cultural diversity but also religious diversity. As social beings, humans always want to connect with each other. They want to understand their

¹ Muhamad Baihaqi Adib, *Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Menjaga Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama* (Perpustakaan IAIN Salatiga, 2018).

² Artis, "Kerukunan dan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama," *Jurnal Dosen Fakultas Dakwah dan Komunikasi UIN Suska Riau* 3, no. 1 (2011).

³ Rizal Ahmad Derry and Kharis Ahmad, *Kerukunan dan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama dalam Mewujudkan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Sosial* (Perpustakaan UIN Mataram, 2022).

⁴ Y.R. Effendi, "Pemberdayaan Semangat Toleransi Beragama dalam Komunitas Pelayanan Dialog Antar-Agama," *Abdimas Pedagogi: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat* 6, no. 2 (2023): 143–49.

⁵ Rusydi Ibnu, "Makna Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama dalam Konteks Keislaman dan Keindonesian," *Jurnal* 1, no. 1 (2018).

⁶ Dly Hamdan, *Membangun Kerukunan Berpolitik Dan Beragama Di Indonesia* (Depeg RI, 2012).

⁷ Sutton Margareth, "Toleransi: Nilai dalam Pelaksanaan Demokrasi," *Jurnal* 5, no. 1 (2006).

⁸ M.A. Nasir and K. Wazis, "Strategi Komunikasi Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Menjaga Toleransi Umat Beragama di Kecamatan Tempurejo Kabupaten Jember," *Maddah: Journal of Advanced Da'wah Management Research* 1, no. 2 (2022).

surroundings and even what is happening within themselves, so this greatly affects the way individuals communicate when interacting with others in carrying out the culture and religious beliefs that they adhere to.⁹

In Indonesia, there have been many conflicts in the name of religion as a trigger for division. In Maluku on February 13, 2002, there was a bloody and fiery conflict that claimed many lives and property and destroyed the foundations of life in various fields. Religious elements were used as triggers and targets for destruction in the conflict. Conflicts in the name of religious differences in Indonesia such as the cases in Maluku and Lampung are proof that religious harmony is not permanent but is related to and influenced by social dynamics that continue to develop.¹⁰

In creating harmony between religious communities, there are five principles that serve as guidelines for all religious adherents in their daily lives. Namely, no religion teaches evil to its followers. Although there are similarities between religions, such as teachings about doing good to others, there are fundamental differences in what they teach. Including differences in holy books, prophets, worship procedures, evidence of the truth of religion, and we cannot force anyone to follow the religion or beliefs of each religious teaching.

Religious figures are people who have great abilities and noble personalities. In the field of religion, religious figures are used as role models by the surrounding community. Religious figures are people who are respected and honored in society, because they have very broad and deep religious insights.¹¹ Religious leaders in Islam are often called Kiyai or Ushtadz. This term refers to a greeting sent to someone who knows Islam or to a religious teacher. In the context of the Metro Rejo community, kiai are considered the most expert in religious knowledge and the most authoritative in explaining religious issues.

Religious figures play an active role in activities to maintain harmony between religious communities, such as attending meetings of activities between religious figures to get to know each other and advise each other, build good relationships between each other in community life and help each other in every social and religious activity. If an individual has carried out his obligations and asked for his rights according to the social status he holds or holds, he has carried out his role properly. The role is considered very important because it regulates a person's behavior in society based on the norms that apply in society.

⁹ I.P. Sari and M. Tanjung, "Metode Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Menanamkan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama di Kelurahan Tanjung Langkat Kecamatan Salapian," *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal* 5, no. 6 (2023).

¹⁰ Siti Munawaroh, *Peran Organisasi Kerukunan Umat dalam Pengelolaan Konflik Keagamaan*, ed. Studi Kasus Desa Gubuk et al. (IAIN Walisongo, 2014).

¹¹ M. Mukhibat et al., "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia (Wacana dan Kebijakan)," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management* 4, no. 1 (2023): 73–88.

Efforts to create religious harmony in the midst of a pluralistic society are very important in overcoming conflicts that are motivated by religion. In this case, religious figures as people who are considered more competent in religious and moral matters are expected to be able to guide their people to get to know other religions as knowledge of the similarities and differences that exist in the teachings of each religion.¹²

The diversity of groups, races, cultures, religions is both beneficial and detrimental to Indonesia. The advantage is when diversity can be managed effectively and becomes an added value for a country and a binding force for existing community groups, on the other hand if it cannot be managed properly then it becomes a part that destroys the nation from within.¹³ Like the incident that often occurs during the democratic party held every five years in this country. The motto of the Indonesian nation called "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" is not a simple expression, but is full of meaning, diversity towards the same goal. The nation cannot ignore the reality that in life together as a nation there are different components from each other. However, the location of the elements of difference is like the identity of each individual when they interact with each other. Similar to religious life in Indonesia.¹⁴

Karakan Village, located in Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency, is known as a village with religious diversity. Since its inception in 1922, Karakan Village has become a symbol of harmony with a community known for being friendly and appreciating differences. However, in recent years, increasing social dynamics require an active role from local organizational leaders to maintain and strengthen internal tolerance between religious communities. The presence of organizational leaders is key to facilitating dialogue and cooperation between religious communities.

Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency, is an area with a diversity of Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Institute (LDII), and the Al-Islam Foundation. Although these four organizations have differences in religious traditions and views, the people of Karakan Village generally live side by side peacefully. However, the potential for conflict due to differences in religious practices remains.

The role of organizational leaders is very important in maintaining harmony and creating internal tolerance of Muslims in Karakan Village. Leaders are not only tasked with managing the organization, but also as role models in responding to diversity. In this context, this study aims to

¹² Budi Nurhamidin and Mashadi, "Strategi Tokoh Lintas Agama Dalam Mengatasi Konflik Pada Masyarakat Plural: (Studi Kasus Di Desa Mopuya Selatan, Kecamatan Dumoga Utara, Kabupaten Bolaang Mongondow)," *Farabi* 18, no. 1 (2021): 1.

¹³ Lalu Moh Fahri, "Mediator Dan Peranannya Dalam Resolusi Konflik," *PENSA* 3, no. 1 (2021): 114–25, <https://doi.org/10.36088/pensa.v3i1.1216>.

¹⁴ Jirhanuddin, *Perbandingan Agama* (Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).

explore the role of Islamic organizational leaders in Karakan Village in creating a harmonious atmosphere of tolerance.

Based on the description above, the researcher feels the need to conduct an in-depth study on the role of organizational leaders in creating internal tolerance among religious communities in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a type of field research which is essentially a method to specifically find the reality that is happening in society. Therefore, data collection carried out in the study was taken directly at the location or area of the research, namely in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency.

This research was conducted on September 5, 2024 to September 25, 2024. The location in this study was carried out in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency, used because researchers can research related to the role of organizational leaders in creating internal tolerance of religious communities. In-depth interviews with leaders of NU, Muhammadiyah, LDII, and the Al-Islam Foundation. Observations were made by collecting organizational documents, activity reports, and literature on tolerance and leadership. The data obtained will be studied, namely, respondents' answers will be analyzed to obtain accurate data.¹⁵ After that, the researcher draws conclusions from the results of the analysis and interpretation of the data, all stages will be explained in the form of statements in this study, the data analysis technique used is the Huberman & Milles model technique, which proposed a data analysis model in qualitative research, known as an interactive model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Karakan Village

Karakan Village is located in Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia. According to the elders, the history of Karakan Village began with the discovery of the production of crackers which in Javanese is called "karak." The name "Karakan."

Javanese people call it karak), so there are hamlets named dukuh karakan and dukuh candi. This is identified or equated with the friendliness of the residents with karak who are not fussy and do not do many strange activities, from here the area is named.

The history of Karakan Village based on the narrative of the elders who are still alive said that a cracker production was found (the Javanese call it karak), so that there were hamlets named Dukuh Karakan and Dukuh Candi. This is identified or equated with the crispness (friendliness)

¹⁵ John W. Cresswell, *Penelitian Kualitatif dan Desain Riset* (Pustaka Pelajar, 2015).

of the residents with karak who are not fussy and do not do many strange activities from here this area was named Karakan Village. In 1922 a village was formed, namely Karakan Village, which was led by Lurah Demang.

Administratively, Weru District consists of 13 villages, one of which is Karakan Village. Weru District has an area of 41.98 km² with a population of 55,091 people in 2021. Karakan Village itself is one of the villages that helps shape the friendly and humble character of this area.

Karakan Village borders various other areas in Weru District located in Sukoharjo Regency. This district is led by Camat Pandiyanto, ST, MM, with a postal code of 57562 and a Ministry of Home Affairs code of 33.11.01.

The population of Karakan Village as part of Weru District reflects the total population of Weru, which consists of 2,024 men and 1,966 women, with a total of 3,990 people.

The Role of Organizational Leaders in Creating Internal Tolerance among Religious Communities in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency.

The relationship between religious figures and society, religious figures are role models and community development. Religious figures have a higher position and social status in society, so that religious figures are respected by society. The position of religious figures in society is as leaders. Their leadership is not only limited to the realm of religion, but includes the entire social life of society..

ResultsInterviews with the leaders of organizations in Karakan Village showed that leaders of organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, LDII, and Al-Islam Foundation stated that they respect the diversity of each organization's practices and these organizations participate in community activities in the village so that Islamic brotherhood between organizations will remain well-established. All religious organizations in Karakan Village hold routines once a month for dialogue between organizations to harmonize differences and if there are differences of opinion on a problem.

ResultsInterviews with leaders of organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, LDII, and Al-Islam Foundation also showed that there were obstacles or constraints that were overcome, namely differences in theological views that sometimes triggered tension. The lack of formal communication space between organizations. Limited support from the village government.

ResultsInterviews with leaders of organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, LDII, and the Al-Islam Foundation stated that they are also preparing strategies to strengthen tolerance between religious communities by utilizing cross-organizational forums and holding training on tolerance between religious communities held by the Al-Islam Foundation.

Based on the above, it is difficult to deny that the role of religious figures, the role of society, the role of government in creating a peaceful life in society is very important, even decisive. The role of religious figures in striving for peace in life is a strong support for the people to direct their attention to peace efforts. It is difficult to convince the people that efforts for peace in a peaceful life are a fundamental religious teaching. This belief is more easily embedded in the hearts of the people if it is conveyed by their religious figures. And in being tolerant, it is hoped that all religious people will adhere to the principle of "Agree in disagreement" (agree in differences).

DISCUSSION

Based on the data description and data presentation that the researcher has described from the research results, in this section the researcher will present an analysis of the data obtained from the results of research in the field that is adjusted to the purpose of the discussion, then the role of religious figures in fostering harmony between communities can be analyzed through direct interviews with religious figures using three dimensions, the dimensions of the role are as follows:

1. Role as a strategy.

The role of this strategy is a strategy to gain support from the community where Inter-organizations tend to interact directly with leaders between organizations with their positions as religious figures. The role played by Religious Figures is to provide guidance by interacting directly between organizations. Inter-religious organizations also interact well with their communities by participating in village activities such as community service (mutual cooperation), in these activities religious figures always provide advice to the community, even though we are of different tribes, religions, we are still one and help each other. Inter-organizations carry out daily activities together, so this will also spur harmony between organizations.

2. Role as a communication tool.

This role is used as a tool to obtain input in the form of information in the decision-making process. In fostering harmony between religious communities, a religious figure must maintain good communication with religious figures and their congregation. As in Karakan Village, the leader of the organization plays a role in inviting the congregation to carry out daily activities together, and if there are activities that are disturbing the peace, they ask permission from leaders between other organizations, because this role as a communication tool is a role of religious figures in being

responsible and a tool to obtain input in the form of information in the decision-making process.

3. Role as a dispute resolution tool.

This role is used as a way to reduce or calm conflict. When the community has a conflict, each religious figure directs and mediates. This is done by organizational leaders by deliberating and always reminding their followers to respect each other. As conveyed by leaders between organizations, all organizational leaders are called to handle a conflict, provide direction and conduct deliberations and find solutions to the problem. Because religious figures are a high position, organizational leaders must unite their followers internally and externally.

Inhibiting factors experienced in the Role of Organizational Leaders in creating internal tolerance among religious communities in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency. Namely, the lack of formal communication between organizations and limited support from the village government are the main obstacles in efforts to reduce tensions caused by differences in theological views.

To increase tolerance in society, a leader can take several strategic steps. Prioritizing the values of Islamic brotherhood is the main foundation. By instilling a deep understanding of Muslim brotherhood and mutual respect between religions, leaders can inspire society to live side by side peacefully. Utilizing communication forums such as cross-organizational meetings is also crucial. Through open dialogue and mutual listening, leaders can build bridges of understanding between groups and reduce the potential for conflict.

Tolerance education in educational institutions under the Al-Islam Foundation is a long-term investment. By integrating tolerance values into the curriculum, leaders can produce a young generation that upholds diversity and is able to live side by side in harmony. In addition, collaboration with religious figures from various backgrounds can strengthen the message of tolerance and build a wider social network. Community empowerment through inclusive social programs can also strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and create a more tolerant environment."

Diversity of Religious Organizations, Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency has various active religious organizations, each with slightly different religious views and practices. Cooperation in Social and Humanitarian Activities, Despite having different identities and focuses of activities, organizations such as Muhammadiyah, NU, LDII and the Al Islam foundation often work together in social and humanitarian activities. Challenges and Conflicts, Although generally peaceful, Tunjungsari Village is not free from challenges and conflicts. Competition between organizations in recruiting members, differences in religious

views, and misinterpretations of religious teachings sometimes trigger tensions. Respect for Differences, Muhammadiyah, NU, LDII and the Al Islam foundation in Karakan Village, Weru District, Sukoharjo Regency tend to accept differences in religious views and practices with an open and wise attitude.

Differences do not have to result in hostility, conflict because in any case differences will never disappear on this earth. Thus, religious harmony is not just passively side by side without any involvement with each other, but more than that, namely active and dynamic tolerance that is actualized in the form of mutual respect and mutual respect, acting fairly among each other, and working together in building a harmonious, harmonious and peaceful society.

Umar Hasyim argues that tolerance in a broad sense is giving freedom to fellow human beings or citizens to practice their beliefs or organize their lives and determine their own destiny. As long as practicing and determining their attitudes do not violate and do not conflict with the terms and principles of creating order and peace in society. Attitudes and behaviors that contradict or are contrary to the principles above are called intolerant. Based on the explanation of the pattern of religious harmony in Karakan Village, it can be understood that religious harmony is a person's awareness to appreciate and understand, respect, allow, permit the establishment of views, beliefs, beliefs, and provide space for the implementation of customs, behavior and religious practices of others that are different or contradictory to their own positions in order to build a life together and better social relations.

CONCLUSION

The role of Islamic organization leaders in Karakan Village as agents of change in promoting tolerance cannot be underestimated. Through example, dialogue, and collaboration, they have succeeded in overcoming various obstacles, including differences in theological views and minimal formal communication. This success proves that religious leaders have a very strategic role in building a harmonious and tolerant society. In the future, efforts to strengthen the capacity of religious leaders in carrying out this role need to be continuously supported.

As a recommendation, it is necessary to strengthen cross-organizational communication through regular forums to facilitate dialogue and cooperation. In addition, support from the village government, both morally and materially, is very important to encourage activities that strengthen tolerance in society. Close collaboration between organizational leaders, village governments, and the wider community will be the key to success in building a harmonious and tolerant society.

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