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INTERPRETING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE QUR'AN THROUGH THEMATIC EXEGESIS: Insight for Contemporary Multicultural Societies

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Abstract: *This study examines the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an through a thematic interpretation approach and analyzes its implications in contemporary society. Religious tolerance is a crucial issue amid religious diversity, which is a global reality, including in Indonesia as a highly diverse country. However, there is still a gap in understanding how the Qur'an comprehensively views interfaith relations, which often leads to partial and contradictory interpretations. This study attempts to answer the following questions (1) How is the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an according to thematic interpretation studies? (2) What are the fundamental principles of religious tolerance contained in the Qur'an? (3) What are the implications of the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an for contemporary society? (4) How is the concept of religious tolerance practically implemented in the context of Indonesia as a multicultural country? This study uses a qualitative method with a library research approach, collecting data from primary sources in the form of tafsir books and the Qur'an, as well as secondary sources in the form of journals, books, and related scientific articles. Data analysis is carried out using content analysis and comparative techniques to compare the various views of exegetes. The results of this study are expected to contribute to a holistic and contextual understanding of religious tolerance according to the Qur'an, while offering practical solutions for realizing peaceful and mutually respectful religious life amid the plurality of Indonesian and global societies.*

Keywords: *Religious Tolerance; Qur'anic Exegesis; Thematic Interpretation; Interfaith Relations; Social Cohesion.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a country with religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity, faces great challenges in maintaining social harmony. This diversity, which is the nation's wealth, can potentially become a source of conflict if not managed properly (Aprilianto et al., 2025). As social beings, humans must be able to interact with others to fulfill their needs. In living a social life in society, a person will be faced with various groups that have various differences, including differences in culture and tradition, language and skin color, religion and beliefs.

Empirical data shows an alarming trend of increasing cases of intolerance in recent years. Based on a report by the SETARA Institute, there were 329 cases of violations of freedom of religion and belief (KBB) throughout 2024, a significant increase from 217 cases in 2023. Even more worrying, throughout 2023-2024, there were a total of 477 incidents and 731 acts of intolerance, indicating an escalation in the quantity and intensity of violations of religious freedom in Indonesia (Umam & Anam, 2025). These forms of intolerance include the rejection or cancellation of recommendations for the establishment of places of worship for minority groups, the dissolution of worship activities, the issuance of discriminatory regulations, and the neglect of acts of intolerance committed by mass groups (Fauzia et al., 2024).

Concrete cases illustrate the urgency of this issue. In May 2024, a rosary prayer by Catholic students at Pamulang University in South Tangerang was forcibly dispersed by a group of residents, resulting in one student being injured by a sharp weapon (Muhammad Iqbal, 2024). Even more tragically, in mid-2025, an 8-year-old elementary school student with the initials KB in Indragiri Hulu, Riau, died after allegedly being bullied and beaten by his older classmates because of religious differences. This case shows that belief-based violence has spread to children (Sonya Hellen Sinombor, 2025). The majority of Cilegon residents are Muslim. However, various religious issues have occurred in the city, including the vandalism of a building belonging to the HKBP congregation in the PCI (Pondok Cilegon Indah) housing complex in Cilegon, which was used for children's Sunday school on April 10th. The incident was triggered by the Easter celebration on Sunday, April 11th at 5:00 PM WIB. However, for approximately two years prior, Sunday school activities there had not been any problems (Saputra et al., 2022).

The dimension of radicalization among students is also a serious concern. A SETARA Institute survey revealed alarming findings. The number of actively intolerant students increased from 2.4 percent in 2016 to an even higher figure in the latest survey, with more than 56 percent of students agreeing with the implementation of Islamic law, and 83.3 percent believing Pancasila is not a permanent and replaceable state ideology. This situation is exacerbated by national political dynamics, particularly the presidential and legislative elections on February 14, 2024, and the simultaneous regional elections on November 27, 2024. Although identity politics is not used as extensively as in the 2014 and 2019 elections, the politicization of religion is still occurring in various regions (Labobar Kresbinol, 2025).

This socio-political context shows that religious intolerance in Indonesia is not merely a sporadic or incidental phenomenon, but rather a structural problem that requires a

comprehensive response based on a solid theological understanding. The Qur'an, as the main source of Islamic teachings and the holy book understood by the majority of Indonesians, has a strategic role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of religious communities. However, a partial, contextual, and often distorted understanding of the Qur'anic verses on religious tolerance has become one of the factors that has exacerbated the situation.

Building tolerance is crucial among religious communities in Indonesia to stop and reduce the phenomenon of intolerance. To overcome various conflicts, religious moderation must be implemented. The phenomena of intolerance, radicalism, and religious-based conflicts that occur in various regions demonstrate the importance of a deep understanding of the concept of religious tolerance. Universal relationships and principles between humans have been regulated in the Qur'an, including in the context of religious diversity. However, understanding of the Qur'anic verses on religious tolerance often suffers from biased interpretations, both extreme and overly liberal, thus obscuring the true meaning of Islamic teachings on tolerance (Husna, 2022).

Religious tolerance from an Islamic perspective does not mean mixing religious teachings, but rather respecting the right of every person to embrace and practice their religion positively in social life. This concept is highly relevant to the pluralistic conditions of Indonesian society. In a pluralistic society, this principle is crucial, where religious differences should not lead to hostility, but must be resolved through mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. Brotherhood in Islam is not only related to religious aspects, but also encompasses social responsibilities, such as maintaining peace, resolving conflicts, and helping each other in good deeds (Shohib et al., 2024).

Based on the above background, this study formulates several research questions as follows:

- 1) How is the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an according to thematic exegesis studies?
- 2) What are the fundamental principles of religious tolerance contained in the Qur'an?
- 3) What are the implications of the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an for contemporary social life? (4) How is the concept of religious tolerance practically implemented in the context of Indonesia as a multicultural country?

Research on religious tolerance in the Qur'an is important to provide a comprehensive and contextual understanding for Muslims in interacting with followers of other religions. This research not only identifies and analyzes the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an through a thematic interpretation approach, but also attempts to integrate the textual-contextual dimensions with practical applications in the lives of pluralistic Indonesian society. Therefore, this research aims to (1) Analyze the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an through a thematic interpretation approach (2) Identify the fundamental principles of religious tolerance contained in the Qur'an (3) Examine the implications of the concept of religious tolerance on social life in the contemporary era (4)

Formulate recommendations for the practical implementation of the concept of religious tolerance in the Indonesian context.

Literature studies on religious tolerance from the perspective of the Qur'an have developed with various approaches and emphases. An analysis of the existing literature reveals at least three main trends in previous studies. First, the trend of comparative studies of classical and contemporary interpretations that compare the interpretations of classical scholars; second, the trend of thematic interpretations (*maudhu'i*) that collect and analyze Qur'anic verses thematically to build a comprehensive understanding of the concept of tolerance; and third, the trend of applied and contextual studies that explore the relevance of the Qur'anic concept of tolerance in the context of the plurality of contemporary Indonesian society.

Several previous studies have examined the theme of religious tolerance from an Islamic perspective, including; A study entitled "The Relevance of Al-Qur'an Interpretation to Contemporary Social Issues in Indonesia: A Thematic Approach and the Contribution of Modern Islamic Thought" explores the relevance of Al-Qur'an interpretation to contemporary social issues in Indonesia through a thematic-contextual approach. By integrating the values of pluralism and social science, interpretation is positioned as a strategic instrument to address the challenges of justice, human rights, and social harmony. Despite facing the obstacle of conservatism, this approach is crucial in realizing a more inclusive, just, and adaptive multicultural society in the face of the dynamics of modernity (Hermanto et al., 2025).

The study on "Equality in Multicultural Societies from the Perspective of Izzat Darwazah's *Nuzūlī* Interpretation" shows that inclusive values are essential for creating harmony in the modern world by looking at the Prophet Muhammad's practices of tolerance in Mecca and Medina. This research provides society with guidance on how to better appreciate diversity and live together. By interpreting the thirteenth verse of Surah Al-Hujurat using a historical (*Nuzūlī*) approach, this study investigates the concept of equality in various societies. All humans have the same origins and rights; the only difference that distinguishes them is their level of piety (Hermanto et al., 2025). The study on "The Value of Religious Tolerance in the Qur'an: A Comparative Study of Classical and Contemporary Interpretations" examines the value of tolerance in the Qur'an through a comparative study of classical (Ath-Thabari, Ibn Kathir, Al-Qurthubi) and contemporary (Buya Hamka, Quraish Shihab) interpretations. This is done in response to the increasing cases of intolerance in Indonesia, with 217 incidents recorded in 2023. The aim is to revise the sacred text to make it relevant to today's world and offer an inclusive understanding as a strategic solution to strengthen harmony in Indonesia's multicultural society (Muhaemin, 2024).

Research by Lathifah Azzahra (2024) entitled "Tolerance of Cultural and Ethnic Diversity" discusses the various cultures that cause differences between ethnic groups. This makes minority ethnic groups vulnerable to discrimination. However, it does not discuss other issues such as the lack of cooperation, especially in the economic field (Muhaemin, 2024).

This study differs from previous studies, which usually focus on social issues or are limited to ethnic diversity. Interpretation is positioned not only as an object of historical text study, but also as a systematic strategic guide to overcoming religious harmony issues amid the dynamics of modern globalization. The main finding of this study lies in the use of thematic interpretation methodology, which has the ability to combine various verses of the Qur'an into a complete framework of solutions, going beyond simply comparing them with classical and contemporary eras or focusing on a single figure. This study specifically offers relevant applied insights for contemporary multicultural societies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a qualitative study with a *library research* approach that is descriptive-analytical in nature, using a thematic interpretation method (*maudhu'i*). The primary data sources consist of the Qur'an and selected tafsir books based on strict inclusion criteria, including temporal representation, methodology, credibility, and accessibility. Secondary data sources include scientific journals, books on exegesis methodology, research reports, and classical Arabic dictionaries for etymological analysis (Dr. Abdul Fattah Nasution, n.d.). Data collection was carried out in three stages: identification of verses related to tolerance and thematic exploration to track keywords such as *la ikraba*, *abl al-kitab*, *'adl*, *birr*, and *tasamuh*; documentation of the context of the verses, including *ashabun nuzul*, the period of revelation (Makkiyah/Madaniyah), and *munasabah*; and extraction of complete interpretations from tafsir books, including methodology, supporting arguments, and the mufassir's conclusions (Rokim & Triana, 2021).

The data was analyzed in four stages. First, thematic coding was carried out in stages. This began with initial coding of new ideas, grouped into categories such as "Principles of Tolerance" and "Interfaith Dialogue," and then finding the main themes that connected them all. To maintain consistency, the entire process was recorded in a code book. Second, interpretations from the classical and contemporary periods were compared to see how the concept of tolerance among exegetes changed and developed. Third, the results were verified by comparing at least three tafsir books, conducting contextual and linguistic analysis of the texts, and using the perspectives of Islamic theology, Qur'anic hermeneutics, and the sociology of religion. Fourth, the results of the analysis are linked to the issue of intolerance in Indonesia to determine the real consequences in the fields of education, public policy, religious discourse, and the media (Yam, 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Understanding the Scope of Religious Tolerance

Etymologically, tolerance comes from the Latin word "*tolerantia*," which means patience, endurance, and the ability to accept. In a religious context, religious tolerance can be defined as an attitude of respecting, allowing, and permitting beliefs, views, customs, and behaviors that are different or contrary to one's own beliefs (Muda & Tohar, 2020). The Indonesian Language Dictionary states that "tolerance" comes from the word "tolerant," which means

to be or act in a forgiving manner (respecting, allowing, permitting) towards beliefs (opinions, views, beliefs, customs, etc.) that are different from or contradict one's own beliefs. Tolerance also means the limit of tolerance for addition or reduction. Islam strongly encourages tolerance, mutual assistance, and a harmonious and dynamic life for all people, regardless of their religion, race, or language (Khoir & Anshory, 2023).

From an Islamic perspective, religious tolerance is known as "tasamuh," which means mutual respect and appreciation for differences. The concept of tasamuh in Islam is not only passive but also active, meaning not only refraining from actions that harm adherents of other religions, but also doing good to them in the context of social relations. Allowing the existence of different beliefs without discrimination is often passive because the main focus is the absence of physical conflict or violence. However, in a dynamic society, this passive attitude is often insufficient, so it needs to be transformed into pluralism (Khawash et al., 2024)

Unlike tolerance, which simply demands the "absence of disturbance," pluralism demands an active presence through an appreciation of diversity as a positive value and the recognition that each religion has its own path to truth. Religious plurality is an inevitable social reality in the global era, where cultural boundaries are increasingly fading and demand a collective awareness for coexistence. In Indonesian society, the dynamics of this diversity are managed through the principles of Pancasila, particularly the First Principle. The value of divinity serves as a moral foundation and unifier so that religious diversity does not become a source of division, but rather a force that maintains the integrity of the nation (Ismail et al., 2023)

For this spirit of pluralism to transcend mere ethical discourse, it must culminate in recognition. Recognition is a defining element that provides a formal and legal basis for one's religious identity; it transforms an attitude of respect (pluralism) into a legal mandate that guarantees the rights, existence, and equality of every religious group in the public sphere. Thus, the three form a unified whole: tolerance creates fundamental peace, pluralism fosters meaningful engagement, and recognition affirms justice for all citizens. In Indonesia, the implementation of the concept of recognition is a crucial bridge that transforms social ethics into constitutional rights. This recognition goes beyond mere respect, but is also manifested in legal policies and public services.

Exploring the Qur'anic Foundations for Diversity

There are several verses in the Qur'an that relate to religious tolerance and interfaith relations. The following are some of the main verses that establish the Islamic concept of religious tolerance:

1. Freedom of Religion (QS. Al-Baqarah: 256)

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۗ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

“There is no compulsion in (adhering to) religion (Islam), for indeed, the right path has become clear from the wrong path.” (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 256).

This verse is a fundamental principle in Islam regarding religious freedom. It affirms that the human right to religion is a fundamental right, and that faith must come from personal conviction without coercion or the use of violence to preach it. The path of truth is clearly distinguished from misguidance, so that humans have the freedom to choose according to their conscience. Faith in Allah is described as *'urwatil wuthqa*, which is a strong and unbroken rope. This provides stability for those who voluntarily decide to become Muslims (Wardani et al., 2021).

The interpretation of QS. 2:256 (*lā ikrāha fī al-dīn*) has given rise to lengthy debates among classical and modern scholars. Classical scholars such as Ibn Kathir argue that this verse has been abrogated by the verses on war, so that freedom of religion is considered to apply only in certain contexts. The legal implications are quite significant, as some classical scholars then developed arguments justifying legal sanctions for apostasy as a logical consequence of this abrogation (Katsir, 2008a). In contrast, modern exegetes such as al-Maraghi reject this claim of abrogation and assert that this verse is universal and permanent. They argue that freedom of religion is a fundamental theological principle in Islam that cannot be abrogated by any verse, and that the punishment for apostasy in classical fiqh reflects the political and social context of the past rather than the will of the Qur'an itself (Maraghi, 2006).

This study adopts an interpretive stance that favors a modern-contextualist approach, viewing this verse as a principle that remains valid and irrevocable. This choice is based on the consideration that this approach is more hermeneutically consistent, more in line with the maqasid of sharia, particularly the protection of reason and religion, and more relevant in responding to the challenges of religious life in contemporary, pluralistic Indonesia. This stance does not mean ignoring classical tradition, but rather critically placing it as part of the dynamics of ongoing interpretation.

2. Recognition of Diversity (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ

"O mankind! Indeed, We have created you from a male and a female, then We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous." (QS. Al-Hujurat [49]: 13)

A highly proportional instrumental-genealogical approach is demonstrated in Al-Tabari's interpretation of the concept of ta'aruf in QS. Al-Hujurat: 13. Al-Tabari divides people into nations and tribes, allowing for social and administrative identities, such as the determination of lineage, inheritance rights, and family structures, to maintain a stable social order. However, Al-Tabari explicitly demythologizes the power of tribes and states that recognition of origins is merely a tool of social organization, not a basis for claiming moral superiority or group pride. By emphasizing that true glory comes only from individual piety (atqakum), he reconstructs a social order that recognizes diversity

of identity without falling into racism or discrimination. This results in a balance between horizontal identity recognition and vertical spiritual authority (Al-Tabari, 2009)

The plurality of God's creation. In this verse, Allah SWT tells His creatures that they have differences so they can know each other. This shows that we must know each other because of our differences. Plurality is a series of lives planned by the Creator. One benefit of the plurality given by Allah SWT is that humans can be grateful when they are different from others and can accept those differences (Firdaus et al., 2025). Al-Qurtubi added that this verse teaches the principle of human equality. There is no superiority of one group over another based on ethnicity or social status. Existing differences should be a means of mutual understanding and recognition, not a means of demeaning one another. All humans share the same origins and equal status. Diversity is God's will and should be accepted and appreciated, a means of mutual understanding, not conflict. The sole criterion of nobility before God is piety. There is no place for discrimination in Islam (Al-Qurthubi, 2014).

3. The Command to Be Fair to All People (QS. Al-Mumtahanah: 8)

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

"Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and justly with those who have not fought you in religion and have not driven you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who deal justly." (QS. Al-Mumtahanah [60]: 8)

Islamic justice is universal and does not discriminate based on religion. Interfaith justice is a maqasidi principle that transcends the context of specific conflicts. This tension between interpretations shows that claims that Islam is "always tolerant" or, conversely, "always exclusive" are both irresponsible textual generalizations; it is more accurate to acknowledge that Islamic tradition contains normative gradations, from active tolerance to restrictions on loyalty that are responsive to relational and geopolitical conditions. As evidence of the human values upheld in Islam, Muslims are required to behave kindly and fairly towards anyone who does not harm them. Thus, these verses become an important foundation for the practice of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in a society composed of diverse people. It should be emphasized that religious differences are not a reason to eliminate justice, virtue, and human rights. This is the basis of Islam for supporting peaceful pluralism and coexistence (Khaliq et al., 2024).

Classical exegetes such as Ibn Kathir interpreted this verse restrictively, allowing acts of *birr* and *qisth* only in conditions of peace. This verse was revealed to correct the understanding of some Muslims who thought that they must be hostile to all non-Muslims without exception. Allah affirms that doing good and being fair to non-Muslims who do not oppose Islam is a recommended action, and that Allah even loves those who are fair (Katsir, 2008a). In the tafsir al-Maraghi, it is explained that Allah does not forbid you from doing good to people who do not fight your religion, do not expel you from your homes, and do not help to expel you from your homes. This is because there was an agreement between the Khuza'ah tribe and the Prophet Muhammad not

to fight or expel them from their homes. Therefore, Allah commanded His Messenger to do good to them (Al-Maraghi, 2006).

4. Prohibition Against Insulting the Deities of Other Peoples (QS. Al-An'am: 108)

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

"And do not revile those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they revile Allah out of ignorance." (QS. Al-An'am [6]: 108)

This verse also explicitly teaches Muslims to safeguard the sanctity of their religion and foster a sense of security and harmonious relationships between religious communities. A person's emotions are easily provoked if their religion and beliefs are insulted (Anam et al., 2023). Al-Qurthubi explains that this verse teaches the ethics of interfaith dialogue. Although Muslims believe that worshipping other than Allah is shirk, verbally abusing their deities in a harsh and unwise manner will only provoke a worse reaction (Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Anshori al-Qurthubi, 2010). This interpretation shows that Islam teaches a wise approach in preaching and interacting with followers of other religions. Insults and humiliation are not methods that are justified in Islam, even in the context of faith. Grammatically, the prohibition in this verse is based on an explicit *'illah* (ratio legis): the prohibition of reviling the deities of others is based not on the principle of the sanctity of the object being reviled, but on the reactive consequences it will cause, namely reviling Allah in return. This means that the argumentative structure of the verse is closer to consequentialist-contextual ethics than to universal deontology.

According to Tafsir al-Mishbah, this verse is addressed to Muslims and contains a prohibition against insulting the god of polytheists, regardless of the emotional situation in which they face disturbance or ignorance. If a person does not protect his soul with faith and piety, lust will control him, so that ugliness is seen as beautiful. On the other hand, if a person is faithful and pious, vice is considered very bad, and virtue is his decoration. This is God's rule that applies to all humans. To preserve their souls, human involvement depends on whether they succeed or not (Azizah & Hasyim, 2023). Normatively, the law of blasphemy in classical fiqh, which in certain schools of thought threatens severe punishment, has a different justification than this verse. In contemporary discussions, scholars such as Khaled Abou El Fadl and Abdullah Saeed argue that this verse, within the maqasid framework, actually supports the principle of religious freedom and discursive security for all communities, rather than being an instrument of unilateral restrictions on non-Muslims.

The most methodologically responsible conclusion is that this verse does not establish a universal ethical norm that stands alone, but rather contains two normative layers that must be distinguished: the first layer is contextual-strategic, namely the prohibition of verbal provocation that could exacerbate communal tensions in certain conditions; the second layer is ethical-discursive in nature, namely the principle that religious polemics must be conducted in a manner that does not demean the dignity of the interlocutor,

and it is only this second layer that has a claim to be generalized beyond the historical context of its revelation (Misbakhuddin, 2023).

5. "Lakum Dinukum Waliya Din" (QS. Al-Kafirun: 6)

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِي دِينِ

"To you your religion, and to me my religion." (QS. Al-Kafirun [109]: 6)

This is an example of Islam's maturity in managing plurality, with firm principles, a polite attitude, and active participation in social interactions. This is not an exclusive attitude that closes itself off, but also not an inclusive attitude that obscures identity (Astuti et al., 2025). This is the middle path of Islam (*wasathiyah*) in religion in a diverse society: maintaining the purity of faith while building a civilization together with all parts of society.

Ibn Kathir interprets this verse as an affirmation of the fundamental differences between Islam and other religions, as well as a recognition of everyone's right to embrace their beliefs. This verse does not mean religious relativism, but rather a recognition of the reality of diversity and a commitment not to impose beliefs (Katsir, 2008b). M. Quraish Shihab adds that this verse teaches a firm stance in faith but tolerance in social relations. Muslims must be firm in defending their faith in Allah without compromise, but still respect the rights of non-Muslims to embrace their religion, placing it within the framework of a more universal freedom of religious choice, so that it can be used as the foundation for functional religious pluralism (Indriani et al., 2024).

Principles of Religious Tolerance in the Qur'an

The principles of religious tolerance in the Qur'an are built on a foundation that balances firmness of faith and respect for humanity. These principles create a framework for peaceful coexistence in which Muslims can live side by side, work together for social and humanitarian good, and build a civilization together with other communities, without having to compromise their religious identity or fundamental beliefs, thereby creating a diverse yet harmonious society based on mutual respect and universal human dignity. The principle of religious tolerance in the Qur'an contains internal tensions that cannot be ignored (Prayitno & Ja'far, 2025).

Based on an analysis of the verses of the Qur'an and their interpretations, several fundamental principles of religious tolerance in Islam can be identified:

1. The Principle of Freedom of Religion

Every human being is born free. Freedom of religion means that everyone has the freedom to choose and adhere to their own religion and to fully practice the teachings of that religion. Islam gives its people the freedom to embrace any religion they want, without imposing their beliefs on others. Islam guarantees the freedom of every individual to choose and practice their religion (Manulang et al., 2024). The principle of "*la ikraha fi al-din*" (no compulsion in religion) is a strong foundation for religious freedom. This freedom includes the freedom to embrace or not embrace a religion, the

freedom to change religion according to one's beliefs, the freedom to practice worship according to one's religious teachings, and the freedom to preach religion wisely. This principle demonstrates that the faith desired by God is one born of awareness and conviction of the heart, not from coercion or external pressure. Coercion in religion will actually result in hypocrisy that contradicts the essence of faith (Efendi et al., 2025).

2. The Principle of Universal Justice

The Qur'an commands Muslims to be fair to all people regardless of religion, ethnicity, or race. Justice in Islam is universal and should not be influenced by personal or group sentiments. The main principle of Islam affirms that justice must be upheld for all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, social status, or other differences. Justice in Islam is absolute and not relative, meaning that the standard of justice does not depend on who is involved (Zahid et al., 2024). The principle of universal justice in the Qur'an is built on two complementary foundational verses, namely, Surah al-Nisa verse 135, which commands the enforcement of justice even when it is detrimental to oneself or one's family, while Surah al-Maidah verse 8 explicitly prohibits hatred towards a group from preventing the enforcement of justice. This study posits that "absolute justice" in the Qur'an refers to divine norms that function as a regulatory horizon as a standard that guides legal practice without ever being fully realized in any human institution (Ihsanniati et al., 2024).

Hatred or hostility should never be an excuse for injustice. In Islam, the principle of universal justice is evidence of the perfection of the teachings originating from God, the Most Just. Justice in Islam is not merely a philosophical idea; it is a value system that must be applied to all aspects of life, from personal to global. Islamic justice is unique because it is absolute, non-discriminatory, and applies to everyone, including those closest to a person. This demonstrates that Islam places justice as a primary value that should not be compromised by anything, including personal, group, or state interests (Islamy, 2022)

3. The Principle of Respect for Diversity

Religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity is the will of Allah (sunnatullah) that must be accepted as reality. The Qur'an teaches that differences are a blessing and should be a means for mutual understanding and cooperation. Respect for diversity is based on the Islamic belief that differences among humans are part of God's will and design (sunnatullah). In Islam, diversity is seen as a blessing that enriches human civilization rather than a threat or a problem that must be eliminated (Ananda et al., 2024). Diversity is not a threat to unity; on the contrary, it is part of human civilization. Human civilization is rich because of its diversity of cultures, languages, ethnicities, and thoughts, just as a garden is beautiful because of its diversity of flowers. The goal is to maintain identity without sacrificing exclusivity, to protect truth without selfishness, and to build unity without uniformity. The principles of *wasathiyyah* (moderation), *'adalah* (justice), and *rahmah* (compassion) are Islam's answer. These principles serve as the basis for managing diversity towards *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (Shohib et al., 2024)

4. Principles of Dialogue and Positive Interaction

Islam encourages Muslims to engage in dialogue and interact with followers of other religions in a good and wise manner. The Islamic approach to communicating and interacting with others, especially those of different beliefs, is through the principles of dialogue and positive interaction in constructive, polite, and truth-seeking ways that are oriented towards mutual goodness. In Islam, dialogue is not merely an exchange of information; it is an effort to gain mutual understanding, eliminate prejudice, and create a space for harmonious coexistence (Ridha et al., 2024).

Dialogue in Islam must be based on respect for the other party, the use of logical and polite arguments, the goal of seeking truth, not just winning the debate, and the willingness to listen to and understand the views of others. In Islam, the principles of dialogue and positive interaction are a manifestation of rahmatan lil 'alamin, or mercy for all creation. Dialogue is worship when done with the right intention and in accordance with Islamic law. Human diversity that complements one another is emphasized in the Qur'an through Surah al-Ruum verse 22. Differences in language and skin color are signs of divine greatness. Theologically, diversity is elevated from a sociological fact to ontological evidence of God's will. Diversity is recognized and even celebrated as divine will, but it is not transformed into epistemic relativism that equates all claims to truth (Islamy, 2022)

Demarcation of Tolerance: Measuring Parameters and Limitations in Public Space

Religious tolerance is an important principle in a pluralistic society that has clear boundaries so as not to cause misunderstandings. In terms of faith and worship, tolerance does not mean mixing or equating all religions, but rather respecting the right of every religious adherent to believe in the truth of their religion and worship according to their beliefs without being forced to follow the rituals of other religions. Tolerance is highly recommended in social life, such as in neighborly relations, business, cooperation in good deeds, and mutual assistance in humanitarian affairs without discrimination. However, tolerance has clear limits when it comes to matters that can undermine faith, such as recognizing the truth of all religions simultaneously (religious relativism), participating in religious rituals that contradict one's own beliefs, or imposing one's beliefs on others.

The principle of true tolerance is to maintain a balance between firmness in upholding one's own religious principles and respect for the rights of others to embrace and practice their religion, as long as it does not disturb public order and the basic rights of others. The limits of religious tolerance in Islam are not arbitrary, but are derived from concrete legal texts and traditions. The Qur'an sets limits that distinguish between permissible peaceful relations and loyalty to actively hostile parties and affirms theological non-intervention without affirming soteriological equality (Prayitno & Ja'far, 2025).

In classical fiqh, these boundaries are operationalized through variously interpreted doctrines: The Shafi'i school of thought combines texts and reason as the foundation of religious tolerance. By balancing revelation and social context, it teaches that differences of opinion are an intellectual necessity. This attitude encourages people to be steadfast in their

faith while remaining inclusive, respecting diversity, and prioritizing human welfare amid the dynamics of global society. The Hanafi school, known for its principle of rationality (*ahl al- ra'yi*), provides flexibility in interpreting sharia texts, allowing for broader discussion between people from different cultures. The Maliki school greatly contributed to the principle of moderation through the use of the *maslahah al-mursalah* rule and consideration of the practices of the Medina community, which always prioritized benefit. The Hanbali school, on the other hand, has a tolerant character, as demonstrated by the application of the principle of *al-'udhr bi al-jabl* (forgiving those who do not know the law) and respect for the opinions of other fuqaha. This school is often considered a very textual school (Zahra et al., 2025).

Implications of the Concept of Religious Tolerance in Social Life

1. Implications in Social Life

The concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an has very fundamental implications for building a harmonious and peaceful social life. In daily interactions, the principle of tolerance encourages the creation of mutual respect and appreciation among religious communities regardless of differences in belief. This is manifested in various ways, such as greeting each other with a friendly greeting, respecting each other's worship times by not making disturbing noises, and participating in social activities together (Yohana, 2024). Tolerance also teaches non-discrimination in social interactions, where every individual has the same right to have their human dignity respected regardless of their religion. Religious tolerance also creates space for sincere and meaningful interfaith friendships. A tolerant society does not view religious differences as a barrier to close social relationships, but rather as a wealth that broadens one's horizons and life experiences (Moch Zainal Arifin Hasan & Muhammad Rizal Ansori, 2024).

In the context of neighborliness, religious tolerance manifests itself in a spirit of mutual cooperation, helping each other in times of difficulty, sharing happiness in celebrations, and mourning together in times of tragedy, regardless of religious background. When neighbors of different religions experience difficulties, Muslims are taught to extend a helping hand as a manifestation of universal humanity. Conversely, in moments of happiness such as weddings or childbirth, sharing joy with neighbors of different religions is a concrete form of tolerance taught by the Qur'an.

2. Implications in the Field of Education

In the world of education, the concept of religious tolerance plays a central role in shaping the character of the younger generation to be inclusive and respectful of diversity. Educational institutions, from elementary to university level, are strategic places to instill the values of tolerance through a comprehensively designed curriculum. Religious education not only teaches about one's own beliefs, but also provides an objective understanding of other religions, their historical development, their basic teachings, and their contributions to human civilization. This approach helps students understand that every religion has noble values that can be respected, even if they do not believe in them (Yohana, 2024).

Implementing tolerance in education also includes creating an inclusive school environment, where students from diverse religious backgrounds feel accepted and valued. Extracurricular activities such as interfaith dialogue, visits to different places of worship, joint social activities, and collaborative multicultural projects can strengthen understanding and direct experience of tolerance (Najmi, 2023). Teachers and educators have a crucial role as role models in displaying tolerant, impartial, and fair attitudes towards all students regardless of their religion. Dialogical and participatory learning methods, rather than indoctrinative ones, enable students to develop critical thinking and the ability to appreciate different perspectives (Irwansyah et al., 2024).

3. Implications in Religious Life

The implications of religious tolerance in social life can be analyzed more systematically through interconnected levels. Religious tolerance shapes the quality of interpersonal relationships and daily worship practices. Religious orientation shows that individuals with intrinsic religiosity tend to be more tolerant of differences than those who are extrinsically-instrumental in their religion. At the institutional level, educational institutions and civil society organizations function as critical mediators, confirming that educational curricula that integrate multicultural perspectives significantly reduce interreligious prejudice. At the state level, restrictions on religious freedom by the state correlate with increased social conflict and decreased economic growth, reinforcing the argument that religious tolerance is not merely a moral value, but a structural prerequisite for social stability and collective prosperity.

Mutual respect creates a dynamic in which every religious adherent can worship solemnly and peacefully without interference or intimidation from other groups. The protection of places of worship is a logical consequence of the principle of tolerance, whereby mosques, churches, temples, monasteries, and other places of worship are kept safe and their sanctity respected by the whole community. In the context of da'wah, tolerance teaches us to convey Islamic teachings with wisdom, sound arguments, and exemplary behavior, not through coercion or intimidation. A polite method of da'wah that respects others' freedom of choice is actually more effective and in line with the guidance of the Qur'an (Sukirno, 2025)

4. Implications for National and State Life

In the context of national and state life, religious tolerance is a fundamental pillar for the integrity and stability of a pluralistic country like Indonesia. The principle of tolerance supports the implementation of Pancasila, particularly the first principle, "Belief in One God," which recognizes religious diversity, and the third principle, "Unity in Diversity," which emphasizes unity in diversity (Islamy, 2022).

Religious tolerance ensures that all citizens, regardless of their religion, have the same rights and obligations before the law, receive state protection, and have equal opportunities to participate in national development. This creates a sense of shared ownership of the nation and state, where each religious group feels that it is an integral part of the national identity (Rizal & Kharis, 2022). In the political sphere, religious

tolerance requires a clear separation between religious affairs and political power, where religion is not used as a tool to gain or maintain power. Responsible politicians and political parties will avoid using issues of ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA), including religion, for political mobilization or to attack their political opponents. Public policy must be formulated based on national interests and justice for all citizens, not just accommodating the interests of certain religious groups. The country's legal system must be able to protect religious freedom while preventing the misuse of religion for actions that harm others or threaten public order. State institutions, from the executive, legislative, to the judiciary, have a responsibility to uphold the principle of tolerance and take firm action against any form of intolerance, discrimination, or violence based on religion (Akmal et al., 2024).

5. Implications for Economic Life

Religious tolerance has a significant impact on the economic development of society by creating a conducive and inclusive business climate. In economic activities, the principle of tolerance encourages the creation of mutually beneficial interfaith business partnerships, where trust and professionalism are prioritized over religious similarities. Muslim entrepreneurs can partner with non-Muslim entrepreneurs in various forms of business, as long as they do not violate Sharia principles such as usury, gharar, or maysir (Lathif & Aminulloh, 2025). This economic cooperation is not only materially beneficial, but also strengthens social ties and reduces prejudice between religious groups. When shared economic interests are formed, resistance to religious-based conflicts will increase because such conflicts will harm all parties involved. Furthermore, religious tolerance opens up wider access to markets and economic resources. Companies that apply the principle of non-discrimination in employee recruitment and promotion will obtain the best workers from various backgrounds, thereby increasing productivity and innovation (Claudia et al., 2025).

At the community level, economic empowerment programs involving various religious groups, such as savings and loan cooperatives, joint entrepreneurship training, or local product development, can improve the overall welfare of the community. Tolerance also creates social stability, which is a prerequisite for investment and long-term economic growth. Investors, both domestic and foreign, tend to avoid areas prone to religious conflict due to high security risks and uncertainty. Conversely, areas known for tolerance and harmony will attract more investment, create jobs, and improve community welfare (Aini et al., 2025).

6. Implications for Conflict Resolution

The concept of religious tolerance provides an effective framework for the prevention and resolution of religious-based conflicts. In the prevention stage, tolerance encourages the development of early warning systems through regular interfaith dialogue, the establishment of interfaith communication forums, and the involvement of religious leaders in the mediation process from the outset of potential conflicts. A case study of post-conflict reconciliation in Papua, for example. The modern history of Papua after 1998 has been marked by considerable political uncertainty as a result of

Indonesia's transition to democracy. This includes the destruction of cultural values caused by rapid social transition, demographic dominance and economic imbalance among migrants, welfare gaps between groups, and the neglect of the basic rights of the indigenous Papuan people. After 2001, local government administration and the relationship between the central government and Papua changed significantly. With Special Autonomy, the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP) was formed in 2005 to guarantee human rights in Papua. Conditions in Papua improved, especially in terms of religious tolerance and moderation. Jayapura is a city that exemplifies tolerance in Papua.

In strengthening peace, religious leaders and communities do not discriminate based on race, skin color, ethnicity, or religion. A sense of brotherhood has enhanced the principle of solidarity, resulting in harmony and unity. As a result, Papua has become more peaceful and tolerant. Relations between migrant communities and indigenous Papuans changed due to the 1998–2001 conflict. After 2001, more efforts were made by Muslim and non-Muslim groups to achieve peace in Papua. Interfaith dialogue, socialization and religious moderation seminars, and an open attitude towards all religions and groups in Papuan society were among the actions taken (Al Hakim & Abdurahman, 2023). This approach allows for early identification of sensitive issues and handling them before they escalate into open conflict. When conflict has occurred, the principle of tolerance emphasizes resolution through dialogue, deliberation, and reconciliation, rather than through violence or coercion. A restorative approach that emphasizes restoring relationships and justice for all parties is preferred over a retributive approach that focuses only on punishment (Pabbajah & Prasajo, 2020).

In the context of post-conflict reconciliation, interfaith leaders play a crucial role in rebuilding trust between damaged groups. Reconciliation programs can include dialogue meetings between victims and perpetrators, joint ceremonies to commemorate victims and commit to peace, and joint development projects involving various religious groups. An inclusive and balanced historical narrative needs to be developed to avoid victimizing one group and demonizing another. Peace education in schools and religious institutions is a long-term investment to prevent the recurrence of conflict in the future. Transitional justice that prosecutes serious violations but still leaves room for forgiveness and reconciliation can help communities move forward without forgetting the important lessons of the past.

7. Implications in the Media and Public Space

The mass media and public space have a strategic role in shaping public perceptions of religious tolerance. The implementation of tolerance in the media includes balanced, accurate, and responsible reporting on religious issues, avoiding sensationalism that can trigger conflict, and providing fair space for all voices from various religious groups (Lona et al., 2025). Journalists and editors have an ethical responsibility not to produce or disseminate hate speech, negative stereotypes, or information that defames certain religious groups. The media can also play a positive role by producing content that promotes dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation among religious communities, such as documentaries about the harmonious life of multireligious

communities, talk shows featuring religious leaders from different faiths discussing common issues, or coverage of community-based peace initiatives.

In the digital and social media era, the challenge of spreading intolerant content has become increasingly complex due to its speed and wide reach. Social media platforms need to develop effective moderation mechanisms to identify and remove content that contains hate speech, hoaxes about certain religions, or extremist propaganda, while still respecting freedom of expression (Masrur et al., 2025). Digital literacy is an important skill that people must have in order to distinguish valid information from hoaxes, recognize extremist propaganda, and not be easily provoked by content designed to divide. Public spaces, both physical and virtual, must be maintained as arenas where various groups can interact, exchange ideas, and build mutual understanding without the domination or marginalization of certain groups.

8. Implications for Family Life

The family, as the smallest unit of society, plays a fundamental role in instilling values of tolerance in the next generation. The implementation of tolerance in family life begins with parenting patterns that teach children to respect differences, not to look down on others because of their different religions, and to see diversity as a treasure rather than a threat (Purwandari, 2024). Parents are the first and foremost role models in demonstrating tolerance through their daily words and actions. When parents show kindness and respect to neighbors or friends of different religions, children will naturally internalize these values. Stories or fairy tales that contain messages of tolerance and interfaith friendship can be used as fun learning media for children. In families whose members embrace different religions (interfaith marriages or conversion of one family member), religious tolerance is tested more intensely but also provides an opportunity to show that family love can transcend differences in belief (Hasibuan, 2023).

The Qur'an itself teaches us to remain devoted to our parents even if they are polytheists, as long as they do not force us to commit shirk (QS. Luqman: 15). This principle shows that family and human relationships should not be severed simply because of religious differences. Families that successfully manage religious differences wisely can be a real example that tolerance is not just a theoretical concept but a practice that can be lived out. Open communication, mutual respect for each other's time and worship rituals, and a focus on universal human values that serve as common ground can maintain harmony in pluralistic families (Podungge, 2024).

Religious tolerance is not merely a strategy to avoid conflict, but a foundation for building a civilization that respects the dignity of every human being, celebrates diversity as a gift, and works together for the common good. In the context of Indonesia's diverse , the application of the concept of religious tolerance rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and enriched with local Nusantara wisdom is key to realizing the nation's vision of a just, prosperous, and dignified society.

Implementation of the Concept of Religious Tolerance in Indonesia

Indonesia has many extraordinary ethnic groups, religions, and cultures. Indonesia has more than 270 million people from various ethnic groups and six officially recognized religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. However, there are also opportunities and challenges in managing diversity (Az-Zahra & Silbi, 2024). The implementation of religious tolerance in Indonesia can be analyzed through four interacting structural domains. At the state level, Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution formally accommodate religious pluralism. As the foundation of the state, Pancasila, especially the first principle of "Belief in One God," recognizes the existence of religion in the life of the nation and state. However, religious tolerance still faces many challenges in Indonesia (Islamy, 2022). At the community level, organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah play a critical mediating role; both organizations have developed roles in upholding religious moderation to avoid intolerance in daily life. At the educational level, research shows that Islamic boarding schools with a religious moderation curriculum produce alumni with higher tolerance indices than institutions without such a curriculum (Shella Ananda Putri, Risky Dwi Ananda, Munajatun Nasih, Dirham Nazwa, 2025).

Education plays a crucial role in instilling values of tolerance, especially in religious education curricula, which need to be enriched with material on religious tolerance based on authentic Islamic sources. Students need to understand that Islam teaches respect for differences. Interfaith dialogue programs in schools and universities can help the younger generation understand other religions correctly and build interfaith friendships from an early age (Irwansyah et al., 2024). The role of religious leaders and scholars is important in realizing religious tolerance. Ulama need to convey contextual and non-literal interpretations of Qur'anic verses, especially those that are often misunderstood to justify intolerance. They need to set an example in interacting with followers of other religions, showing that strong faith is not incompatible with tolerance (Samuel & Tumonglo, 2023).

The government has a responsibility to protect the rights of every citizen to embrace and practice their religion in accordance with the constitution, without discrimination. The government needs to have an effective *early warning system* and conflict resolution mechanism to prevent and resolve religious-based conflicts. Law enforcement must be fair and non-discriminatory, both in cases of intolerance and blasphemy (Wafa, 2024). In the digital age, media and technology play an important role. The public needs to be equipped with media literacy skills to be able to distinguish between true information and hoaxes, especially those related to religious issues. There needs to be an organized effort to spread narratives of tolerance on social media as a counterbalance to content that spreads hatred (Masrur et al., 2025).

Challenges in Implementing Religious Tolerance

A literal and non-contextual understanding of religion often hinders tolerance. Some groups understand verses from the Qur'an textually without considering the context in which the verses were revealed and the objectives of Sharia law. Although the concept of religious tolerance in the Qur'an provides a strong normative foundation, its

implementation in society faces various complex challenges that need to be understood and addressed comprehensively. The use of religious issues for political gain often sharpens differences and creates polarization that threatens social harmony (Emmanulle et al., 2025)

The challenges of implementing religious tolerance in Indonesia can be mapped through five mutually reinforcing analytical dimensions. In the ideological dimension, the development of an exclusive scripturalist interpretation that claims the authority of the Qur'an to justify intolerance is a fundamental challenge; a survey by PPIM UIN Jakarta (2021) found that 37% of Indonesian Muslim students showed intolerant tendencies towards religious minorities, indicating the penetration of exclusive ideology into educated segments. On the political dimension, the instrumentalization of religious identity in electoral competition, as documented in the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, shows that intolerance is often artificially produced by opportunistic political actors. In the socio-economic dimension, it confirms that economic inequality based on group identity is a significant predictor of inter-religious conflict. In the cultural dimension, *local* traditions of tolerance such as *pela gandong* in Maluku demonstrate the capacity of local wisdom as a resource for reconciliation that has not been optimized in policy.

The politicization of religion exploits religious sentiment for mass mobilization or the delegitimization of political opponents, which ultimately obscures the essence of religious teachings on peace and justice. This phenomenon not only damages the social order but also distorts the public's understanding of tolerance, where religion, which should be a source of peace, is instead used as a tool to divide and gain power (Yunus et al., 2023). Economic and social inequality often exacerbates interfaith relations and becomes fertile ground for religious conflict. Groups that feel economically marginalized are easily mobilized by religious issues because of the frustration and injustice they experience (Lathif & Aminulloh, 2025). This condition is exacerbated by competition for limited resources, disparities in access to education and employment, and unequal distribution of welfare. When religious identity meets economic dissatisfaction, the resulting conflict tends to be more intense and difficult to resolve, as material and spiritual dimensions become intertwined into one complex issue. The influence of religious ideas from abroad, both moderate and extreme, affects the dynamics of religious tolerance in Indonesia and poses its own challenges. The globalization of information through social media and the internet facilitates the entry of various religious interpretations without adequate filters.

There needs to be filtering and contextualization of transnational religious thought so that it is in line with the characteristics of Islam Nusantara, which is known for being tolerant and moderate. Religious thought that does not take into account the local context can cause friction with the traditions of diversity that have long been rooted in Indonesian society, which values differences and promotes dialogue (Fauzia et al., 2024). On the other hand, Indonesia has a wealth of local values that support tolerance, such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and tolerance, which have been the identity of the nation for centuries. These values need to be revitalized and integrated with an understanding of tolerance in Islam to strengthen the foundations of a harmonious national life (Nisa, 2026).

Local wisdom such as the philosophy of "unity in diversity," the concept of "tepo seliro" in Javanese culture, "pela gandong" in Maluku, and various other local traditions are actually in line with the principles of tolerance in the Qur'an. The exploration and integration of these local values can be an effective strategy in promoting tolerance that is not only normative-theological in nature, but also rooted in the historical and cultural experiences of the community (Japar et al., 2020). The family is the first and most fundamental institution in tolerance education that will shape children's character in the future (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). Parents need to instill an attitude of respect for differences in their children from an early age through habit formation, role modeling, and open dialogue about diversity.

Tolerance education in the family environment includes introducing religious, cultural, and ethnic differences as something natural and positive, not as a threat. Children who grow up in a family environment that respects differences will find it easier to accept and interact positively with people from different backgrounds when they grow up. This inclusive parenting style needs to be supported by setting real examples, such as befriending neighbors of different religions, attending interfaith social events, and avoiding derogatory remarks about other groups (Hasibuan, 2023). Strengthening tolerance requires synergistic cooperation between the government, religious leaders, academics, civil society organizations, and the mass media. Each party has a complementary strategic role in building a strong ecosystem of tolerance (Daymond et al., 2023). The government is responsible for creating regulations that protect religious freedom and enforcing laws against acts of intolerance.

Religious leaders serve as moral role models who provide moderate and inclusive religious understanding to their followers (Thoha et al., 2025). Academics contribute through research, critical studies, and the provision of empirical data on the dynamics of tolerance. Civil society organizations can serve as bridges between different groups and advocate for the rights of minorities. Meanwhile, the mass media has great power in shaping public opinion and must be responsible in reporting religious issues in a balanced manner, avoiding sensationalism, and not provoking conflict. Finally, inclusive and equitable economic empowerment can reduce the potential for religious-based conflict by addressing the structural root causes that often trigger tensions. Economic empowerment programs can be a means of building positive interactions between religious communities through interfaith cooperatives, business partnership programs, joint skills training, and community-based creative economic development (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024; Tao, 2022). Equitable economic empowerment also creates a more equitable distribution of welfare, reduces social jealousy, and gives equal hope to all citizens regardless of their religion. Thus, tolerance is not only a normative discourse, but is implemented in everyday life through mutually beneficial socio-economic interactions.

CONCLUSION

This research asserts that religious tolerance in the Qur'an is not merely a pragmatic strategy for managing diversity, but a profound theological principle rooted in divine revelation. The study's primary original contribution lies in its intellectual rigor in

distinguishing between descriptive pluralism acknowledged as a divine decree inherent in the human condition and normative-soteriological pluralism, which represents a theological boundary that must be recognized rather than obscured for apologetic purposes. By reaffirming established foundations such as the non-coercive principle (*lā ikrāha fī al-dīn*) and the epistemology of mutual recognition (*ta'āruf*), this study provides an authentic framework for mapping the parameters of tolerance without compromising the integrity of theological identity.

Methodologically, this study introduces a three-tiered implementation framework—micro, meso, and macro as a novel analytical structure to evaluate the operationalization of Qur'anic values within the Indonesian context. Five fundamental principles are identified, ranging from religious freedom to constructive interfaith dialogue, all of which necessitate a critical acknowledgment of the tensions between sacred textual ideals and historical jurisprudential constructions. This framework transcends traditional normative-textual approaches, offering a more coherent mechanism for evaluating how Qur'anic imperatives function effectively within a pluralistic and complex public sphere.

The implications of these findings span multiple dimensions, from inclusive citizenship in political life to the design of accessible public spaces for all faith communities. Practical implementation requires a multidimensional strategy, including the revitalization of the role of religious authorities, the institutional strengthening of bodies such as the FKUB, and the strategic use of digital technology to disseminate counter-narratives against radicalism. In conclusion, the Qur'an serves as a comprehensive and robust conceptual framework that addresses contemporary societal challenges, positioning tolerance as a fundamental solution for social integration and the protection of the universal right to freedom of belief.

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