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Tasamuh Religion: Study on Simpul Iman Community (SIM-C)

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Abstract: Simpul Iman Community is a forum for interfaith theological dialogue between students of Sanata Dharma University, Duta Wacana Christian University, and Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta. This organization was born as a form of maintaining tolerance and the teachings of compassion from every religion. The purpose of this research is to find out how the forms of interreligious communication that occur in SIM C. This study uses a qualitative approach with an observational method that observes how members of the SIM C organization engage in dialogue. The results of this study indicate that all activities are carried out with the awareness that all human beings can live together based on tolerance and compassion. The content and method of dialogue are not only about theological debates but also about how implementing the teachings and values of divinity in each religion affects life in society. The way SIM C dialogue members do not offend one another. They dialogue tolerantly and do not touch the sensitive side of each religion. It is hoped that this research can be a reflection to create spaces for dialogue between faiths to create harmony in the nation's life.

Keywords: SIM C, Interfaith Communication, Tasamuh
A. Introduction

Currently, plurality (especially religion) is increasingly becoming the identity of the Indonesian nation. Among Indonesian clergymen, religious pluralism is responded to and interpreted differently (pros and cons) (Zainuddin, 2010). Pluralism is not an understanding that recognizes that all religions are equally true but a reality that must be accepted, that humans live together culturally and religiously in diversity. Inclusive and pluralist theology is developed to support interfaith dialogue efforts (Fatonah, 2014). Pluralism should give birth to tolerance by recognizing the diversity that exists in Indonesia (Ghazali, 2016).

Many inter-religious conflicts occur both on a national and international scale. In the international world, one of them is the conflict between Hinduism and Islam that occurred in India. This conflict initially occurred because of the insult to the prophet Muhammad and anti-Islam by a Hindu politician named Nupur Sharma. The conflict heated up when two Muslims beheaded a Hindu tailor who supported this statement (Indonesia, nd). One of the conflicts between religions on a national scale is the conflict that occurred in Tolikara, where violence and destruction by Christians occurred during the Eid al-Fitr (Ginanjar, nd). Based on the many national and international conflicts, the important role of inter-religious dialogue is needed. Dialogue is needed to share knowledge and reduce misunderstandings due to stereotypes built by each religion towards other religions.

Through inter-religious dialogue, it is hoped that there will be a shared awareness to create brotherhood based on the spirit of universal religious truth, mutual respect, respect, openness, willingness to listen to other religions, and fully recognizing these differences. Inter-religious dialogue can lead to understanding and enlightenment of the people in a place of harmony (Irfan, 2020). Dialogue is a process of interpersonal communication in which they exchange ideas about their culture and values (Baqir & et al., 2011). Dialogue is a process by which individuals and groups learn to get rid of fear and distrust and develop new relationships based on mutual trust. Dialogue aims to understand each other and bridge the gap of misunderstanding (Anwar, 2018).

The presence of reforms that opened up the space for plurality cannot be separated from the role of students at that time. Students are known as agents who will bring about big changes in the future, both changes on a local, national, or even global scale. “Students as agents of change, agents of intellectuals, and agents of social control” certainly have an important role in maintaining this plurality so that it continues to bring peace to society. Students use various ways to maintain pluralism, such as conducting socialization regarding harmony between communities to form organizations that breathe pluralism (Yunus, 2014).

An organization that breathes pluralism is certainly inseparable from the several aspects it brings to dialogue. There is culture as well as values, norms, identities, and also language that is also brought along. When meeting with other groups, these values are also brought, which ultimately gives birth to the tolerance of cultural acculturation. It is important to communicate and respect these values so that integration continues between groups of different religions or cultures. Instead of disintegration because of the wrong way of communicating. Not a few organizations, communities, or groups have been established as a result of dialogue, one of which is an organization or community resulting from dialogue between campuses of different religions, namely UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Duta Wacana Christian University and
Sanata Dharma University, which gave birth to the Simpul Iman Community (SIM-C). This community is a forum for theological dialogue that contains Christian, Catholic, and Islamic students with a spirit of openness and the birth of human values among students as well as appreciation and respect for plurality, especially religion (Diki, 2020).

One of the previous studies discussing religious communication accommodated in organizations is Diki Ahmad's work entitled "Students and Interreligious Relations (Study of the Yogyakarta Community Faith Knots)," *Religion: Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol 16, No 2, 2020. The results of this study show how the SIM-C structure, activities, and forms of cooperation have been carried out to create peace in religious life for students of different religions in Yogyakarta. This study focused on the form of SIM-C communication to maintain and establish harmony between students and other religions.

SIM-C is a normal student extra organization that is in demand by students with a background in the study of religions and theology. This circumstance becomes indispensable because, after all, a background student is very closely related to being a character of religion in society to be able to direct its people to harmony. The presence of SIM-C is interesting to discuss. One of the things about SIM-C discussed in this paper is how awareness, content, and ways of dialogue with the SIM-C create an attitude of tolerance towards others.

**Tasamuh in Diversity**

*Tasámuh* is tolerant and willing to respect all the facts of difference and diversity. Both in thought, belief, social society, ethnicity, nation, religion, cultural traditions and so on (Rosyidi, 2019). Tolerance means an attitude that respects differences, does not force our will, and feels self-righteous. Values govern how we behave in everyday life, especially in religious life and socializing. We must interpret tolerance as a pattern of attitude as being tolerant and open to all groups as long as they can be brothers to others. It is no longer time to be compartmentalized in the frozen group, let alone religion. Thus, *tasámuh* (tolerance) means an attitude to create harmony in life as fellow human beings. It is an attitude to build harmony among God's creatures on earth and to create civilized human civilization (Kristeva, 2014).

The key to *tasamuh* tolerance is to create peace and harmony. Choosing to uphold the values of *tasamuh* tolerance and rejecting extremism and liberalism in religion is the key to balance in maintaining civilization and creating peace (Nurrohmah et al., 2022). Thus in harmony, there is a reciprocal relationship with the principle of mutuality, mutual acceptance of differences without weakening each other, mutual trust in the honesty of others, mutual respect for self and other people's beliefs, mutual respect for other people's worship, and giving each other meaning for togetherness (Rosyidi, 2019). In the concept of *tasamuh*, there are values of sincerity, mutual understanding, honesty, cooperation, mutual respect, happiness, togetherness, and respecting differences (Maulana & Yenuri, 2022).

Tolerance in the context of religion and belief does not mean compromising faith. Acknowledging other people's beliefs does not mean recognizing heresy and falsehood as truth (Aulia, 2023). In relation to religious tolerance, Allah SWT says:
“To you is your religion, and to me, my religion” (QS. Al-Kafirun: 6).

"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, then once in a while it will not be accepted (the religion) from him, and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter." (QS. Ali Imran: 85).

The concept of tasamuh has been stated in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13:

"O mankind, verily We have created you from a male and a female. Then We made you nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is the most pious. Verily, Allah is all-knowing, all-observant."

In the interpretation of Ath-Thabari, the phrase khalaqnakum min zakarin wa untsa means that Allah created humans through water that comes out of men and women, or in other languages, comes out of water that radiates, comes from the backbone (shulb) and breastbone, to create humans who develop into syu'ub and qaba'il. Concurrently, Ibn 'Asyur interpreted that Allah creates human that consists of syu'ub and qaba'il, namely lita'arafu, knowing each other as well as being a form of harmonization in social life and realizing that these groups come from the same vessel, namely min zakarin wa untsa. Ibn 'Asyur also assessed that there is great wisdom behind getting to know each other to strengthen bonds of brotherhood and mutual respect and create harmonious relationships among people. This verse also serves as a warning to humans not to spark divisions that can negatively impact social life. Meanwhile, the axis of disunity in a pluralistic society is as stated by Allah in surah Al-Hujurat in the previous verse, namely verse 11, which contains ridicule, insults, ridicule, and so on (Ath-Thabari, 2007).

So, the concept of tasamuh and pluralism in religion must be understood as a bond in civility. Even according to Amir Hussain, pluralism is a must for the safety of mankind (Hussain, 2003) as Islam brings the role of rahmatan lil 'alamin that should be felt by everyone. Islam must give birth to peace not only for Muslims but also for fellow creatures (Ma'arif, 2009). The attitude of tasamuh and pluralism in responding to differences on earth must be echoed because both are teachings of the Qur'an to foster the values of unity and mutual respect and create harmony between religions, cultures, ethnicities, and other diversity.

To develop an attitude of tasamuh tolerance, one must first recognize one's own ability to manage and respond to differences that occur in the closest environment. Tolerance begins with building togetherness and harmony and being aware of differences. Thus, it may raise a sense of affection and mutual understanding, and the peak is tolerance (Sholeh, 2014). From this tolerant attitude, the concept of universal brotherhood (ukhuwwah) was born. Includes
ukhuwwah Islamiyyah (Islamic brotherhood), ukhuwwah wathaniyyah (national brotherhood), ukhuwwah basyariyyah or insâniyyah (human brotherhood), and universal brotherhood to create a harmony of life on this earth.

The ultimate goal is awareness of pluralism or diversity, which complement each other and do not lead to divisions (Mansur, 2012).

Tasamuh religion is an inner strength that constructs the mind, heart, and individual behavior. An open mind and behavior create a harmonious relational relationship between religious communities. Some understandings that need to be instilled to create religious tolerance include the view that all religions have values both vertically and horizontally. This means that every religion has values and principles in social life. Pluralism does not merge one religion with another (Ghazali, 2016). Doing dialectics between people can create a good relationship in the future. It elaborates on meaningful values in various religions, which has implications for the ownership of “religion,” which belongs to all people. It also raises agree in disagreement (agreement in differences), the view that every religion has its own truth value. Everyone who believes in their religion respects the choices of others in believing in their chosen religion and does not corner other individuals in their choice of religion (Nizar, 2021).

SIM-C (Simpul Iman Community) is a forum for interfaith theological dialogue formed from university students whose members are students from the Wedabhakti Faculty of Theology, Sanata Dharma University, Duta Wacana Christian University Faculty of Theology and Ushuluddin Faculty, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta. The SIM-C was born from the dialogue between three campuses: UIN Sunan Kalijaga representing Islam, Duta Wacana Christian University (UKDW) representing Christianity, and Sanata Dharma University representing Catholicism. All three are represented by scholars with a background in the Faculty of Theology.

This organization was formed in 2000, born out of a spirit from university students to address pluralism and religious freedom as well as New Order fundamentalism. The interreligious (informal) dialogue began to be carried out by ICRS UGM, UIN, and UKDW students. The purpose of holding this dialogue is to appreciate and respect plurality, especially religion. With award and respect, it is hoped that violence in the name of religion will not happen again.

On May 12 of 2007, a joint seminar was held by UKDW, USD, and UIN to discuss actual issues at that time. UKDW was represented by Pdt. Dr. Djoko Soetoopo (late), USD, represented by Rm. Dr. YB Prasetyantha, MSF., and UIN represented by Dr. Sekar Ayu Ariyanti. The outcome of this seminar (one of them) was the declaration of the Simpul Iman Community (SIM-C) organization, an interreligious organization driven entirely by interfaith students. SIM-C is an organization that comes from, by, and for students.

Starting in 2010, SIM-C did not only limited to those three Religious Colleges. However, many from other universities also joined, even from several different religious communities such as Ahmadiyah, Sundanese Wiwitan, Kejawen, etc., and often participate in Yogyakarta SIM-C activities. From 2008 to 2011, SIM-C Yogyakarta also began to establish good relations with the Yogyakarta Faith Fraternity Forum (FPUB) (Diki, 2020).
B. Research Method

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach which aims to explain a phenomenon in depth and was carried out by collecting as much data as possible (Bungin, 2008). The data collection method was the observation, where researchers observe activities that occur or are directly involved in the subject and object of research (Prastowo, 2000). The primary data source was the SIM-C Community, while the secondary data were books, journals, and articles related to interfaith communication. The data analysis technique in this study was to check the validity of the data by extending participation, persistence of observation, and triangulation (Ismail, 2015).

C. Discussion

1. Forms of Consciousness built to Realize Tasamuh

Each religion has its own views regarding the concept of interfaith dialogue. In a relationship, dialogue gives humans the opportunity to learn about listening, understanding, respecting various kinds of opinions, and knowing that truth does not only belong to oneself (Aldana, 2019). Therefore, dialogue plays a role in bringing about peace and brotherhood among religions. In addition, dialogue also plays a role in resolving conflicts between conflicting parties. Instilling *tasamuh* values in religion is taught intensively to avoid inter-religious conflicts (Burhanuddin Daya, 2004).

Shared awareness that humans must have an open attitude and social spirit, as stated in the vision and mission of SIM-C, allows members of the SIM-C to foster brotherhood with interfaith students, open theological insights into other religions through dialogue and discussion, and foster a young community sensitive to social and environmental issues. The awareness that discussing religion is not only concerned with the theological realm but also has to dive into the social realm makes the SIM-C not only busy with right and wrong debates in the realm of theology. Another awareness that is built is an attitude of moderation and tolerance towards other religions so that it does not give rise to radical views.

Believing that every religion teaches compassion and peace to all mankind and the universe is the basis for them to be able to carry out a dialogue with any religion without discriminating or looking cynical. In various balanced opportunities, where a person obtains the same justice when interacting, mutual respect arises, mutual support, openness, mutual trust, and then becoming familiar with one another. However, this does not change a person's religious beliefs as a whole, only in certain aspects which were initially negative to become positive (Wibisono, 2015).

The implementation of this awareness is contained in various work programs or events held by SIM-C, including routine meetings once a month (internal for each university or across universities), interfaith dialogue with students of UIN-UKDW-USD in the SIM-C, participating in religious diversity actions, visiting places of worship, attending celebration ceremonies or activities on religious holidays, and holding student seminars. On several occasions, SIM-C has also participated in peaceful action activities with other Yogyakarta
communities such as FPUB, YIPC, Gusdurian, and so on. This movement was carried out as a form of student concern as a problem solver for what is currently a problem in this country. Recruitment is also intensively carried out once a year to find and grow young people who long for peace (Diki, 2020).

SIM-C schedules joint activities, including trying to solve problems together. Visits to religious ceremonies and rituals, visits to houses of worship, and the atmosphere of makrab activities (familiarity nights) are also designed to build awareness of life dialogue among SIM-C Yogyakarta members whose religions are different. In small matters, for example, when someone has a campus assignment and needs a book reference, Yogyakarta SIM-C members always help each other. Non-Muslim SIM C members who need book references on Islam are usually assisted by SIM C members from UIN and invited to the UIN library and vice versa.

In its journey and interaction, SIM-C fosters a pro-existence attitude, which mutually fosters the existence of other people. SIM-C also guarantees the existence of other people and organizations around it and provides security guarantees for growth for others. This is evident from the activities carried out, not only holding activities with other organizations but also growing together and overseeing the activities of other organizations, participating in providing physical and material assistance, support, and services to people of other religions by participating in their activities, and holding dialogue to solve a problem so that carrying out social services becomes a manifestation of pro-existence built by the SIM-C.

2. Fill in the SIM-C Dialog

Language or word is used to describe an action, existence, incident, or event. Language is also used as a helper or liaison for a predicate. Language in the form of words shows human awareness because language is obtained through memory, emotion, and thought. Language consists of words and sentences, which are collective agreements of certain groups that are identical to cultural groups and products of cultural agreements. Language and meaning exist together in a conversation, or more reflectively, the world should have a certain meaning. The meaning of language is inseparable from the culture of the community where the language is spoken (Purwanti, 2020).

In communicating, the matters discussed by sim c are also about religion in general. If it leads to the religion of one of the students, what is discussed is universal matters, not touching aspects that are sensitive to each belief. Some of the discussions they held on theology and humanity included understanding human and divine values in religion, the role of religion in society, and the commemoration of holidays or other important days with the theme of tolerance and peace. In addition, the discussion that was carried out was not only about the theological dimension but also about the role of theology students in responding to current religious problems. The material presented at makrab events, interfaith dialogues, and student seminars discussed humanitarian issues such as environmental damage, natural disasters, education, social conflicts, and religious issues. Not infrequently, in various activities or events, there is always time to pray together. The goal reflects the goals of cooperation, achieving the vision and mission of SIM-C itself.
Besides that, in the opening, they also said greetings in Islam as well as Christianity. Greetings spoken in various religions show respect for other religions. The jokes they use are friendly jokes for all religions. For example, some words are enough to understand and respect when talking about the history of SIM-C and the seminary. You do not need to log in (enter a neighbor's religion), this also shows how they still respect each other's beliefs, even if it is a joke. UIN Sunan Kalijaga students were also invited to sing Christian children's songs during the visit. Singing this song is not intended to invite Muslim students to convert to Christianity or some other kind of missionary movement but only as an introduction, entertainment, or ice-breaking.

Catholic and Islamic students, for example, discussed the difficulty of building houses of worship. The word that cannot be separated is sorry for fear of offending one party's religion. Talking about how difficult it is for Christians to build houses of worship in Indonesia, and received a response that the difficulty actually depends on the location. From there, a space for healthy dialogue was opened between the two religions. At the time of the visit, there was also a collaborative performance of the drama between Sanata Dharma University students, Duta Wacana Christian University, and Sunan Kalijaga UIN with issues concerning religion ranging from romance to social life. There was dialogue and sharing of ideas regarding the problems, values, and norms that exist in each religion so that there was a beautiful drama collaboration, and many even changed their religious roles. For example, Christians became Muslims and vice versa.

Languages familiar to the SIM-C are divine terms from various religions, especially the mention of Allah (God the Father, Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit) in Christianity and Allah in Islam. In addition, greetings from various religions, such as Assalamualaikum, Shalom, Greetings of Prosperity, Uncle Swastiastu, etc., are familiar because SIM-C often meets people with various religions. SIM-C members no longer find it strange to use many terms from various religions because that is the hallmark of that community. Languages such as cinta and rahmatan lil alamin are often used in discussions at SIM-C because they discuss human and divine ideas that protect all mankind.

3. How to Communicate SIM-C

Although the Qur'an does not specifically address the issue of dialogue, many verses provide general descriptions of the principles of dialogue. Kind and gentle words are the best way to dialogue (bilati hiya akhsan) (Asriadi, 2022). Because it will create a calm and solemn atmosphere for the dialogue, far from overflowing emotions as if using loud and dirty words that offend, those who have high knowledge are ordered to convey dialogue or debate in a wise manner, namely dialogue with wise words according to their level of intelligence. The laity is ordered to apply mauidzah, namely giving advice and parables that touch the soul according to their simple level of knowledge. As for the Ahl-Kitab and adherents of other religions, what is ordered is jidal/debate in the best way, namely with subtle logic and rhetoric, free from violence and swearing (Zulfunun, 2019).

Dialogue in Islamic communication strategies, both verbal and non-verbal, must be in accordance with what Allah teaches in the Al-Quran. The principles of Islamic communication
are qaulan sadidan (true, not lying), qaulan baligha (straightforward, effective), qaulan ma’rufa (kind and polite words), qaulan karima (respect), qaulan layina (gentle), and qaulan maysura (easy to understand) (Ilaihi, 2010).

SIM-C community establishes a dialogue with fellow members or followers of other religions outside the community. They communicate in a kind, friendly, mutually respectful manner and do not offend the other party. Kind, gentle, kind, polite, and respectful words are reflected in how they dialogue with other religions.

Christian students, for example, greet Muslim students in a friendly manner, with a welcome greeting and cupping their hands in front of their chests with a smile. They also welcome and prepare the place for seminars properly. This was reflected when Islamic students visited the Kentungan Seminary in the SIM-C introduction activity. They welcomed them at the entrance, along with SIM-C administrators from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Duta Wacana Christian University, and Sanata Dharma University. This shows that there is no discrimination between Christian students and Islamic students. In front of the entrance to the hall, an absentee is provided, which is guarded by a nun. Of course, she is wearing a velum/monastic dress. The nun is a Wedhabhakti Faculty of Theology student at Sanata Dharma University. Even though his beliefs or level of religious understanding differ from UIN Sunan Kalijaga students, he does not look down on him but is proud of his choice. He is also friendly to visiting students and always agrees to photo invitations from various students.

Likewise, when SIM-C members from UKDW students visited the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, FUPI students also greeted them in a friendly manner, did not look cynical, and said inappropriate words even though UKDW students were minorities and dressed not according to UIN rules. When discussing with fellow SIM-C members from other campuses or from other religious groups, they use language appropriate to the level of the person being invited to the discussion. Discuss theology with people who really understand it, not with people who have no tolerance for other religions. During a SIM-C visit to the Sapta Dharma hermitage, they discussed Sapta Dharma's beliefs with the leader of the hermitage, who has more knowledge than ordinary members at the hermitage. In the discussion, they did not compare it with their religion or with other major religions. They also do not underestimate the Sapta Dharma spiritual sect, even though this belief does not have as many members as Christians or Muslims.

Awareness of the freedom to embrace religion is one of the essential rights for human life. There is respect for other religions, openness, awareness of differences, a critical attitude, similarities on the human side, and a willingness to understand beliefs, rites, and religions to understand other people correctly (Arifin, 2016). The SIM-C organization proves that tolerance or tasamuh is so important in the midst of Indonesia's current plurality. The values and concepts of tasamuh or tolerance in Islam teach people to believe in and have faith in all the prophets and messengers sent by God. Based on these rules, non-Muslims must be protected and may not be forced to convert to Islam. In terms of worship, tolerance takes the form of ease in carrying out worship. The field of muamalah instructs Muslims to do good and be fair to all people, both Muslims and non-Muslims.
D. Conclusion

Simpul Iman Community (SIM-C) is a forum for interfaith theological dialogue between students of Sanata Dharma University, Duta Wacana Christian University, and Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta. This organization was born as a form of maintaining tolerance and the teachings of compassion from every religion. The activities of this organization are interfaith dialogue and visits, as well as social actions. This activity is carried out with the awareness that all humans can live together based on tolerance and compassion. The way of dialogue is not only about debates in the theological realm but about the implementation of the teachings and values of divinity in every religion towards life in society. The way SIM-C members dialogue does not offend one another. They dialogue tolerantly and do not touch the sensitive side of each religion.

In understanding the differences in religions, a multicultural approach is needed, as is done by SIM C, which tries to keep away from absolute, subjective, and exclusive attitudes. This understanding is also equivalent to the Qur'anic principle of maintaining friendship in diversity. As Muslim students who are members of it, they also highlight attitudes that prioritize moral and social aspects of religion so that religion appears as a carrier of mercy to the universe.
Bibliography


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Supplementary Material

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