
Community Based Diversity Management: Analysis of Community Activities Building Post-Conflict Social Harmony in Tual, Maluku Province, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Ethnic and religious diversity have often been used as a source of conflict between different groups of people. However, pluralistic societies' local wisdom offers a potential tool for long-term building of peace. This study investigated the practice of diversity management by post-conflict communities in Tual, Maluku Province, Indonesia, along with the factors that support community-based diversity management and forms of activities that contribute to the creation of social harmony in the city. Research was conducted in 2017 through a field study, using qualitative methods to observe the ways in which community groups in the region developed post-conflict social harmony, with data constantly updated to determine the dynamics of diversity management in the community. Two important findings were made. First, shared cultural and historical factors, availability of public spaces for encounters, and traumatic transformation influence and support diversity management and contribute to the creation of social harmony in Tual. And second, several communities were built by community initiatives as the foundation of managing diversity. Community daily activities proved to be effective in ensuring long-term peace building. Based on the reality of social lives in Tual, this study confirmed that a cultural approach is still relevant in efforts to end communal conflict and build social harmony, and synergy between stakeholders is needed to strengthen the social and cultural capital owned by community groups in conflict areas.

Keywords: *diversity management; social harmony; post-conflict; Tual*

INTRODUCTION

Community pluralism is an indisputable social fact, but often pluralism is a disharmony problem in Indonesia, including the democratic condition in this country (Sofjan, 2016; Hamdi, 2017; Ahnaf and Lussier, 2019). The phenomenon of community life in Indonesia in the last two decades shows that pluralism or ethnic and religious diversity is often used as a reason for conflicts between groups of people with diverse roots and triggering factors. Religion does not produce conflict but in many cases in Indonesia, religion is often constructed to be the dominant factor. The conflicts emerge from various reasons: from criminal actions that are not accepted by certain groups, problems of seizure of resources, to identity politics

that emphasize ethnic and religious differences. Among the many factors, it turns out that differences in ethnic and religious identity are more dominant. In fact, ethnic and religious identities are so sensitive that in a number of regions in Indonesia, the conflicts and violence are unstoppable. It proves that diversity as a gift of God turns out to be used by humans as a reason for conflict, mutual destruction, killing, and slaughtering one another without shame. This reality can be found in a number of regions in Indonesia in the last two decades, such as in Kalimantan, Java, Nusa Tenggara, Poso, Maluku and Papua (Mas'od, Maksum and Soehadha (eds.), 2000; Bertrand, 2004; Trijono et al., 2004; Rumahuru, 2005;