



## The Harmonization and Religious Tolerance Living in West Java: A Socioreligious Study of Plural Society

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### Abstract

Diversity and plurality are closely related fact with Indonesia. This plural society may generate two potential social conditions: harmonization and social conflicts. This study supports Talcott Parson's Structural-Functional Theory that a good social system in a society, both structural and functional, could preserve harmonization between religions. This study aims to explore a socio-religious condition in Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Cigugur village by analyzing kinds of harmonization and religious living tolerance within the community and exploring each leader's effort to improve the harmonization and tolerance of religious living in a plural society. This study also used a phenomenologist qualitative method which used interviews, observation and documentation as data-gathering techniques. The research found that the harmonization and tolerance of Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Cibubur village community in religious living prevails with three main assets. They are social, cultural, and kinship. These harmonizations and tolerance of the community religious living in both places manifest in their good relationship, high social intimacy, tight brotherhood, high empathy, and helping each other because of kinship. It is also because of the efforts and the active role within the community from all levels, the community, the regional government and local figures. The role of religious leaders also enhanced these harmonizations and tolerance in both places in West Java as the controller, leader, facilitator and motivator. They helped each other to prioritize unity.

**Keywords:** Harmonization, Tolerance, Religious Living, Plural Society

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### Abstrak

*Kebhinekaan dan pluralitas merupakan fakta yang erat kaitannya dengan Indonesia. Masyarakat majemuk ini dapat menimbulkan 2 potensi kondisi sosial yang berbeda, harmonisasi, dan konflik sosial. Studi ini mendukung Teori Struktural-Fungsional Talcott Parson bahwa sistem sosial yang baik dalam masyarakat, baik struktural maupun fungsional dapat menjaga harmonisasi antar agama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kondisi sosio-religius di Kampung Sawah Bekasi dan Kampung Cigugur*

dengan menganalisis macam-macam harmonisasi dan toleransi hidup beragama di masyarakat serta menggali upaya masing-masing pemuka agama dalam meningkatkan harmonisasi dan toleransi kehidupan beragama masyarakat majemuk. Penelitian ini juga menggunakan metode kualitatif fenomenolog yang menggunakan wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi sebagai teknik pengumpulan data. Dalam penelitian ditemukan bahwa harmonisasi dan toleransi masyarakat Kampung Sawah Bekasi dan Kampung Cibubur dalam kehidupan beragama berlangsung dengan tiga modal utama. Mereka adalah sosial, budaya, dan kekerabatan. Harmonisasi dan toleransi kehidupan umat beragama di kedua tempat ini terwujud dalam hubungan yang baik satu sama lain, keakraban sosial yang tinggi, persaudaraan yang erat, memiliki empati yang tinggi antara satu sama lain, saling membantu karena kekeluargaan. Hal ini juga berkat upaya dan peran aktif masyarakat dari semua lapisan masyarakat itu sendiri, pemerintah daerah dan tokoh masyarakat. Peran tokoh agama juga meningkatkan harmonisasi dan toleransi tersebut di kedua tempat di Jawa Barat, sebagai pengendali, pemimpin, fasilitator dan motivator. Mereka saling membantu untuk mengutamakan persatuan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Harmonisasi, Toleransi, Kehidupan beragama, Masyarakat majemuk*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Harmonization is a social order which means a societal, relationship and habitual system that effectively reaches the community goals (Paul B. Horton, 1993). It can be implied that harmonization is a dynamic condition where the foundations of social life progress well in order so that community aspirations can be reached. According to (Nuriyanto, 2018), Social Capital is the foundation of multicultural approach to overcoming exogenous factors.

In another theory, Coleman, with his Social Capital theory, stated that social capital is defined by its function, not as its element but manifested in many different kinds, with two elements consist of the society itself with other social structures and the community, which facilitates particular acts both personal or from corporations. Eva Cox in Boedya defines social capital as a process of human relationship supported by networks, norms and social beliefs that allows the efficiency and effectiveness of coordination and cooperation for the community's gain and virtues. For Talcott Parson in his Structural Functionalism Theory (Parsons, Talcott. 1937), society should be seen as a system of parts that connects. (Parsons, Talcott. 1937).

In a harmonious religious community context, societal harmony development is affected by social capital. Based on that statement, the harmonization that applies between the religious community in *Peraturan Bersama Menteri Agama dan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor 9 Tahun 2006* also on *Nomor 8 Tahun 2006* article 1 paragraph 1 emphasized that harmony in religious community is based on tolerance, understanding, respect and equality in practicing their beliefs also cooperating in the community and as the citizen of the country. Hamdani (2015) and Mukhoyyaroh Falahi & Kamil (2019) research results show that social harmonization and harmonious religious community in a multireligion society could be manifested from the acculturation of Islamic and Christian respect and appreciation culture (Hamdani, 2015) and (Mukhoyyaroh & Falahi, 2019). According to (Atabik, 2016), (Hadi, 2016), (Sofi'i, 2019), and (Takdir, 2017), local figures of each religion have the main role in the harmonization of a religious community.

(Pepi 2016), (Wibowo, 2016), (Pikoli, Trinugraha, & Yuhastina 2021), (Ikhwan,



2020), (Kaharuddin & Darwis, 2019), and (Salim & Andani, 2020) stated that the effort to achieve peace in diversity needs the role of local figures from each religion, as all sides would also want to achieve social harmony and made them realize how important it is to collaborate in social life.

Based on these background studies, this study of harmonization and tolerance in religious living communities in West Java becomes paramount. The research objects of this study are Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Desa Cigugur Kuningan. It is because both objects have their own uniqueness compared to other regions in West Java. Kampung Sawah Bekasi was capable of resisting persecution trends that happened in West Java. There are three oldest places for worshipping in Kampung Sawah. Each building is only distanced by 80 meters, the Catholic Church Santo Servatius, Pasundan Christian Church and Al Jauhar Great Mosque of Educational Foundation Fisabilillah (Yasfi). Despite the short distance, it does not disturb each prayer. In this community, Christian Betawi and Catholic is already merge into the same customs as Muslim Betawi. Based on the researcher's observation, there is one uniqueness in Cigugur Kuningan Village. It has a multicultural society with many religions; Islam, Catholic, Christian, Protestant and the disciple of Sunda Wiwitan or often called *Agama Djawa Sunda (ADS)*.

This research aims to obtain an in-depth depiction of the harmonization and tolerance on religious living in West Java. As for the specific goals, this study aims to explore the socio-religious condition in Kampung Sawah and Cibubur village. Second, analyze the form of harmonization and tolerance of religious living in Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Cibubur village communities. Third, explore the efforts of local religious figures to develop harmonization and tolerance of religious living in a plural society.

This study used a qualitative research method. Through this method, the researcher attempts to identify and record every sign of harmonization and tolerance apparent in Kampung Sawah and Cigugur, West Java. Moreover, the researcher used an ethnographic, social and religious pedagogy approach. This approach refers to the new ethnography that considers events as social, religious, and cultural formations of society that exist in the structure of the mind, to then be dug out of the mind as the object of research.

In gathering data, researchers use interviews, observations and documentation, as well as Focused Group Discussions (FGD) with education figures and religious figures from Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Confucianism, Buddhism and Hinduism, and other faith.

The data that has been collected is then verified by the criteria recommended by Lincoln & Guba (1985), namely (1) credibility with continuous observation, peer discussion and member check, (2) transferability by providing a description of detailed research findings, (3) dependability by asking several people the auditor to audit it, and (4) confirmability, namely research results of research by expert.

## B. DISCUSSIONS

### **Harmonization and Tolerance of Religious Living in Kampung Sawah Bekasi**

Geographically, Kampung Sawah is on the skirt between East Jakarta and Bekasi City. There are 4 (four) regions included in Bekasi; they are Jatiwarna, Jati Melati, Jatimurni (Pondok Melati district) and Pondok Ranggon (Jatisampurna district) subdistrict. In the north, there is a Kecapi Market. While on the west are Ujung Aspal street and East Jakarta. On the south, there is Kampung Raden and last on the east are



Kampung Pedurenan and Cakung Payangan. The distance between Kampung Sawah Bekasi and East Jakarta is approximately 40 km.

The history of population development in Kampung Sawah is at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, consisting of the Kampung Sawah natives, people from Pedurenan, Cakung Payangan, people from Banten descendants of Mataram Soldiers, Chinese, Gunung Putri Community, Christian community from Bendo-Jepara and Modjowarno Jember. The native of Kampung Sawah called their region Mini Indonesia because of the diversity since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The profession of the Kampung Sawah community is religious. Some people work as government employees or work in private corporations. Although, there also some people who work as merchants and farmers.

Kampung Sawah society has different cultural backgrounds in social relations or interactions, such as cooperation, rivalry, commotion and accommodation. These forms of social relations decrease social tension or social conflict. It also could trigger solidarity in a diverse society; it could be in the shape of cooperation between the people, helping each other and having a forum. Besides obedience based on morality, the people also know another value that brings

solidarity or associative value. This value has a positive characteristics such as brotherhood, kinship, harmony, and cooperation. This is what Kampung Sawah Bekasi people believe.

At a funeral, the people of Kampung Sawah helps each other in arranging death certificate until the funeral itself. Regarding *tahlilan*, the non-Muslim people patiently awaits nearby to respect the Muslims. After it was done, they joined the Muslim to socialize and give condolences to the family. The same attitude happened to the Muslim themselves. The Muslim wait outside until the Christian rites are done.

The relationship between the religious community in Kampung Sawah is that they must mind their religion. They live peacefully, not interfering with each other and coexist well. Not only do they take care of themselves, but they also respect and do not feel disturbed by other religions. The harmony in Kampung Sawah is also proven by their belief that they are fine with diversity. They accept and respect other people who have different faith, aspirations, habits, and lifestyles and respect their freedom to choose their beliefs to the extent that they know it is best for all. In the end, the mutual respect between the religious community grows, and harmony in Kampung Sawah becomes true ever since then.

### **Harmonization & Tolerance between Religious Community in Kampung Sawah Bekasi**

Harmonization in the religious community formed in Kampung Sawah happens in their daily life. They consider the neighborhood family, so they do not mind religion. They also think that religion is a personal matter. In Kampung Sawah, there is a festival called Sedekah Bumi on 13 May, where all people from any religion gather and discuss neighborhood matters the night before the festival. This activity is called Ngariung Bareng. On this occasion, each local religious figure gathers and commits to bringing together all people in Kampung Sawah so that no dispute and harmony will be preserved. According to Solahuddin Malik, if the potential for conflict in the religious community is detected, these local religious figures should discuss the solution together to avoid unwanted conflict so that it would be prevented earlier.



Until today, this tradition is still taking place not only by the local religious figure but young individuals across religions also attend this tradition. These young individuals help prepare for any religious holiday. For example, if the Christians and Catholics have a mass and Christmas, these young people from Al-Jauhar Mosque secured parking spaces for the community only 150 meters from the Church. They also help the elderly get off public transportation and cross the road. This also happens when the Muslim community has two religious holidays, Eid al Fitr and Eid al Adha vice versa.

When it comes to Christmas Day, Muslims in Kampung Sawah, mostly from Betawi ethnicity, wish the Christian and Catholic community a merry Christmas. On the other hand, the Christians also keep the village safe on Eid al Fitr and other religious holidays. Mathisu stated that on Christmas Eve, the Christian community used an amplifier so that everyone in Kampung Sawah could hear the activity. It did not become a problem for non-Christian religions.

“Having a mass on 9 o’clock at night, suddenly there is a Qur’an recitation comes from Yasfi Mosque. Usually, at 8:30 pm the recitation stops and lets the Christian pray on Sunday. it was always like that. Even when we celebrate Christmas last year, we did it at 6 pm, meanwhile in Yasfi mosque adzan comes. It does not matter if adzan comes and we did our prayers too. It is not a problem, instead the form of harmony in our home.” Said Marthius.

This local religious figure in Kampung Sawah Bekasi always seeking harmonization for the people in Kampung Sawah through these attempts: (1). The Role of Controller, this attempt had been done in many ways, one of them is by relieving the suspicion and hostility to other religion. They changed those negative feelings into curiosity and respected other religions. If there are incidents, they should not blame the religion. Instead, they should blame the person. For example, on terrorism, they should let other religion do their prayers and not judge them because it is part of respecting each other faith. All people have the right to education, a job and so on. Therefore they should not discriminate against each other. According to Solehudin, Nahdlatul Ulama's figure had done this to preserve the harmony between religious communities. The role of the controller, as KH. Afif states that it is by not having an extreme mindset. This means that we should consider not only the negative side but also the positive side. (2). The Role of Leader, as a leader who is charismatic and full of knowledge, should encourage people spiritually and socially along with being the mediator to solve the conflicts between religions. Ustadz Sholahuddin states that the local religious figure should do this role in bringing harmony to Kampung Sawah. The importance of religious leader involvement in building the religious aspect on people is unavoidable. (3). The Role of the facilitator is important and unavoidable for a local religious figure or the leader of religion to be involved in harmonizing religious living. The local religious figure is a medium for someone to comprehend their religion. For harmonization to be preserved, ustad salahudeen stated that the local religious figure in this context is Kyai Rachman Afifi forbids breaches that could trigger conflicts between the religious community. There is a bridge that contains hate speech, he would be strict. He said that a preacher such as that is not welcomed in Kampung Sawah. They are the real provocators. (4). The Role of the motivator, these four rules, according to salahudeen, are strengthened by the consistency of local religious figures in Kampung Sawah in order to hold onto the principle of Nahdlatul Ulama. First tawassuth principle not pickingsides, which means not blaming any side without thinking of the impact. Second, tawazun principal is maintaining balance and harmony so that between the world and life after death is balanced. Third,



the tassamuh principle means tolerating different views especially regarding faith, so there will be no conflict. Fourth, amal makruf nahi munkar principle is preaching virtue and avoiding evil. All four principles above will encourage virtues in living together and the feeling of reviewing, using and avoiding things that will trigger conflict. The local religious figure has a huge role in preserving tolerance in Kampung Sawah through dialogue on harmonization in religious living.

### **The Role of Local Religious Figures in cultivating the harmonization and tolerance of religious living in Cigugur Village Kuningan**

Among the local religious figure who actively have this controlling role is Kyai Madrais. He is the leader of the Djawa Sunda religion, which is quite influential among his supporters in Cigugur and its surroundings, even spreading to Tatar Pasundan (West Java). Among the ADS community, Kyai Madrais is a child born miraculously from Raden Kastewi. With this belief, Kyai Madrais is highly respected and glorified by his followers. (Interview with K. Subarman in Carlan 2020)

Kyai Madrais teaches Islam in Islamic boarding schools while also teaching other religions instilling respect and love for the homeland and fellow nations as well as continuously emphasizing efforts to uphold the values of the nation's personality as the embodiment of authentic religious teachings that are in harmony with the basics of human rights. This form of teaching is what the Cigugur community calls the teachings of Kiai Madrais as the Djawa Sunda religion.

Harmony in Cigugur was formed because the indigenous people of Cigugur realized that all existing religions came from one, namely teaching virtues, the only difference being where and when religion originated and developed. If we think our religion is the most correct, we blame the one who sent it down. Absolute truth belongs to God. The main factor in the harmony of the Cigugur community is the very prominent role of Prince Djatikusumah as a descendant of Madrais. In addition to each religious figure. As the dominant culture, ADS applies a lifestyle full of tolerance for the Cigugur community to embrace and carry out religious orders. (Collected from Interview and Field Observation, Cigugur, 10 October 2021).

According to Kyai H. D. Syarif Hidayatullah, MA. (Chairman of MUI Kuningan Regency), the role of religious leaders in maintaining harmony among the citizens of Cigugur Kuningan is very important. Both internal and external across religious harmony. The importance of the involvement of religious figures or leaders in the spiritual development aspect of the people is something that cannot be avoided, especially in the multiethnic, multi-religious and multicultural Cigugur Kuningan area.

Religious leaders who can protect religious adherents are proven to reduce conflicts that occur, like the conflicts between Ahmadiyah and other Muslims. For Kyai Syarif, the "main weapon" in overcoming internal and religious conflicts is effective communication. With good communication, all obstacles and problems can be overcome. (Interview with Kyai H. D. Syarif Hidayatullah, MA, Cigugur, 2021)

The importance of the involvement of religious figures or leaders in preserving religious harmony is unavoidable. Among the activities facilitated by the community and religious leaders is inter-religious dialogue. Inter-religious dialogue is a place to fuse and eliminate prejudice against other people's beliefs and religions. Dialogue between religions is also a serious effort to fight hostile attitudes toward other people's religions. This step is a complete awareness to get out of your comfort zone. This is done to find new inspiration different from the religion that has been believed so far. Interreligious



dialogue.

Cigugur Kuningan Village has a forum for inter-religious dialogue, namely the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB). Through this forum, the awareness of every religious believer is built to live in harmony and tolerance with followers of other religions.

Religious leaders in Cigugur Kuningan have both a controlling and a leader role. They are also active motivators for the pluralistic Cigugur community. The role of this motivator can be seen in the religious life there. With their credibility, a religious leader will be much easier to influence the community, motivating them to live harmoniously and tolerantly with followers of different religions. Tolerance is an open-minded attitude towards the principles of others; it does not mean that a person has to sacrifice his beliefs or principles but must reflect a strong attitude or *istiqomah* to hold on to his own beliefs or opinions. The process of harmonization and tolerance in Cigugur Kuningan is not only due to their longstanding background factor (by accident) but also thanks to the efforts of community leaders and religious leaders to unite citizens and their people (by design)

From the explanation above, it can be comprehended that the harmonization and tolerance of religious life in Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Desa Cigugur Kuningan, West Java, was realized thanks to the roles of various parties, ranging from the community, local government, religious leaders, and community leaders. These four elements work hand in hand to create a conducive atmosphere for implementing harmonious and tolerant religious activities and cultural rituals.

Talcott Parson's structural-functionalist theory is appropriate to see the conditions in Kampung Sawah and Desa Cigugur. (Parsons, Talcott. 1937). For Talcott, society must be seen as a system of interrelated parts. This system must be structured so that it can maintain its sustainability and must also be able to harmonize with other systems. The system must be able to control potentially disruptive behavior. If there is a conflict that causes chaos, it must be controlled immediately. Sawah Village and Cigugur Kuningan Village, West Java.

In the socio-religious context of the people of Kampung Sawah and Cigugur Kuningan Village, West Java, according to Talcott Parson's structural-functionalism theory, it is more focused on efforts to strengthen social relations than efforts to deal with conflict. The results of the study confirm that the community has a united character and lives in harmony. This theory views that society requires cohesive conditions so that social life depends on solidarity based on reciprocity and cooperation. Thus conflict in society must be seen as a derivation of social character (James Coleman, 2013).

From the aspect of the character's role in maintaining religious harmony, this research is in line with Talcott's functional-structural theory that the social system is always directed at equilibrium or balance, not by chance but on the consensus of the general assessment of society. Consensus on the existence of an actor. Actors who do not deal with situations as individuals but as social functions. When viewed from the conditions on the ground, especially in Kampung Sawah Bekasi, community leaders and interfaith leaders play a very important role in realizing the harmony of the people.

Interactions between adherents of different religions are not only social group interactions but also cultural interactions. According to Ritzer & Douglas, the congruence of function is not only in the behavior patterns of the group but also in the elements of its culture. (George Ritzer and Douglas J. Goodman, 2004). This harmony and tolerance is very visible at the Seren Taun ceremony; the preparation and implementation of the Seren Taun are carried out by all Cigugur residents regardless of religion and ethnicity, whether they are Christians, Catholics, Muslims, or Beliefs; all of

them volunteer to prepare the Seren Taun party. The work system of sharing tasks and no division of roles based on belief is also a form of tolerance maintained (Marpuah, 2019).

The theory of Redfield, Ralph Linton and Melville J. Herskovits about cultural acculturation is very appropriate to read about Betawi culture in Kampung Sawah Bekasi and Sundanese culture in CigugurKuningan Village (Marpuah, 2019). It can be seen that although the rate of immigrants entering the two areas is very high and the currents of modernity are strong in people's lives, it turns out that cultural acculturation in the existing social values of the community goes hand in hand without losing the identity of the community.

### C. CONCLUSION

However, taking it to become Islamic law highly depends upon the Muslims themselves. The nuance of law, as a result of the political process, is strongly determined by the political nuance of the ruler. For this, there is a need for Muslims to control politics to control the law. The objectification of the law offering the general public, including the adherents of Islamophobia, that Islamic law academically is a law that contains justice, equality and peace must continue to be pursued. The offer of symbolic Islamic law becomes an unstrategic effort with the potential to emerge conflict.

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