

# MODEL OF INTERRELIGIOUS HARMONY BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM AS A MEANS OF CONFLICT PREVENTION: A CASE STUDY OF THE PEACEFUL AND CULTURALLY-ORIENTED VILLAGE OF NGLINGGI, KLATEN, CENTRAL JAVAN

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## Abstract

*This study aims to explore the model of interreligious harmony in Nglinggi Village, Klaten, Central Java, which is rooted in local wisdom, and to examine its role as a means of preventing social conflict. Nglinggi Village, known for its religious diversity, has earned recognition as a Culturally Peaceful Village due to the community's various efforts to foster harmony. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with religious and community leaders, and documentation studies of interreligious harmony activities. The findings indicate that local cultural traditions such as gotong royong (mutual cooperation), sadranan (ancestral commemoration), and sharing practices during religious holidays play a crucial role in sustaining long-term harmony. Local wisdom in Nglinggi Village serves as an effective model for preventing social conflict in plural societies. This study is expected to contribute to the development of culturally based peacebuilding efforts in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *Harmony, Local wisdom, Conflict prevention, Nglinggi Village, Peace culture*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a nation with a multicultural and multireligious population, often faces significant challenges in fostering interreligious harmony. Social conflicts among religious groups frequently stem from misunderstanding, intolerance, and poorly managed social tensions. In this context interreligious harmony is essential, not only to maintain social cohesion but also to prevent the escalation of broader conflicts.

Nglinggi Village, located in Klaten Regency, Central Java, serves as a remarkable example of interreligious harmony. The village received recognition as a *Culturally Peaceful Village* due to various initiatives undertaken by the community and local stakeholders to preserve interfaith harmony. A range of local wisdom traditions practiced in Nglinggi Village such as *sadranan* (ancestral commemoration), the sharing of *qurban* meat, and other interfaith activities have played a significant role in cultivating peace and mutual respect.

This study aims to explore in greater depth the model of harmony implemented in Nglinggi Village and to analyze how local wisdom functions as a means of conflict prevention. By

examining this real-world example, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how interreligious harmony can be fostered through culturally grounded and locally inspired approaches.

Based on the background described earlier, this study seeks to address several key research questions: How is the model of interreligious harmony implemented in Nglinggi Village? What role does local wisdom play in fostering and maintaining harmony within the community? And how does this model function as a mechanism for preventing social conflict?

The primary objectives of this research are to describe the model of interreligious harmony practiced in Nglinggi Village, to analyze the role of local wisdom in supporting the creation of harmony, and to assess the contribution of this harmony model in preventing potential social conflicts within a pluralistic society.

The novelty of this study lies in its effort to connect local cultural traditions with conflict prevention. While numerous studies have discussed interreligious harmony, few have directly linked it to the function of local wisdom and its contribution to preventing social conflict. By selecting Nglinggi Village as a case study, this research aims to fill that gap and offer new insights into how traditional values can serve as effective instruments for conflict prevention in multicultural communities.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to explore in greater depth the phenomenon of interreligious harmony in Nglinggi Village. This research emphasizes understanding and interpreting the practices of religious harmony that occur within the community.

The study was conducted in Nglinggi Village, located in Klaten Regency, Central Java. The village was selected as the research site because it has been recognized as a *Culturally Peaceful Village* and is well known for its strong traditions of interreligious harmony.

Data collection techniques include:

- a. **Participatory Observation:** The researcher engaged directly in social and religious activities in Nglinggi Village, such as religious festivals and *sadraran* (ancestral commemoration rituals).
- b. **In-Depth Interviews:** Interviews were conducted with religious leaders, the village head, members of the Interfaith Harmony Forum (*Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama* or FKUB), and local residents to gain insights into the model of harmony practiced in the village.
- c. **Documentation Study:** Relevant documents were collected and analyzed, including short films on tolerance, village regulations on burial practices, and records of other social activities.

The collected data were analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion-drawing techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis process was carried out thematically, identifying key themes related to interreligious harmony and conflict prevention.

### 3. RESULT

According to John Hick (1985), religious pluralism is the view that acknowledges the reality that the world's religions possess different paths to truth and salvation, yet can coexist peacefully. This perspective is highly relevant to the Indonesian context, which is characterized by diverse religions and belief systems. Religious pluralism provides a theoretical foundation for harmonious coexistence, where each faith is respected and accepted within society.

Azyumardi Azra (2002) also emphasizes the importance of tolerance in maintaining interreligious harmony. He asserts that harmony is not merely about living side by side but involves showing respect for others' beliefs and appreciating differences. In the context of Nginggi Village, joint celebrations during religious holidays and interfaith activities demonstrate the practical application of pluralism in everyday life.

The theory of conflict prevention, developed by Johan Galtung (1996) and John Paul Lederach (1997), highlights that social conflict can be prevented by creating social structures that support peace. In this regard, interreligious harmony functions as a *peace infrastructure* that prevents tension and potential conflict. Nginggi Village can thus be seen as a successful model of conflict prevention through interfaith harmony rooted in local wisdom and strong social traditions.

Galtung argues that conflict often arises from social injustice, intergroup tension, and structural imbalance. Therefore, creating fair and equitable conditions, as well as strengthening social solidarity among different groups, are essential steps in preventing conflict.

Local wisdom refers to the collective knowledge, values, and traditions developed within a community, which contain principles for problem-solving and maintaining harmony in social life. Ibrahim Abdullah (2001) and Yudi Latif (2011) assert that local wisdom such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), *musyawarah* (deliberation), and communal solidarity plays a vital role in fostering harmony and avoiding conflict. In Nginggi Village, local cultural traditions such as *sadranan* (ancestral commemoration) and *jaga tonggo* (neighborly vigilance) serve as key elements in nurturing mutual respect and maintaining interreligious harmony.

Based on the theories described above, the conceptual framework of this study can be outlined as follows:

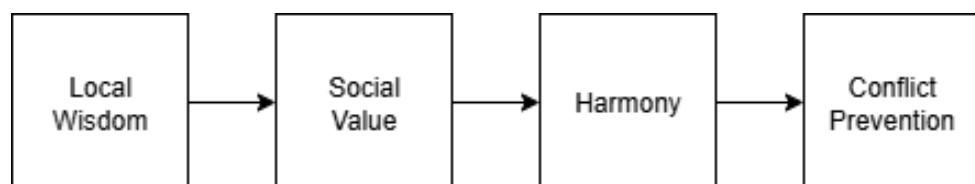


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

- Local wisdom, such as *gotong royong* and *musyawarah*, serves as the foundation for building interreligious harmony.
- The harmony that emerges plays a crucial role in preventing both religious and social conflicts.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

##### A. Profile of Nglinggi Village and Its Social Context

Nglinggi Village is located in Klaten Regency, Central Java, an area known for its religious diversity and strong cultural traditions. The village community consists of followers of various religions including Islam, Catholicism, and Protestant Christianity who coexist harmoniously. Despite the potential for interreligious tension due to differing beliefs, Nglinggi Village has successfully managed these challenges by developing various harmony initiatives rooted in local wisdom and the principles of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation).

Nglinggi's success in maintaining interreligious harmony is reflected in its recognition as a *Culturally Peaceful Village*. This award was granted not only for the community's ability to preserve harmony but also for its culturally grounded approach that strengthens social integration among different religious groups. Traditional values such as *musyawarah* (deliberation), *sadranan* (ancestral commemoration), and *gotong royong* have become integral parts of daily life, reinforcing a strong sense of brotherhood and social cohesion among residents.

##### B. Models of Interreligious Harmony in Nglinggi Village

Nglinggi Village has developed several models of interreligious harmony that have proven effective in fostering peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths. These models include:

1. Joint Celebration of Religious Holidays: Each year, the residents of Nglinggi Village regardless of their religious affiliation celebrate major religious holidays together. For instance, during *Idul Fitri*, Muslim residents are supported by followers of other religions who help maintain security and manage traffic. Conversely, during Christmas and Easter celebrations, Christian and Catholic communities receive similar assistance from Muslim residents. This mutual participation demonstrates a strong spirit of respect, solidarity, and cooperation in commemorating each faith's sacred days.
2. Short Film as a Medium for Promoting Tolerance: As part of efforts to promote tolerance, the Nglinggi community produced a short film titled *Kau dan Aku Keluarga* ("You and I Are Family"), which portrays the peaceful coexistence of people of different religions in the village. The film serves as an effective medium to introduce and reinforce the values of tolerance, empathy, and interreligious brotherhood among younger generations and the broader public.

3. Shared *Qurban* Distribution and Collective *Sadranan* Rituals: The distribution of *qurban* meat during the Islamic holiday of *Idul Adha* exemplifies the village's inclusive spirit. Participation is not limited to Muslims; residents of other faiths also take part in the activity, fostering mutual respect and social cohesion. Similarly, the collective *sadranan* (ancestral commemoration) ritual, jointly performed by Muslim, Christian, and Catholic residents, represents a deep expression of interfaith solidarity and communal unity.
4. Village Regulation on Burial Practices and the Establishment of the Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKUB): Nglinggi Village has established a village regulation (*perdes*) governing burial practices that applies equally to all religions. This policy aims to prevent potential disputes related to burial grounds or land use. Additionally, the formation of the *Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama* (FKUB) at the village level serves as a strategic initiative to facilitate continuous dialogue and cooperation among religious communities.

### **C. The Role of Local Wisdom in Fostering Harmony**

Local wisdom in Nglinggi Village plays a vital role in shaping and sustaining interreligious harmony. Several core values underpin the harmonious relationships within the community:

1. Gotong Royong (Mutual Cooperation): *Gotong royong* represents the most highly valued principle in Nglinggi Village. This value is reflected in numerous communal activities, such as collective village clean-ups, joint infrastructure development, and interfaith religious events. The spirit of mutual cooperation serves as a social glue that unites residents across religious boundaries.
2. Musyawarah untuk Mufakat (Deliberation to Reach Consensus): Another key element of local wisdom practiced in the village is *musyawarah untuk mufakat*, or deliberation to achieve consensus particularly when resolving differences of opinion. This process is regarded as the primary mechanism for decision-making, whether in social, cultural, or religious matters, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.
3. Paguyuban Panrukti Layu and *Uang Duka* (Condolence Solidarity Groups): A tangible form of social solidarity in Nglinggi is the *Paguyuban Panrukti Layu*, a community association that provides emotional and material support to bereaved families. In addition, the tradition of *uang duka* (condolence contributions) demonstrates the community's deep sense of empathy, compassion, and shared responsibility in times of loss.
4. *Jaga Tonggo* (Neighborly Vigilance) Practice: The *Jaga Tonggo* (literally "guarding the neighbors") initiative, implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, exemplifies how local wisdom adapts to contemporary challenges. During the pandemic, residents

cooperated to support one another by assisting families in need, maintaining health protocols, and promoting mutual care to prevent the spread of the virus. This practice highlights how traditional values remain relevant in fostering social resilience and collective well-being.

#### **D. Harmony as a Means of Conflict Prevention**

Nglinggi Village has a long history of preventing social conflict. Several minor disputes have occurred in the past, but none were related to religious issues; rather, they were social in nature, such as boundary disputes and inheritance disagreements among neighbors or family members. However, the village has successfully resolved these conflicts peacefully through deliberation (*musyawarah*) and the application of the restorative justice concept.

For instance, when disputes arise over land or inheritance, the community prioritizes resolution through deliberation involving all concerned parties, including religious leaders and community elders. The decisions made are fair and based on mutual agreement, allowing conflicts to be resolved without violence or animosity among the involved parties.

The harmony cultivated in Nglinggi Village rooted in local wisdom demonstrates that interreligious harmony is not merely about coexistence, but also about building peace through social justice, mutual respect, and interfaith cooperation. With these values in place, social conflicts can be prevented, and harmony can be sustained in the long term.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study shows that interreligious harmony in Nglinggi Village has been successfully achieved through the strong application of local wisdom, encompassing values such as *mutual cooperation* (*gotong royong*), *deliberation* (*musyawarah*), and *social solidarity*. Various harmony models implemented in the village such as joint celebrations of religious holidays, the production of short films promoting tolerance, and the establishment of the FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony) have proven effective in fostering peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths.

Moreover, local wisdom reflected in traditions such as sadranan (communal ancestral commemoration) and jaga tonggo (neighborhood watch and mutual care) has served as a solid foundation for maintaining harmony and preventing potential social conflicts.

- a. For Village Government and Stakeholders: Nglinggi Village can serve as a model for other villages in developing harmony based on local wisdom. The village government should continue strengthening programs that uphold values of harmony and expand community participation in maintaining peace.
- b. For Researchers and Academics: This study is expected to contribute to the development of research on interreligious harmony rooted in culture and local wisdom.

Future researchers may explore more deeply the strategies for implementing harmony within broader social and cultural contexts.

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