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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Schools Strategies in Countering Religious Radicalism in Post-Conflict Community in Poso Regency Central Sulawesi, Indonesia**

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**| ABSTRACT**

Schools in an area of conflict often experience traumatic memories regarding radicalism and terrorism. Besides having to develop student's talents and interests, schools are also required to take an important role in conflict resolution. Poso regency is an Indonesian territory that has a long history of conflict. After the social conflict that was accompanied by armed violence, Poso was designated as a red area of terrorism in Indonesia. This study aims to find schools strategies in countering radicalism through multicultural-based peace activities in implementing Islamic religious education in schools. This study used qualitative research methods with a multi-site study design. This study found that schools apply Islamic religious education in schools in a multicultural frame based on religious values, nationalism, and local wisdom. In practice, students play active roles in interfaith social action and humanitarian charity activities. Among them, there are peace ambassadors to elementary schools in building inter-religious peace in Poso schools and communities. Apart from that, they also keep each other safe and regulate traffic during the celebration of religious holidays. This effort was made to prevent the entry of radicalism into schools after the Poso conflict.

**| KEYWORDS**

Conflict, Radicalism, Islamic Religious Education, Peace, School

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### **1. Introduction**

Involving education in managing diversity in a society that has experienced conflict is one of the academic responsibilities of educational institutions in Indonesia, especially in the Poso regency. Poso is an area that has experienced social conflicts of concern. Poso is a regency that experienced the longest religious conflict in Indonesia (D. McRae, 2013, 2016; D. G. McRae, 2008). Other scholars also argue that Poso conflict has developed from what was originally a communal conflict problem to a problem of radicalism and terrorism (Harb & Fischer, 2013; Hasan, 2002; Hwang et al., 2013; D. McRae, 2016; Nasrum, 2016; Sirozi, 2005; Suyanto et al., 2019; Van Bruinessen, 2002).

Concern over the problems above has attracted the attention of activists and peace researchers to find a comprehensive solution, starting from examining the causes of conflict, the impact of conflict, resolution of conflict, reconciliation, and a shared commitment to maintaining peace. In this study, we discussed the findings from a psychological perspective (Tol et al., 2010), communicative approach (Ali et al., 2020), social solidarity (Pulubuhu et al., 2019), political stability (Viartasiwi, 2011), community empowerment (Mufti et al., 2020), implementation of multicultural values (Malla et al., 2021) and peace education (Khairil, 2013; Kristimanta, 2021; Susanty et al., 2016).

The Poso regency conflict has occurred during three periods. The first period of conflict occurred on December 25, 1998. It was considered more political in nature (D. McRae, 2013, 2016), which related to the change of regency leadership. The conflict was sparked by an unequal power-sharing arrangement between Muslim and Christian officials. The second period of conflict was occurred from 16 to April 22 2000, with greater intensity and was driven by political and racial issues (Alganjih, 2016), thus triggering the polarization of the power of the two major religions, Islam and Christianity.

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When the escalation of the riots was peaking due to the conflict in the second period, it was triggered again by the murder of a Muslim by Christians in Taripa Village on May 6, 2000, which sparked the outbreak of a more devastating third-period conflict (Aprilian, 2018). The third period of conflict became a phase of revenge for Christian troops against Muslims, considered more organized and superior to the conflict in periods one and two. Christian militias with mass strength from various Christian organizations and communities in Poso carried out sadistic killings in areas where Muslims were based. One of them was the mass massacre of Wali Songo Islamic Boarding School residents in Tagolu Village, Lage Sub-district on May 28, 2000. In the end, the communal conflict turned into a radical religious movement with violent acts categorized as a terrorist movement by the Indonesian government. (Harb & Fischer, 2013; Hasan, 2002; D. McRae, 2016; Nasrum, 2016; Sirozi, 2005; Suyanto et al., 2019; Van Bruinessen, 2002).

The portraits of conflict, violence, radicalism, and terrorism above show that the problem of religious differences and understanding among the Poso people has not been fully resolved. Religious identity often appears in each of these events (Sholeh, 2008). In addition, the shift from what was originally a problem of communal conflict to a problem of radicalism (Hwang et al., 2013; Nasrum, 2016) shows a failure in understanding religious teachings. Religion is often used as a justification by radical groups to commit acts of violence and murder against followers of other religions.

The politics of religious identity, intolerant understanding of religion, and the growth of radicalism movements show the importance of proper understanding of religion. This religious understanding related to the pattern of religious education in the community and schools has a very strategic role. This encourages researchers to uncover Islamic religious strategies in countering radicalism and terrorism through Islamic religious education in schools. The schools that became the locus of the research were two schools located in Poso, namely State Islamic Senior High School 3 (SMAN 3) Poso and State Vocational High School 1 (SMKN 1) Poso.

Two schools were selected based on similarities and differences in characteristics that were quite representative of the two majority groups in Poso, Central Sulawesi. SMKN 1 Poso is located in a majority Christian base environment, so Muslims are a minority group at school. On the other hand, SMAN 3 Poso is located in an area where the majority of Muslims are based, so Christians are a minority group in the school.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Definition of Radicalism**

The study of radicalism has attracted the attention of many researchers in various fields of science. In everyday social and political discourse, the words "radical" and "radicalism" give rise to several images due to the meaning and context of using these words. Linguistically, the word "radical" comes from the classical Latin word "radix," which means "root" (as in the root of a plant). So, what is called a "radical" has to do with the "root" of something. In post-classical Latin, the meaning of "radical" is somewhat expanded so that "radical" does not only refer to the "root" of something but also to "original," "primary," or "fundamental." Therefore, in broad etymological terms, "radicalism" will appear as a particular orientation (practical or theoretical) towards the "roots," "foundations," or "origins" of something. (McLaughlin, 2012). Radicalism is an understanding that wants to make fundamental changes according to its interpretation based on social reality or the ideology it adheres to (Hasani & Naipospos, 2010).

In a religious context, radicalism is defined as a religious movement that seeks to completely overhaul the existing social, cultural, political, and legal order by using violence (Azra, 2005; Rubaidi, 2008). According to the Muslim scholar Yusuf Qardhawi (1991), radicalism in Arabic is called *tatharruf*, which means standing on the far edge of the middle. This term was originally used to describe things of a sensory nature, such as sitting, standing, and eating. However, in subsequent developments, this term is used for something abstract, such as withdrawing in terms of thought and behaviour and withdrawing in terms of religion. Then in classical Islamic literature, the term radicalism is termed *al-ghulwu* (beyond limits), *tanatthu* '(feeling right about yourself), and *tasydid* (complicates). (Qardhawi, 1991, 2011).

Theoretically, the use of the term radicalism has a diverse history. There are those who think radicalization is something positive and negative. For many socialists in times of economic crisis, radicalism is seen as a good thing; however, conservatives in times of political instability may see radicalism as a bad thing (McLaughlin, 2012). From a later theoretical point of view, it appears that radicalism is associated with extremism, which is a fundamentalist. That is, radicalism is bound, theoretically, with a simplistic, dogmatic, and reactionary (religious or ideological) worldview.

From a practical point of view, it appears that radicalism-extremism takes the form of violence; that is, radicalism is bound, in practice, with discriminatory and especially indiscriminate violence (including 'terrorism'). Moreover, the meaning of radicalism as extremism-fundamentalism-terrorism is a negative and disgusting phenomenon for most citizens in living their daily lives.

(McLaughlin, 2012; Verkhovsky, 2010). In this second sense, radicalism has attracted the attention of many academics because of its increasing exclamation of movement with its various forms of propaganda.

Radicalism in this negative view also has a complex history. The history of radicalism among certain Muslim groups shows that there are many causes of radicalism, and there is a strong tendency that their motives are political rather than religious (Azra, 2005; Inbar & Maddy-Weitzman, 2013; Van Bruinessen, 2002). It is also striking that their radicalism has much to do with the disruption of the political and social system as a whole. The politicization of religion also adds to the escalation of this radical movement (Hasan, 2008). The absence or weakness of law enforcement is certainly an essential factor in this case because radical groups take over the law in the name of their own version of the vision of Islam. (Azra, 2005).

In a historical survey of Islamic radicalism in Malaysia, Yusoff (2010) has identified three forms of religious radicalism (meaning Islam) involving ethnicity, fanaticism, and idealism (Yusoff, 2010). In the Indonesian context, the roots of most radical Muslim groups in contemporary Indonesia can be traced to two relatively "indigenous" Muslim political movements that began in the 1940s – the Darul Islam movement and the Masyumi party – supported by several transnational Islamic movements (Van Bruinessen, 2002).

Thus, radicalism can be identified from the characteristics of its thoughts and movements. In terms of thought, radical religious groups have simplistic, dogmatic, fundamentalist, reactionary patterns of thought (McLaughlin, 2012), *takfiri* (likes to offend other people) (Kadivar, 2020; Spalek, 2014; Yusar, 2016), rigid, exclusive (Maulana, 2017). In their movement, radical groups to realize their vision tend to use violence, intolerant (Azra, 2005; Rodriguez Garcia, 2019; Suyanto et al., 2019), and indiscriminately (McLaughlin, 2012). In fact, its movement is expanding through various information technology channels (Hui, 2010; Nurdin, 2016). The motives for the movement tend to be ideological, economic, and political (Azra, 2005; Van Bruinessen, 2002), and they do not fully want to carry out a religious mission.

## **2.2 Strategy to Counter Radicalism**

Radicalism in its various forms has been proven to have caused many disturbances to the comfort of human life. Various efforts have been made to counter religious radicalism both by academics socio-religious organizations (Pribadi, M., & Nurdin, N., 2021), as well as hard power (state policymakers) and soft power (in the form of counter radicalism and de-radicalization) (Subagyo, 2021). Law enforcement, in this case, is pursued by involving law enforcement institutions in force in a country. Meanwhile, the soft power strategy involves many strategic actors from various social institutions.

Several studies show that de-radicalization programs take various forms. Amal (2016) conducted a survey of counter radicalism through the moderate Islamic movement with Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah as the main characters. The strategy is to maintain a peaceful coexistence, establish a balanced relationship between NU and Muhammadiyah, defend moderate Islam, counter-discourse, and protect pluralism (Amal, 2016; Hilmy, 2013). Since radicalism has also targeted young people, the strategy has also been expanded to include de-radicalization in schools and campuses (Suyanto et al., 2019; Yusar, 2016).

This strategy is not enough to come directly into schools and campuses because radicalism is also developing in cyberspace. A lot of radical content is disseminated and propagated through social media (Bunt, 2009; Hui, 2010; Nurdin, 2016), and therefore, the strategy is expanded to target cyberspace. Several strategies have been carried out by establishing a cyber mode of religion to monitor the movement of radical content and increase moderate Islamic content (Campbell & Connelly, 2012; Futaqi & Mashuri, 2021).

The various strategies to counter radicalism have not eliminated radicalism. Subagyo assessed that the de-radicalization program for terrorism in Indonesia was not optimal due to the absence of business actors (business world) and the media. So far, only the government, academics, and the public have been involved, even though important business groups are involved in providing funds through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to former terrorists for venture capital. At the same time, the media are also very important in creating anti-narrative radicalism and anti-terrorism in Indonesia, such as electronic media, online media, and social media (Subagyo, 2021). Therefore, they offered the need to implement the Penta helix model in the terrorism de-radicalization program in Indonesia. The Penta helix model is a model of synergistic cooperation between various strategic actors, namely academics, business entities or actors, communities or society, government, and media. (Effendi et al., 2016; Subagyo, 2021; Sudiana et al., 2020). These five elements must collaborate in order to maximize the program to counter religious radicalism.

## **3. Methodology**

This study uses qualitative research with the type of multi-site case study with a phenomenological approach (Nurdin, N., Stockdale, R., & Scheepers, H., 2014; Nurdin, N., 2018; Nurdin, N., & Yusuf, K., 2020). The research was conducted at the State Vocational High

School 1 (SMKN 1) Poso and the State Islamic High School (SMAN 3) Poso. These two sites have unique characteristics. SMKN 1 Poso is located in a majority Christian base environment, so Muslims are a minority group at school.

On the other hand, SMAN 3 Poso is located where most Muslims are based, so Christians are a minority group in the school. Researchers researched school strategies in countering radicalism at these two sites. Researcher on social phenomena of multicultural PAI learning in post-conflict schools includes school leadership policies, learning processes, interactions between teachers and students of different religions and cultures, and multicultural school cultures.

The data was collected through in-depth interviews with 24 informants: 12 informants on the SMKN 1 Poso website and 12 informants on the SMAN 3 Poso website. Every Informant was interviewed for about 45 minutes to one hour.

**Table 1. Number of In-depth Interviews for Each Site**

No		Position of Informan	Number of Informant	Number of Interview
<b>1</b>	<b>SMKN Poso</b>	<b>1</b> Headmaster	1	3
		Teacher	4	4
		Student	5	5
		External	2	2
		Community		
	Total		<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>SMAN Poso</b>	<b>3</b> Headmaster	1	3
		Teacher	4	4
		Student	5	5
		External	2	2
		Community		
	Total		<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>

Researchers also traced some of the explanations given by the informants through observations of school activities, such as learning inside and outside the classroom. Researchers also observed training for teachers on strategies to counter radicalism, collaborative programs with interfaith communities, and other activities. The researcher also deepened the findings by looking at several documents, including photos of training activities, certificates, descriptions of activities, and several related strategies to counter religious radicalism.

Since this study was conducted at two sites, the researcher also required cross-site analysis. In this case, the researcher uses The Constant Comparative Method mapping (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This type of analysis enriches the framework of the findings of a theory rather than finding universal relationships from each site. The cross-site data analysis is intended to combine findings from each site.

**4. Results and Discussion**

**4.1 School in the Midst of Radicalism**

Schools in Poso face complex challenges. Besides developing the potential and talents of students, schools must face socio-religious challenges. The formidable challenge is the problem of radicalism and terrorism in Poso, which is very complex and lengthy. This movement became even stronger after the leader of the Poso Terrorist, Santoso, launched an open resistance to the apparatus, especially Densus 88, through video recordings and leaflets circulating among the people of Central Sulawesi. This public reality then gave rise to opinions from researchers Nasrum (2016), who stated that the Poso conflict was closely related to the terrorist groups the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT), and Jama'ah Asharut Tauhid (JAT).

The existence of these terrorist groups has a psychological and sociological impact on society (Ilyas, 2021; Prieto-Rodríguez et al., 2009). Psychologically, people feel uncomfortable, fearful, have a phobia of explosive sounds, and have a phobia of religious attributes. Terrorist groups resist the Indonesian army and police, but they also intimidate, even kill, anyone who informs the police of their whereabouts. This condition affects all aspects of life, such as education, economy, religion, politics, security, social interaction, even family life (Gaibulloev & Sandler, 2009; Ilyas, 2021; Larobina & Pate, 2009; Prieto-Rodríguez et al., 2009). This condition is strengthened when a group of terrorists enters civilian areas to fulfil their needs. The presence of terrorists among civilians provides psychological terror and intimidation even though it is not carried out directly. They use the veil, which later

became their trademark when mingling with society. This reality triggers the emergence of a negative stigma in society against veil users in Eastern Indonesia, namely identifying the veil with terrorism.

This reality also has implications for the situation at school. Teachers at SMKN 1 and SMAN 3 experience almost the same psychological and sociological burdens (Askar, Adawiyah, & Nurdin, 2021). Even though all teachers have the same awareness, the burden is felt by religious teachers the most. As one religion teacher said, "I always control the religious studies they take outside of school. lest their studies lead to radical teachings". Besides the religious teachers working hard to teach a peaceful life, they also monitor the religious affiliation of the students. The teachers' concerns are not without reason because of the socio-religious situation of the community.

In the life of the Poso people, there is also the polarization of the area where people live based on their religion. Geolocation-based polarization is the result of socio-religious interaction patterns in society. Christian groups tend to feel comfortable living with fellow Christians and Muslim groups. The majority of Muslims occupy the Poso City area, while the majority of Christians occupy the southern part of Poso City to the Tentena area. Uniquely, this polarization occurs naturally through the exchange or sale and purchase of land and buildings between Muslims and Christians, not through the relocation of the Poso district government.

The composition of the majority and minorities based on religion in schools is also the result of the polarization of people's residences based on religion. SMKN 1 Poso is located in a majority Christian base environment, so Muslims are a minority group at school. On the other hand, SMAN 3 Poso is located in an area where the majority of Muslims are based, so Christians are a minority group in the school. Although polarization has an impact on the composition of Muslims and non-Muslims in schools, this phenomenon does not pose a significant problem in building social and humanitarian relations.

The main dilemma for the world of education in a divided society lies in the way in which we perceive differences (Blair et al., 1998; Blum, 2014; Gallagher, 2009; Giroux, 2018; Hayes et al., 2020; McCarthy, 1990; Shields, 2000). The dilemma for educators is that this method is neither easy nor difficult to understand, so knowledge accumulation, learning, and critical reflection are needed (Gallagher, 2009; Hayes et al., 2020). Some of these ways can be seen from several experiences carried out by schools that incidentally are in post-conflict areas. Until now, there are still some radical groups that have the potential to damage differences and peace.

The context of the Poso community has become a concern for SMKN 1 Poso and SMAN 3 Poso through several peace programs. One of the peace programs considered strategic is Islamic religious education. Islamic religious education in the two schools emphasizes formal Islamic teachings such as rituals of worship and fiqh law and emphasizes the formation of moderate, tolerant, and peaceful religious understanding and attitudes in the midst of religious plurality. This religious attitude aligns with the PAI learning objectives listed in the 2013 Curriculum. This was explained by an Informant as follows;

"Poso has had conflicts, and it is important to build a peaceful life among religious people. Therefore, in the goals of Islamic education based on the 2013 syllabus and curriculum, one of them is to create a peaceful atmosphere of religious communities in schools, especially the Poso area which has experienced conflicts with religious nuances".

Thus, as the spearhead for forming students' religious attitudes, Islamic Education teachers are required to have insight, awareness, and multicultural attitudes in teaching Islam so that they can live interfaith social life tolerantly and moderately both at school and in society.

#### **4.2 Strengthening Moderate Religious Understanding and Attitude**

Learning Islamic education from a multicultural perspective as an approach to building religious peace in this school cannot be separated from the social context of the Poso community. In classroom learning and religious activities at the Islamic center, teachers instil moderate and peaceful religious understanding and attitudes in students so that they are able to live an interreligious life in the middle of religious diversity at school (Kurniati, Nurdin, & Nurasmawati, 2020). As stated by students as follows:

"I often convey in classes or religious activities at the Islamic center the dangers of terrorism and radicalism for people of other religions. I tell students not to join in their studies."

In addition, to convey peace to students, at the same time, the teacher also takes a strategy as a moral agent that becomes a role model for students (Bergem, 1990) because of religious differences.

Moderate religious understanding and attitudes in students can be seen in their behaviour. It is not easy to carry out acts of intolerance and violence against people of other religions at school. This reality was explained by an Islamic religious teacher as follows:

"I emphasize that Muslim students should not demean other students, let alone do violence to friends of different religions because it is strictly forbidden by Allah and is against the teachings of Islam."

On another site, SMAN 3, a teacher stated that Islamic religious learning in schools had formed a religious attitude that is tolerant and moderate looking at people of other religions. The social life of Muslim and Christian students is very tolerant. They are not easily involved in fights that bring up religious issues like conflicts in the past." Although students have various religious group affiliations outside of school, they still maintain peace at school, especially with Christians. Another informant explained,

"In the internal Muslim community, the students of senior high school consist of various religious organizations: Al-khairaat, Muhammadiyah, Nahdatul Ulama, Wahdah, Front Pembela Islam, Jama'ah Tablighi, and Amanah. We are united in this school, respecting each other's differences in understanding and religious groups for the sake of a peaceful Poso."

Moderate religious attitudes are also instilled through habituation of students' attitudes to always *tabayyun* (clarification) if there are problems that bring up religious issues at school. (Fathoni et al., 2019). This also applies to the diversity of groups within the Muslim community. For example, even though Muslim students wear the veil, they are able to show a religious attitude that is tolerant, moderate, and peaceful to all Christian students, both in learning in class or in social life in the school environment.

#### **4.3 Counter Radicalism**

Radicalism groups in Poso are still active in spreading religious understanding that is radical and intolerant of religious differences and religious beliefs that are not in line with the theological concepts they believe. Through understanding and moderate religious attitudes, students are able to select and avoid studies and radical Islamic groups that are rife in the Poso area when outside of school. At the same time as an effort to prevent the entry of radical religious understanding and attitudes into the school environment.

During the research, the researcher did not find any indication of the participation of SMKN 1 Poso students in the study of radical groups in the Poso area. None of the Muslim students at this school wears the veil in terms of clothing. They also do not actively participate in Islamic studies in radical Islamic groups so that the majority Christian community at school feels comfortable with all Muslim students. The above reality was revealed an informant as follows:

"Alhamdulillah, none of the students at this school have participated in studies in radical Islamic groups that are seen in the use of the veil or anti-nationalism because we always remind them."

In an effort to protect students from understanding radicalism, PAI teachers at this school strictly forbid students from participating in Islamic studies in groups that are indicated to have radicalism. This effort is a form of responsibility for Muslims in counter-radicalism (Spalek & Lambert, 2008). Prevention efforts by Islamic religious teachers can be started from learning in schools. Prevention by controlling the student must not hinder the student's freedom (Sjøen & Mattsson, 2020).

In a school with a majority Muslim background, the senior high school, students have affiliations of diverse religious understandings and practices because they follow Islamic studies abroad. However, they do not show radical understanding and attitudes towards minority Christian students when learning in class, practising worship rituals, religious social, and social life in the school environment.

In general, radical groups in Indonesia always instill doctrines against the Indonesian constitution, such as anti-Pancasila, anti-Basic Law 45, anti-NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia). (Fenton, 2016) with the aim of changing the State system (Hasan, 2018; Rahman Alamsyah & Hadiz, 2017). As a response to schools against the anti-nationalism doctrine, Islamic religious education is designed and developed by incorporating national values. A teacher explained:

"When studying in class or at religious activities at the Islamic center, I explain to students how to respect the philosophy of Pancasila (Five state principles) as the ideology of the Indonesian state, symbols of the state to strengthen the spirit; of student nationalism."

Teachers take advantage of extra-curricular activities such as Intra-School Student Organizations (OSIS), interfaith camps, Heritage Flag-raising Troops (Paskibraka), Sports and Arts Week (Porseni), and peace workshops. This activity aims to build a sense of love

for the homeland and the spirit of nationalism as a counter to the radical understanding of Islam. Among the activities related to the formation of students' national attitudes that have been carried out at this school, namely de-radicalism from the BNPT, the Head of the Resort Police, State Defense from or Dandim, Scouting from the Palu Kwarcab. These activities are a form of school synergy with external institutions to strengthen school strategies, especially Islamic religious education, in instilling the spirit of nationalism so that students are not easily exposed to radicalism.

The program for strengthening nationalism in SMKN 1 is also of the same concern, although with a different formulation, as said by the following participant:

On various occasions, the teachers tried to instill nationalism in an effort to ward off radicalism. "As a religious teacher, I always remind students not to take part in the study of hardline groups in Poso because many of them are anti-government and intolerant of other religions."

Learning Islamic religious education combined with the cultivation of national values is the right step. Besides Islam and nationalism having a close relationship, integrating Islam and nationalism will make nationalism stronger because it has a strong theological basis in Islamic teachings. In practice, several countries and educational institutions also use strengthening nationalism as a strategic way to counteract radicalism (Azra et al., 2007; Verkhovsky, 2010).

#### **4.4 Peace From School**

Peace is the keyword for survival in diversity. Peace is also an important value that needs to be instilled in an effort to prevent acts of intolerance, conflict, radicalism, and violence (Hasan, 2018). This important value has become a significant concern for schools in Poso, especially for religious teachers, given the socio-religious context of the Poso community, which has been and is prone to conflict and the existence of radicalism and terrorism movements.

In playing this strategy, Islamic religious teachers try to build the religious character of peaceful Muslim students by integrating the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and non-violent attitudes, both to fellow Muslim and non-Muslim friends. As stated by a teacher as follows:

"I always teach students to respect each other and maintain peace at school and outside of school. In my teaching, I linked the teaching material with the Poso conflict incident so that it doesn't happen again."

This dark history is still etched in the memory of the school community to continue campaigning for peace through various school programs. One strategic way is through the implementation of Islamic religious education that integrates multicultural values in every learning program, both in class and out of class. (Arifin, 2016; Pohl, 2009). This multicultural perspective can shape the religious culture of Muslim students who are tolerant, caring, and peaceful in carrying out religious, academic, extra-curricular, social, and humanitarian activities.

In religious life at school, Christian and Muslim students have the right to religion and worship at school equally, without discrimination. The equality of students from various religions can be seen in the religious Saturday activities, where Muslims and Christians worship together at school according to the teachings of their respective religions. At the Christmas celebration, Muslim students helped smooth the Christmas celebration, and on the other hand, Christian students also helped the Islamic Holiday Commemoration (PHBI). An informant said as follows:

"Diversity in religions make life more beautiful; with differences and religion, we can respect each other. If it's only Christians, worship in this school lacks a beautiful diversity of life. We worship together, not only the majority Christians, but Muslims also worship comfortably in this school."

Equality in religion is seen in the principal's policy, where all religious activities at SMA 3 Poso are given the time, place, and financial assistance needed equally. For example, suppose the celebration of religious holidays, Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism are given the same support (Suhariono, principal of SMKN 1). The picture of equality in religion is clearly seen in every religious Friday activity. All religious people jointly carry out worship practices according to their respective faiths in different places Muslims in the school mosque, Christians in the hall, and Hindus in the classroom.

Although students are polarized into majority and minority groups according to religion, this reality is not a problem, and in fact, they support each other in the implementation of religious and social religious rituals. Minority Christian students get equal treatment and are comfortable in carrying out worship rituals at school. Almost the same phenomenon also occurred at the second site, SMAN 3. As explained by the following student:

"Muslim friends are good friends, and they take care of us who are Christian minorities. When we worship, they don't make noise outside and appreciate us doing prayers or worship services at school."

The attitude of equality is shown by upholding the attitude of tolerance by maintaining calm during the worship rituals according to their respective religions. The following informant explained:

"We respect each other's worship and celebration of major holidays at our school. When there are friends who worship, we always keep calm as a form of tolerance between us."

Equality in performing worship rituals is an important aspect because every religion has rituals as an intrinsic and fundamental area of religion. Through habituation in facilitating the implementation of religious rituals in schools by respecting the implementation of other religious rituals, Islamic religious education contributes to peacebuilding that is relevant to the context of the Poso people who have experienced religious social conflicts.

#### **4.5 Togetherness in Academic and Non-Academic Activities**

Building togetherness is another way of bringing about peace among students. This togetherness is practised in academic activities and non-academic activities such as daily social interactions and various extra-curricular activities. In schools with Muslim minority students, such as at SMKN 2, all students from various religions also participate in learning together, and they can work together during learning activities at school. Likewise, in extra-curricular activities such as student council, boy scouts, and some peace training. Students from various religious and cultural backgrounds get equal treatment in developing talents and achieving achievements.

This phenomenon can also be found in schools with a majority Muslim background, such as at SMAN 3. As expressed by participants as follows:

"We are Christian help to prepare the place, decorations, and folding cake boxes. In addition, we listened to the lectures and prayers read by Muslims at the celebration of Islamic holidays."

In humanitarian charities, Muslim and Christian students jointly raise funds for school residents who are sick, grieving, and communities affected by natural disasters (Handayani & Nurdin, 2021). Every year, Muslim and Christian students pray together before the national exam and collect basic necessities distributed to orphanages in Poso City.

The dialogue of life is a simple, flexible, fluid, and natural form. It is related to social interaction in the daily activities of religious people. In the school context, this dialogue occurs in various activities while at school. Students from various religions, both minorities, and the majority, interact with fellow students as well as with teachers and all school members. The interaction is also in the classroom and outside the classroom.

At the SMKN 1 website, for example, after Christmas and Eid al-Fitr, all school residents gather and line up in the school field to shake hands with each other to wish each other a happy new year and Eid al-Fitr (halal bi halal). Although this is related to religious expressions, these religious expressions have become socio-cultural expressions and become part of the dialogue of life for the religious community in this school. A teacher said:

When there is grief or illness, students help each other and empathize with coming to the grieving house. In extra activities, students are together regardless of religious differences. Students from different religions hang out in daily life, visiting each other if someone is sick or grieving from each class. At the '*padungku*' event, students also visited each other's villages with friends of different religions.

Christian and Muslim students live a peaceful dialogue in the extra-curricular unit by jointly becoming administrators and carrying out various activities to develop talents, interests, social work, and humanitarian charities. They support each other and work together, whether in happy or sad conditions.

On the Senior high schools' website, several Muslim and Christian students participated in internal school activities and joined NGOs in the field of peace. They socialized the peaceful life in diversity to various elementary schools in Poso Regency. Every year, Muslim and Christian students join the police in controlling traffic for the smooth implementation of Eid al-Fitr or Christmas worship in turns.

In the context of a school that is in the midst of a community that has experienced and is prone to conflict, dialogue must be developed continuously in various forms as a solution in conflict resolution efforts. (Chaudhari, 2016; Morgan & Guilherme, 2013; Parker & Bickmore, 2020). However, the dialogue of inter-religious life continues to be used in everyday school life, without having to wait for conflict to occur, because the dialogue is an important element for a peaceful life. (Gürsel-Bilgin, 2020).

#### **4.6 School Peace Action for Communities**

Schools create peace among students and become part of efforts to build peace for all religious communities. School as a social system (Dewey, 1902, 2013) can be a strategic forum in initiating religious peace in the midst of society. Through Islamic religious education, schools can contribute to creating a peaceful generation and school culture with solid theological legitimacy. Starting from a culture of peace in schools, teachers and students can be involved in inter-religious peace actions in the community.

The peace of religious people can occur because of the tolerant attitude of religious people. Therefore, schools make the value of tolerance an important value in carrying out dialogue on social life and humanity in schools. The phenomenon of the two sites shows the composition of the majority and minority in terms of religion in schools does not become a barrier to forming a tolerant attitude. This is because all forms of rituals and religious activities get the same rights from the school. Islamic religious teachers, together with Muslim students, contribute to the success of religious activities of other religions. Vice versa, people of other religions also help carry out the religious activities of Muslims.

Peace among religious believers, especially Christians and Muslims, in this school does not only stop in the school environment. Teachers and students try to go out of their way to display a tolerant and peaceful attitude when celebrating Christmas, receptions, and '*padungku*' events held at the homes of Christian teachers or students. Christians invite Muslims and prepare halal food according to Islamic teachings processed and prepared by Muslim teachers. To maintain unity, Muslims and Christians visit each other on the momentum of the holiday. On Eid al-Fitr, Christians, both teachers and students, visit the homes of Muslim school residents.

Vice versa, when celebrating Christmas, Muslim teachers and students visit the homes of Christian school residents. As part of efforts to maintain unity, the school provides THR to teachers and staff, both Muslim and Christian, in a fair manner. PAI teachers and PAK teachers also participated in interfaith workshops held by various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), both at the national and local levels.

School involvement, especially in Islamic religious education materials, shows that peace in society can also be started from school peace. Teachers, students, and parents are members of the community who share a religious background. Their understanding of the meaning of peace for life, of course, contributed to tackling radical ideas and movements in society. Together with peace NGOs, the school is actively involved in outreach activities, workshops, and various forms of peace campaigns in the Poso community.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The context of the Poso school and society, in general, is still overshadowed by the problem of radicalism and terrorism. Although the Poso area is often identified as a post-conflict area, some radicalism and terrorism movements are still obstacles to peace for the Poso people (Hwang et al., 2013; Khairil, 2017; Nasrum, 2016; Schulze, 2019). This condition affects all aspects of life such as education, economy, religion, politics, security, social interaction, and even family life.

This reality becomes a reflection material for schools, especially religious education, to include the latest content in their peace programs. Studies at the two sites above show that there were adjustments to peace programs in schools and communities after the Poso conflict, which are still in the shadow of radicalism and terrorism. *First*, schools try to counteract radicalism among students by strengthening moderate religious understanding and attitudes and nationalism. Forming a moderate attitude is one of the important programs in conducting de-radicalization and anti-terrorism programs in schools (Maghfuri, 2019; Rustan et al., 2018), and religious education can be a spiritual capital that can strengthen the building of religious peace (Futaqi, 2019). In addition, nationalism combined with religious values taught in schools is also an important part of strengthening students' understanding that the religion they profess has a basis and obligation to maintain the spirit of national unity.

*Second*, the peace program for students needs to be realized by building equality in worship and religious, social activities; togetherness (in academic and non-academic activities); and dialogue of peaceful student life. The peace of interfaith students is implemented through real-life dialogue in various school programs, religious, social work, and humanitarian actions that take place in the school and community environment. Students as religious people can interact with each other in the reality of everyday life and work together in social-humanitarian activities (Kimbal, 1995).

The peace program is a reflection of all educators and peace activists that schools must be involved in peace campaigns through various forms of activities in schools. This has a logical consequence because the school is the center of social and social progress (Dewey, 1902, 2013) that will build a generation of peace. As a social center, schools become a forum for the formation of moderate, tolerant, and peaceful attitudes for community members who are teaching and learning at school. As social progress, schools have a strategic role in shaping the generation of a peaceful Indonesian nation by being actively involved in peace campaigns in the post-conflict Poso community. The limitation of this study is that we did not involve students whose families were the victims of the conflict. Future studies need to involve the students from the conflict victim families to provide in-depth insight.

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