

# Accommodation of Local Culture as a Strategy to Reduce the Potential for Religious Social Conflict: Learning from the Indonesian Experience

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## Abstract

The religious factor in social life often functions as an instrument to suppress the potential for conflict and or at the same time triggers the potential for conflict to strengthen. Therefore, the author argues that it is important to place religion in the construction of a society's cultural space. Without cultural space, religion will always be a scapegoat for all conflict events in the name of religion and even terrorism. This research tests whether cultural factors are able to mediate the potential for social conflict to be suppressed or vice versa does not have a significant effect. The research method was conducted with a quantitative-survey approach to 1000 respondents who were interviewed face-to-face with a sampling technique using multistage-random sampling and with a margin of error of  $\pm 3\%$ . The results of these findings show that several factors of acceptance of cultural diversity do not have a significant influence on reducing the potential for religious social conflict, such as "Personal Betterment," "Maintaining the Social Environment," "Maintaining Social Harmony," "Respect for Local Culture," "Respect for Religious Traditions," "Reinterpretation of Religious Syiar," and "Cultural Preservation." However, for the two factors of religious acceptance of cultural diversity that have a significant partial effect, culture is able to encourage a better way of religion and culture is also able to strengthen tolerance for diversity. This confirms that religious teachings have relevance that can strengthen the culture of Indonesian society. However, when both (religion and culture) are seen as contradictory by religious believers, a tolerant attitude is chosen as a form of accommodation to the diversity of the noble values of the established Indonesian nation.

**Keywords:** Cultural Accommodation, Social Conflict, Cultural Diversity, Social Control, Good Culture.

Religion plays a very important role in the lives of Indonesians, even becoming the main identity for most of the population. In a country with a diverse population in terms of ethnicity, culture and beliefs, religion serves as a moral and spiritual foundation that binds all citizens. This religious diversity is reflected in Pancasila, the foundation of the Indonesian state, which places

"Belief in One God" as the first principle, showing how central religion is to the nation's social and political order.

It is difficult to ascribe secularism to the Indonesian nation (Komaruddin Hidayat, 2019, Pranowo, 1994), Secularism, which emphasizes the separation of religion and state, contradicts the reality in Indonesia where religion is

explicitly present in various aspects of public life. Laws and policies are often influenced by religious values, and social life is closely tied to religious identity. In fact, many government policies are designed to maintain inter-religious harmony, showing how religion continues to be a force that influences important decisions in society and the state (Fahri Hidayat, 2015).

Religious identity is not always ascriptive or automatically inherited from one generation to the next. These identities tend to be fluid and change along with the social and cultural dynamics that affect individuals or groups (Supriadi, 2023); (Lee, 2021); (Hoon, 2017); (Woodward, 2018). However, there is also a view that religious culture and identity remain inherited through symbols and practices that are reproduced continuously by each generation (Budiwanti, 2022); (Ingليس, 2000); (Beaumont & Scammell, 2012); (Wohlrab-Sahr, 1999); (Barth, 1969); (Bellah, 1970). Both views reflect the fact that religion can undergo transformation, either towards secularism or retaining its traditional aspects, even within the same context (McAndrew & Richards, 2020). Thus, both secular and traditionalist forms of religion can exist simultaneously in a society, depending on how religious identities and cultural symbols are lived and maintained among different generations.

Religious adherents do not always display a friendly attitude, both towards others in the same religious sect and towards those with different beliefs. This condition often triggers social conflicts in the community, as noted by the Wahid Institute and the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP). Interestingly, although religious-based conflicts continue to emerge in every generation, efforts to resolve them have also always been successful. Researchers argue that the potential for religious social conflicts can be mitigated thanks to the strong bonds of identity as a cultured nation. This bond allows people to maintain the noble values inherited by previous generations and maintain

the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) as the final choice.

Disruption in the form of intolerance and even terrorism are inevitable consequences of living in a pluralistic society. However, what is most important for the Indonesian nation is its ability to maintain and nurture this diversity, making it a source of strength in promoting a dignified culture and upholding the values of togetherness. Thus, the Indonesian nation can still maintain harmony and peace in facing the challenges of plurality. This research aims to measure the acceptance of cultural and religious diversity as an instrument of pluralism and weakening the potential for religious social conflict.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a quantitative approach with data collected through several methods, namely by survey (Weisberg, Krosnick, & Bowen, 1996) through data collection methods using direct face-to-face interviews through questionnaire instruments, which were conducted in March-April 2024, and literature studies. Quantitative research is a research method that focuses on collecting and analyzing data in the form of numbers. The aim is to measure certain variables, find patterns, and test existing hypotheses or theories using statistical measurement techniques (Prof. Dr. Sugiyono, 2019; p. 130); (Sekaran & Bougie, 2003; p.106); (Creswell & Creswell, 2017); (Yam & Taufik, 2021).

The study was based on the positivism paradigm and involved 1000 respondents selected using multi-stage random sampling techniques (Babbie & Babbie, 1998) from 34 provinces in Indonesia. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with testing through multiple regression (Babbie & Babbie, 1998). This analysis aims to ensure that the acceptance of local culture has an influence on weakening the potential for social diversity conflict (Boone, Brouwer, Jacobs, Van Witteloostuijn, & De

Zwaan, 2012); Law No. 5 on Cultural Advancement in 2017; Presidential Regulation 58 of 2023 on Religious Moderation; Ministry of Religious Affairs Strategic Plan 2020-2024).

The concept of culture used in this research was developed from Unesco's definition (2001):

"the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs". Furthermore, it was developed in the form of measuring cultural practices as follows: (a). A better person: I feel that the culture of my ethnicity/tribe provides life principles that help in developing myself better/forward; (b). Better Natural Environment: I feel that the culture of my ethnicity/tribe provides life principles that help in maintaining my physical and social environment; (c). Social Harmony: I feel that the culture of my ethnicity/tribe provides life principles that help in maintaining harmonious togetherness with other ethnicities/tribes; (d). Better Religion: I feel that the culture of my ethnicity/tribe provides life principles that help in strengthening my devotion to God Almighty;

Religious acceptance of cultural diversity is developed from the conception of Cultural Accommodation published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan), which is as follows: (a) Respect: Local traditions and cultures as long as they do not conflict with the main teachings of religion must be preserved as a treasure of national life; (b). Appreciation: Willing to appreciate religious traditions that have local cultural nuances; (c). Preservation of Regional Culture: The celebration of sekatenan, suroan, festivals welcoming Christmas, and the like are forms of tradition that do not contradict the main teachings of religion, and therefore must be preserved; (d). Strengthening Tolerance: Celebrations or activities of local traditions and cultures that have lived and existed for generations, such as the archipelago's earth alms, should not be disbanded unilaterally; (e).

Reinterpretation: There is no problem broadcasting religious teachings using local traditions and culture, such as music, dance, puppets, performances, certain celebrations, and so on. Meanwhile, the measurement of the Potential for Social Conflict was developed from the results of research by the University of Indonesia Psychology Laboratory, 2021, which consists of indicators: (a). Religious Intolerance; (b). Intolerance of Different Religions; (c). Political Intolerance; (d). Feeling of Threat; (e). Ideology of Violence; (f). Violence Support; (g). Intensity of Violent Action; and Collective Narcissism

RESULTS

Respondent Profile Description

Descriptive test is a statistical method used to describe and summarize data from a population or sample without making conclusions or testing hypotheses . Descriptive tests focus on presenting data in a concise and informative manner to understand the basic characteristics of the data collected.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Variable	Dimensions	Percentage
Gender	Male	50
	Female	50
Ethnicity	Java	38,1
	Sunda	16,4
	Batak	4,2
	Madura	3,1
	Betawi	2,2
	Minangkabau	1,2
	Bugis	2,1
	Malay and Tribe of Origin others in Sumatra	5,9
	Banjar	2,1
	Bali	2
	Papua	1,7
	Dayak	1,2
	China/Chinese	0,3
	Aceh	1,9
	Sasak	2
	Makassar	2

	Maluku Tribe of Origin	0,6
	More	13
<b>Job</b>	Work	77,3
	Not working	22,7
<b>Religion</b>	Islam	83,5
	Christian	7,8
	Catholic	5,4
	Hindu	2,3
	Buddha	1
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor	11,4
	Non-graduate	88,6

Source: reprocessed from data from the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2024

The demographics of respondents in this research include the dimensions of ethnicity, gender, occupation, religion and education level. The sample met the criteria for validity (within the margin of error) in representing the population when compared to national population data (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). Table 1 summarizes the profile of the respondents as follows, the respondents consisted of a balanced number of men and women, each at 50%, which means that the gender proportion was equal among the research

participants. The majority of respondents were Javanese (38.1%), followed by Sundanese (16.4%) and Batak (4.2%). However, there were other ethnic diversities with smaller proportions. Most respondents, 77.3%, reported being employed, while 22.7% were not employed. Most respondents were Muslim (83.5%), followed by Christian (7.8%), Catholic (5.4%), Hindu (2.3%) and Buddhist (1%). Finally, in terms of education, only 11.4% of respondents have a university degree, while the majority (88.6%) do not have a university degree.

The Influence of Local Cultural Acceptance on Potential Religious Social Conflicts

Table 2 shows that the relationship between each indicator of cultural acceptance and potential conflict is generally significantly negatively correlated, or in other words, an increase in acceptance of cultural diversity can affect the level of potential conflict, except in the aspects of collective narcissism and political intolerance. This finding also confirms that adherents' acceptance of cultural diversity also has side effects in the form of strengthening tribal and religious identities, especially when in a situation of increasingly equal economic and political inequality.

Table 2. Correlation between Cultural Acceptance Variables and Potential Social Conflicts

Variables	Potential for social-religious conflict							
	ISA	IBD	IPOL	PK	IK	DK	IAK	NK
<b>1. Cultural Adaptation</b>	-.050	-.071*	.070	-.085**	-.113**	-.125**	.003	.100**
a) A Better Person	-.063	-.088**	.062	-.104**	-.063*	-.086**	-.012	.112**
b) For a Better Natural Environment	.013	.021	-.024	-.081*	-.084**	-.076*	-.029	.108**
c) Social Harmony	-.019	-.085**	.056	-.015	-.057	-.057	.013	.082**
d) Better Religion	-.104**	-.072*	.113*	-.068*	-.165**	-.169**	.049	.013
<b>2. Cultural Accommodation</b>	-.091**	-.045	.121*	-.201**	-.093**	-.219**	-.030	-.012
a) Respect	-.064*	-.036	.042	-.201**	-.099**	-.252**	.009	-.062
b) Award	-.098**	.074*	.038	-.097**	-.007	-.122**	.005	-.072**
c) Preservation of Regional Culture	-.061	-.063*	.081	-.150**	-.091**	-.184**	-.025	.037
d) Strengthening Tolerance	-.065*	-.092**	.183**	-.185**	-.087**	-.116**	-.059	.039
e) Reinterpretation	-.069*	-.039	.096	-.146**	-.070*	-.183**	-.037	-.008
<b>3. Local Cultural Practices</b>	.001	-.023	.157**	-.031	-.044	.000	.049	.096**

Source: reprocessed from data from the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2024

Notes: \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Religious Intolerance (ISA); Religious Intolerance (IBD); Political Intolerance (IPOL); Feeling of Threat (PK); Ideology of Violence (IK); Violence Support (DK); Intensity of Violent Action (IAK); and Collective Narcissism (NK).

As mentioned in the demographic data in Table 1, the presence of a large proportion of ethnic groups such as Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Madurese, Betawi, Minang, Bugis, Banjar, Balinese, and Makassarese or other largest ethnic groups in the region will make it more likely that they will get a more favorable proportion of economic and educational equity than ethnic minority groups. In other words, accommodation of the principles of pluralism and multiculturalism is not easily practiced without maintaining a balance between the

interests of majority-minority ethnic groups. The dilemma context of multiculturalism practice in Canada, Australia and Malaysia mirrors the face of multiculturalism in Indonesia (Lan, 2011); (Hoon, 2021); (Zarbaliyev, 2017); (Tiesler, 2018); (Eriksen, 2019).

Simultaneous Statistical Test F Snedecor's

The F-test is used to determine whether the independent variables together or simultaneously affect the dependent variable. The significance level used in this analysis is 0.05. If the significance value obtained is less than the specified significance level, then the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that the independent variables jointly affect the dependent variable (Riswan, 2019). Based on the results of data analysis, the following results were obtained:

Table 3. F Statistical Test ANOVA (b)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3222073	9	358008	4792
	Residuals	72623479	972	74716	.000a
	Total	75845552	981		

Source; reprocessed from data from the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024

Based on the statistical values in the table above, it can be seen that the calculated F value is 4792 with a significance value of 0.000, because the significance value is smaller than  $0.000 < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that the local culture acceptance variable simultaneously (together) affects the potential for weakening religious social conflict.

Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

The coefficient of determination is the value used to measure the contribution of the independent variable (x) to the variation

(increase / decrease) of the dependent variable (y). In other words, variable y can be explained by variable x by  $R^2\%$  and the rest is explained by other variables (Imron, 2019). The  $R^2$  value ranges from 0 to 1. If  $R^2$  is 0, it means that there is no relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Conversely, if  $R^2$  is 1, it means that there is a perfect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Riswan, 2019). The following are the results of the calculation of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ).

Table 4. Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.206a	.042	.034	8.644	.042	4.792	9	972	.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), 9 indicators of Cultural Diversity Acceptance

b. Dependent Variable: Potential Conflict

Source: Reprocessed from data from the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024

Model Summary is used to understand the relationship between two or more variables in a regression equation. The main focus here is on the R-Square value. In this result, the R-Square value is 0.042 or 4.2%. This means that local cultural adaptation affects the potential for weakening socio-religious conflict by 4.2%, while the remaining 95.8% is influenced by other factors outside the analyzed model.

Hypothesis Test t-test Statistics

The t test or partial test is a test of the independent variable partially on the dependent variable to determine the hypothesis of each variable (Priyastama, 2017). Where the degree of significance used is 0.05. If the significant value is less than the degree of confidence, the interpretation is to accept the alternative hypothesis which states that the independent variables partially affect the dependent variable (Riswan, 2019). From the results of data processing, the following results were obtained:

Table 5. T-Test Statistical Test

Coefficients (a)										
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Correlations		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	55373	2846		19460	.000					
Better Personal	-.907	.610	-.069	-1487	.137	-.092	-.048	-.047	.453	2209
Maintaining the Social Environment	.643	.504	.056	1274	.203	-.043	.041	.040	.514	1944
Nurturing Social Harmony	.220	.511	.018	.431	.667	-.057	.014	.014	.592	1690
Religious Better	-1108	.481	-.086	-2301	.022	-.107	-.074	-.072	.701	1427
Respect for Local Culture	-.572	.620	-.040	-.923	.356	-.118	-.030	-.029	.529	1889
Religious Tradition Award	-.507	.493	-.046	-1027	.305	-.117	-.033	-.032	.492	2034

Reinterpretation of Religious Broadcasting	1319	.677	.086	1948	.052	-.073	.062	.061	.511	1958
Culture Preservation	-.633	.633	-.048	-.999	.318	-.135	-.032	-.031	.419	2386
Strengthening Tolerance	-1594	.555	-.129	-2870	.004	-.153	-.092	-.090	.484	2064

**a. Dependent Variable: Potential Conflict**

Source: reprocessed from data from the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2024

Based on the statistical values in the table above, it can be concluded that :

1. Personal Better (X1) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.137, which means  $> 0.05$ . This value indicates that partially, the variable "Personal Better" has no significant effect on potential conflict (Y). However, the coefficient B is negative (-0.907), which indicates that the higher the level of self-improvement, the potential for conflict tends to decrease, although it is not statistically significant.

2. Maintaining the Social Environment (X2) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.203, because this value  $> 0.05$ . This means that it shows that "Maintaining the Social Environment" has no significant effect on potential conflict partially.

3. Caring for Social Harmony (X3) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.667, because this value is  $> 0.05$ . This means that "Caring for Social Harmony" has no significant effect on reducing potential conflicts.

4. Religious Better (X4) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.022, because this value is  $< 0.05$ . This means that the Better Religious variable has a partially significant effect on reducing potential conflicts. The coefficient B is negative (-1.108), which indicates that an increase in better religion can reduce the potential for conflict.

5. Respect for Local Culture (X5) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.356, because it is  $> 0.05$ , so "Respect for Local Culture" does not have a significant effect on potential conflict partially.

6. Religious Tradition Award (X6) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.305, because it is  $> 0.05$ , so "Religious Tradition Award" does not have a significant influence on potential conflict partially.

7. Reinterpretation of Religious Preaching (X7) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.052, because it is  $> 0.05$ , so "Reinterpretation of Religious Preaching" does not have a significant effect on potential conflict partially.

8. Cultural Preservation (X8) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.318, because it is  $> 0.05$ , so "Cultural Preservation" does not have a significant effect on potential conflict partially.

9. Strengthening Tolerance (X9) has a significance value (Sig.) of 0.004, because this value is  $< 0.05$ . This means that the Strengthening Tolerance variable has a partially significant effect on reducing potential conflicts. The coefficient B is negative (-1.594), which means that increasing tolerance will significantly reduce potential conflicts.

**DISCUSSION**

The results of the analysis show that simultaneously local cultural practices and traditions have an effect in suppressing the potential for religious social conflict, with a contribution of 4.2%. This indicates that local culture has the ability to reduce the intensity of conflicts that occur. Local cultural values are considered an effective alternative in various phases of conflict management, helping to

reduce tensions that arise in society. As a country with a very high diversity of tribes, ethnicities and religions, Indonesia has many local traditions that can be a tool for conflict resolution. However, on the other hand, these local cultural values also sometimes trigger social conflicts that raise SARA (ethnic, religious, racial and inter-group) issues.

According to Ode and Rachmawati (2017), local cultural values can be used as a means to resolve conflicts at the local level. However, the times and modernization often erode the power of local culture. However, local cultures that are able to survive as "good culture" have great potential to suppress social conflict. In this case, a well-maintained local culture functions as a social stabilization mechanism, promoting harmony and tolerance in a pluralistic society.

This view is in line with the opinion of (Prasojo & Pabbajah, 2023), who explained that one of the factors triggering religious conflicts in Indonesia is the lack of understanding of ethnic and religious diversity. The research adds that by accommodating local wisdom, people can utilize the culture as a conflict resolution tool. Local wisdom is able to provide more contextual solutions in overcoming complex social problems.

Another study by (Asmara & Noho, 2022) also supports these findings. The research emphasizes the importance of culture-based legal conflict resolution in the future, especially in cosmopolitan societies. According to the findings, conflicts often occur when individuals or groups feel different from others, and this applies to religious aspects as well. Therefore, local cultures that are inclusive and emphasize equality and harmony can be key in defusing potential conflicts that arise in diverse societies. Thus, based on these results, it is important to maintain and utilize local cultural values as part of conflict management strategies in Indonesia. A well-preserved local culture has the power to create social stability and reduce the risk of conflict, especially in religious issues.

This is similar to the view of (Sianipar et al., 2023), that religion is one of the cultural factors that play an important role in mitigating and resolving social conflicts. Religion, with its universal values such as peace, justice and compassion, is often used as a guide for individuals and communities in managing conflict. Religious teachings that prioritize peace become a strong basis in easing social tensions that have the potential to trigger conflict. Religious communities also often take an active role as mediators or facilitators in dialogue between conflicting parties, thus becoming part of the solution to conflict resolution.

This research is also supported by the opinion of (Ulum & Utami, 2022), who emphasize that inter-religious harmony is an obligation, especially in areas that have diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. The research argues that this harmony is an important key in maintaining harmony in a heterogeneous society, as existing differences can trigger potential conflicts if not managed properly. In diverse societies, better religious practices that emphasize tolerance, respect for differences, and peace can be the foundation for social stability.

Furthermore, the variable "Strengthening tolerance" means an effort to create harmonious relationships between various religious and cultural groups. In line with what happened in Amparita Village, the To Wani Tolotang religious group coexisted with the Muslim community. The results of research (Reski SPR, 2024), show that although the community is different, the concept of diversity held by the To Wani community remains in harmony with the teachings of their ancestors, Toriolota, who believe in the existence of supreme power, Dewwata Sewwae.

Respect for Dewwata Sewwae is realized through the ritual of "Molaleng," which consists of activities such as Mapprenre Nanre, Tudang Sipulung, and Sipulung. These rituals serve as a means to strengthen social ties and deepen inter-group understanding. In addition, in dealing with conflict, the community applies conflict



management strategies that involve meetings between disputing parties, negotiations, and reconciliation approaches. The act of withdrawing from the conflict as well as involving third parties, including the police, is also adopted to help resolve disputes. Cooperation between the To Wani Tolotang community, the Muslim community, and government elements is crucial to creating a harmonious environment in Amparita. Thus, strengthening tolerance has proven to have a significant impact in reducing the potential for social conflict.

In the context of this research data, the partial findings that show the independent variables "Religious Better" (X4) and "Strengthening Tolerance" (X9) have a significant influence on reducing the potential for social conflict can be

interpreted as follows. The aspect of local culture has relevance in the religious life of the people in Indonesia. Through local culture, understanding and practicing religious teachings become better and can contribute to reducing tensions and potential conflicts with adherents of other religions. However, if religious teachings and local cultural practices encounter situations that in principle in the understanding of certain religious adherents are difficult to integrate, they are accommodated through the choice of a tolerant attitude to maintain the ancestral cultural heritage that has been established in Indonesia (Kholis Ridho, et.all., 2024). Tolerance of cultural diversity without emphasizing aspects of religiosity is a form of accommodative attitude typical of Indonesian society (Menchick, J., 2016).

Table 6. Opportunities to Reduce the Potential for Religious Social Conflict Mediated by Religious Acceptance of Cultural Diversity and Cultural Development

Variables	Year			Tred <sup>1</sup>	Tred <sup>2</sup>
	2022	2023	2024		
Religious Acceptance Index of Local Cultural Diversity <sup>1</sup>	76,3	83,6	81	7,3	-2,6
Index of Potential for Social-Religious Conflict <sup>1</sup>	35,2	31	48,8	-4,2	17,8
History of Religious-Social Conflict (%) <sup>1</sup>	5,7	3,2	3,0	-2,5	- 0,2
Cultural Development Index <sup>2</sup>	55,13	57,13	62,7 <sup>3</sup>	2	5,57
Interpretation: The Contribution of Cultural Acceptance Can Reducing the Potential for Religious Social Conflict				Accepted	Accepted

Source:

<sup>1</sup> Reprocessed from the Study Report of the Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia: 2022-2024

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education and Culture Cultural Development Index (<https://ipk.kemdikbud.go.id/>)

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education and Culture Cultural Development Index Target (<https://ipk.kemdikbud.go.id/>)

A strong indication that local cultural accommodation is able to suppress the potential for socio-religious conflict can be proven from the downward trend in potential conflict mediated by the level of religious acceptance of local cultural diversity that strengthens, and vice versa. This can be tested by the finding that the index of religious acceptance of cultural

diversity increased by 7.3 points in 2023 compared to 2022, while the index of potential religious social conflict decreased by minus 4.2 points. Conversely, when the trend of religious acceptance of cultural diversity decreases in 2024 compared to 2023 by minus 2.6 points, the increase in the potential for conflict also strengthens by 17.8 points. It should be noted

that the significant increase in the potential for conflict in 2024 is accompanied by the momentum of simultaneous presidential and regional head elections. Interestingly, the percentage of historical socio-religious conflicts is decreasing even though the potential for conflict is increasing. The author argues that this cannot be separated from the cultural development efforts targeted by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the last 10 years. As a result, the hypothesis that the contribution of religious acceptance of cultural diversity can reduce the potential for social conflict tested from the measurement trend during 2022-2024 is empirically proven and acceptable.

Therefore, despite many criticisms related to government intervention through the policy of promoting regional culture (Kemendikbud RI) and Religious Moderation (Kemenag RI), it seems relatively successful in suppressing the potential for radicalism and terrorism, which is proven at least in the last 5-10 years to have decreased (Report of the National Counterterrorism Agency, 2022). In addition, the author is of the view that strengthening acceptance of cultural diversity is able to spark new generations to re-recognize their regional culture even through mass media, including the proliferation of culinary, fashion and cultural festivals. As for the potential for collective narcissism and political intolerance, it is important to be given space for healthy socio-political contestation so that feelings of threat become positive energy in cultural promotion (Jabbar, Haider, & Qureshi, 2023); (Liu, Zhou, & Wang, 2024); (Lan, 2011).

The research then recommends that the potential for conflict cannot only be seen from the point of view of cultural acceptance. A more comprehensive approach is needed, encompassing security, economic stability, education, and socio-political aspects. The emphasis on cultural factors in this research aims to discuss how people and societies can be formed and managed as culturally sovereign communities, in accordance with the living

principles of Indonesian society. Therefore, promoting religious tolerance that supports cultural diversity is an important step in building a harmonious and sustainable society.

## CONCLUSIONS

Adaptation and accommodation of local culture is effective in reducing the potential for religious social conflict in Indonesia by 4.2%. Assuming that culture becomes an independent variable so that it becomes the foundation in the way of religion, and not the other way around. The unpreparedness of religious believers in accepting various reinterpretations of the relevance of culture and religion is the toughest challenge for cultural preservation, strengthening social harmony, and better personal and community life in a heterogeneous society. Therefore, the author concludes that accommodation of cultural diversity without religiosity by relying on reasons to maintain a noble cultural heritage is not the best cultural strategy, even giving birth to an unfriendly attitude and will actually add new complications for the next generation. Moreover, the situation of balance between the desire to express the interests of one's own group and the need to be tolerant of the interests of other groups is still being maintained. This means that religion must be present in the shared cultural space. As in the competition for community interests on the basis of religion or group, it can be suppressed through strengthening socio-cultural and religious institutions, which until now still function as a bridge of harmony over the diversity of religions and cultures in Indonesia. In other words, religious and cultural behavior is not always ascriptive (inherited) but dynamically maintained according to the interests of the times by each generation. There are ancestral cultural values that are maintained or accommodated as an affirmation of shared cultural identity, and it is also necessary to always adapt the latest cultural values as individuals in the context of a global society. All of these cultural behaviors are based on the religious frame that characterizes

Indonesian society (First Precept of Pancasila / Belief: The Basis of the State in Indonesia).

Although, the imagination of a multicultural society that emphasizes the values of equality and equality is difficult to practice empirically for all communities and groups. And this research affirms that in practice the equality of other ethnicities and cultures must be faced with

domination or at least need to get approval from the majority ethnicity or group. However, the practice of pluralistic society that prioritizes tolerance and unity remains (and is final) as a common life expectancy that continues to be nurtured (good culture) in every generation (Third Precept of Pancasila/Nationalism: The Basis of the State in Indonesia).

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