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Cyber-Based Conflict Management in Maintaining Religious Harmony in Medan City

Novebri^{1*}; Resdilla Pratiwi²; Elismayanti Rambe³
^{1,2,3}STAIN Mandailing Natal, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Corresponding author's email: novebri@stain-madina.ac.id

Abstract: This research deals with communication strategies of religious leaders based on cyberculture. The aims of this study are to explore the communication strategies of religious leaders based on cyberculture in achieving religious harmony for a multicultural society in Medan, to know the effectiveness of religious leaders based on cyberculture, the last to investigate the defiance of religious leaders in achieving religious harmony for a multicultural society. The study was designed in qualitative research, which the data of this study was the association of Religious Harmony (FKUB), for collecting the data, the researcher uses interview, observation, and documentation, then it's analyzed in four steps, they are data reduction, data display, data collection, Verifying. Based on analysis data it is found that there are some social media that have been used by religious leaders as the communication strategies in achieving religious harmony, namely: Website, TV, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Zoom Meeting. Those will be used by them to deliver their religious message and creating mutual tolerance in the society. In addition, these communication strategies are very effective which they can maintain religious harmony surrounding multicultural environment, so that Medan obtained the appreciation in the Harmony Award. The last, the defiance of religious leader in achieving religious harmony in Medan city is quiet enough and lack of complexities, it is based on the religious tolerance is very splendid among multicultural society. The purpose of this study is to determine the application of cyber-based conflict management in caring for religious harmony in the city of Medan. The city of Medan is known for its multicultural community, there are various ethnic groups, racial religions and inter-groups living and coexisting in this area, with various diversity that exists can result in potential conflicts that if not managed properly can become a source of division in society. Based on the results of research conducted by the local government together with religious leaders and FKUB agreed to maintain the harmony of religious people by often holding dialogues and lowering the spaciousness if it is known that there are problems that can trigger SARA conflicts. Conflict will certainly not be avoided because as many people as people, each group and every religion has their own understanding and beliefs. If conflict management can be managed properly, the potential conflict that arises can strengthen the relationship between the two sides who are feuding. Until now, the harmony of religious people in the city of Medan was well maintained so that it was used as a barometer of diversity by the government by getting an award as a miniature of Indonesia.

Keywords: *communication strategies; religious leaders; cyberculture*



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A. INTRODUCTION

The sara issue is still a problem in Indonesia. In 2018 there were at least 5 SARA cases that received public attention in North Sumatra. (Mashabi. S, 2020) until 2021 there are still cases containing ELEMENTS of SARA in Indonesia concerning the religious/belief symbols, verbal insults, establishment and demolition of houses of worship, attacks on religious figures, security, order, comfort in worship

The presence of the internet that has a life style of society also muddies issues related to ethnicity, racial religion and inter-group (SARA) which is spread through social media, such as facebook, whatsapp, instagram, youtube and others by people who aim to damage the harmony of religious people by contributing to provoking, spreading hoax news so that it causes many divisions among the community, especially in cyberspace.

The city of Medan is known for its diversity of people, this can be seen from the diversity of ethnic groups, religions and languages in this region. Based on data compiled by BPS in 2019, it was recorded that the total population of the people of Medan city was 2,279,894 million people, with the Batak ethnic group 35%, 39% Toba 20.93%, Mandailing 9.36%, Karo 4.10%, others 1.00%), Javanese 33.03%, Chinese 10.65%, Minangkabau 8.60%, Malay 6.59%, Aceh 2.79%, Tamil and others 2.93%. For adherents of the religion consists of Islam 64.53%, Christianity 26.10% (Protestant 20.99%, Catholic 5.11%), Buddhist 8.28%, Hindu 1.04% and Confucian 0.06%. While the languages spoken by the people are Indonesian, Malay, Batak Toba, Javanese, Hokkien, Minangkabau, Acehese, Tamil, Mandair and English.

North Sumatra is also the province with the highest amount of internet use on the island of Sumatra. Data compiled from the online media of the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2019 recorded that 75.3% of the population in North Sumatra is connected to the internet. These data were obtained from 5,900 samples using questionnaires and interviews. From this data, it was found that only 24.7% of the total population of North Sumatra residents had not been touched by the internet. This means that approximately 10.5 million people have experienced the internet and the remaining 3.5 million people have not been reached by the internet network.

With the heterogeneity of the community in the city, the potential for SARA conflicts can occur at any time. The ability to manage conflicts properly so that it does not reach divisions certainly needs to be done by stakeholders in the city of Medan, especially carried out by religious leaders who have direct access to society through ruitn lectures conducted to their followers. From the above phenomenon, researchers feel interested in conducting research with the title "Cyber-based conflict management in realizing the harmony of religious people in the city of Medan"

The general research problem in this study is: how is the application of cyber-based Conflict Management in caring for religious harmony in Medan?

Meanwhile, the purpose of the study was to determine the application of cyber-based conflict management in caring for religious harmony in the city of Medan

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Conflict Management

Management comes from the word manage which comes from Italy, in latin it is mentioned maneggio latin managiare from the word manus meaning hand, the word to manage itself means to take care of, organize, carry out, manage. In terminology, management is a process of moving others to carry out activities in order to achieve the goals of an organization. (Asiah, 2017).

Conflict is one of the essences of the life and development of mankind that has a diverse characteristic. There is no human being who does not conflict in his entire life. Conflict does not always lead to negativity. In the process of life, conflict is needed because it can strengthen the relationship between people in conflict, can understand each other's personalities, and can even improve self-quality for the better by learning and evaluating the conflicts faced. Conflict is a condition where the opinions/desires of the parties are different from others. What is meant by conflict management in this study is a series of actions and reactions between perpetrators and outside parties in a conflict. Conflict management is included in an approach that is oriented to direct a form of communication from actors and outside parties. And how to influence interests and interpretations. For parties outside the conflict, there is accurate information about the conflict situation. This is important because effective communication is established if you have full confidence in a third party.

Communication Strategy is a guide to communication planning and management to achieve a goal. Anwar arifin said that in formulating a communication strategy means taking into account the conditions and

situations (space and time) faced and that will be faced and that will be possible in the future to achieve effectiveness (Efendy, 2003). With this communication strategy, it means that several ways can be used to use communication consciously to create changes in the audience easily and quickly. Thus, what is meant by the meaning of a communication strategy will face the reality of what and how all activities are carried out effectively in realizing ideas, thoughts, and ways that were previously known and understood by communication actors.

The success of the communication strategy is obtained by analyzing the advantages and readiness of all components in it which are answers to the questions of Harold Lasswell's formula, namely:

Who? (who is the communicator)
Says what? (what message it states)
In which channel? (what medium does it use)
To whom? (who is the communicant)
With what effect? (what effect to expect)

From the above components, basically its implementation will be determined by the type and form and field of work of the institutions, organizations and even the government that carry it out.

The abilities that should be possessed in preventing conflicts are as follows, honesty, good knowledge, firmness of the position in arguing and opinion, have empathy for the other party, be observant in analyzing opportunities and challenges related to the source of the time required compared to the available, wisdom in maintaining the results of negotiations

2. Role of Religious Figures

Religious figures are prominent people who have deep religious knowledge and experience and are used as role models /role models in society (Burhan, 2017). Religious leaders have a role as religious broadcasters, spiritual leaders, carrying out mandates from God, trustees of the people, guides of the people and enforcers of truth (Hashim, 2004). The main duties of religious leaders in society are (Eksan, 2000):

Develop various thoughts as a reference for people in living their daily lives. Guiding, and being a reference in the explanation of the halal and haram of a thing. Able to communicate well with the people. Maintain, preserve and uphold the teachings in accordance with the demands and rules of religious teachings. Willing to defend and defend the rights of the people for the common good. Fight against the enemies of religion.

In addition to the above, religious figures also play a role in minimizing the occurrence of conflicts or conflicts between different religious groups, because what religious figures teach will usually be easily accepted and believed by their people (Basuki & Isbandi, 2008).

C. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a type of descriptive qualitative research, which is intended to collect data and information regarding a symptom according to what it is at the time the study is carried out. This research was conducted in Medan City, the collection technique was carried out by means, observation and documenting. Interviews were conducted to collect all in-depth information from participants, namely religious figures in managing conflicts so that they are well managed in

the internet era which is widely used, especially various social media platforms. observations are carried out to carry out a structured secra observer through the consensus published through the social media accounts of religious institutions such as the Ministry of Religion of Medan City, MUI kot Medan and various other islm organizations involving dai-di in the city of Medan.

The data source is the subject by which the data is obtained (Arikunto, 2013). The data in this study were collected by the method of interviewing religious figures in the city of Medan, collected with a snowball sampling technique until the information obtained was saturated with no other information obtained from informants. This technique is used to make it easier for researchers to get clear and more detailed data, where if there is still a lack of data, the researcher will continue to dig until the data is deemed sufficient.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations made by the research team, it can be the application of cyber-based Conflict Management in caring for religious harmony in the city of Medan.

The internet has developed into a technology that is not only able to transmit information but has been able to create a new world in the reality of human life, human changes in carrying out the activities of daily life carried out face to face are changing using social media networks such as through whatsapps, telegrams, zoom and so on. Something new causes change in society it is always related to the diffusion of innovation, where change is spurred by the spread of a new knowledge. According to Rogerd, there are four

elements that are always present in the diffusion of innovation, namely: 1) Innovation, 2) communication channels, 3) time and 4) social systems. These four elements are interrelated, innovation is related to ideas, actions, or goods that are considered new by a person and his society (Bungin, 2010). The new concept stretches between the concepts of recognition, persuasion and the decision to use it (adoption). The diffusion of innovations taking place in the social system has begun to open up to new ideas, at least characterized by changes in insights, views, attitudes and changes in behavior.

The high number of internet users in the city of Medan indicates that the people of Medan are open to social changes, so that it becomes a lifestyle in the community. The phenomenon of society experiencing a change in habits by using the internet is used by religious leaders as an opportunity to carry out effective communication in maintaining the harmony of religious people.

This culture of communicating online is increasingly popular, especially in the current 5.0 era. All aspects of life utilize technology and online media in communicating without exception in the field of religion (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Conflict management in the digital age as it is today conflict management is carried out effectively when utilizing applications or social media such as whatsapp, facebook, instagram, twitter, zoom meetings, google meet as a means of communicating and spreading religious teachings to its adherents. Many activities carried out with the internet provide various conveniences in carrying out the process of interaction and communication between people. Distance and time are no longer barriers to being able to share information and

communication with each other. Even the results showed that 54.37% of the younger generation such as students learned religious knowledge from the internet, blogs and websites (Syafruddin & Ropi, 2018).

Based on the data collected by the researchers through interviews with community organizations and several religious leaders in the city of Medan, the researcher summarized some of the social media used in spreading religious teachings by religious leaders in Table 1 below:

No.	Civic Organizations	Social media used
1	MUI Medan City	Website, TV, youtube, facebook, instagram, zoom meeting
2	FKUB Medan City	Website, zoom meeting
3	PGIW Medan City	Youtube, facebook
4	Ministry of Religion, Medan City	Website, youtube, facebook, zoom meeting
5	Medan city government in Kesra	Website
6	Khonghucu Religious Upper House in Medan City	WhatsApps Group
7	Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia Medan City Area	WhatsApps Group, zoom meeting
8	Representative of Indonesian	WhatsApps Group, zoom

No.	Civic Organizations	Social media used
	Buddhists in Medan City Area	meeting

Based on interviews with religious figures, the following factors that can cause SR conflicts are as follows, the narrow understanding of adherents of the understanding that considers the understanding that is the most correct, lack of understanding of freedom of religion and worship, land grabs for places of worship, poverty and lack of public awareness of tolerance and harmony.

To prevent the conflict from getting worse, it needs to be managed properly so that it can be resolved *secra inter*. Here are some handling in managing SARA conflicts, carried out through three stages, namely conflict prevention, conflict termination, and post-conflict recovery. Conflict prevention is carried out so that it is preemptive and preventive, namely conducting socialization or education to the community, maintaining peaceful conditions in the community, developing dispute resolution in a comprehensive manner, reducing potential conflicts, and building an early warning system. Handling conflicts during conflicts is carried out through efforts to stop physical violence, emergency measures, rescue and victim protection, or the deployment and use of the power of law enforcement officials.

Handling that can be done in dealing with religious *antaumat* conflicts by choosing a moderate path in carrying out the teachings of their respective religions / beliefs., moderate behavior in religion can cause an attitude of tolerance in people's lives.

To find out how to care for harmony in a multicultural society, researchers conducted an interview with Dr. Hasan Matsum, MA as a religious leader and Chairman of the Medan City MUI argued that, "the meaning of harmony means the creation of a safe, peaceful, comfortable *syasana*, forming a sense of air and togetherness between people. A condition where religious people accept each other and respect each other to help and cooperate. Things that must be done in achieving harmony such as open slings, accepting, loving love, so as to create a sense of mutual tolerance, not imposing the will, carrying out worship in accordance with the teachings of their respective religions, enforcing regulations and laws and religions, so far pre-religious figures uphold this principle so that divisions due to SARA conflicts can be anticipated.

In line with what the chairman of the Medan City MUI, Pastor Erwin, as the Chairman of the Medan City PGIW, said that since the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of social media as a religious activity has been very effective as an effort to spread religious teachings and also help the government in reducing the spread of the corona virus which can prevent conflicts between religious people by containing content about tolerance and diversity.

Based on non-participation observations made by the research team when participating in workshops involving interfaith leaders in the city of Medan, it can be seen that religious leaders are consistent in caring for the harmony of religious people in the city of Medan, the potential for conflicts that arise is immediately overcome before it widens and can provoke the community. The resolution of problems that have the potential to trigger pre-religious conflicts gathered in the FKUB immediately came

down to carry out mediation which was intended to provide a win-win solution between the two warring parties. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic where the government implemented the PSBB so that people could reduce their activities outside the home, it was used by religious leaders through the internet to suppress the values of tolerance. The discussions conducted involving religious leaders in Medan city have also agreed to live in mutual respect with all the differences that exist in the city of Medan. The Medan city government also supports and encourages religious leaders to always line up, dialogue intensively if there is a problem in the community that can trigger an uproar and commotion to be resolved immediately.

Table 2. Population of Medan by Religion

No	Kecamatan	Jumlah Penduduk						Jumlah
		Islam	Protestan	Katolik	Hindu	Budha	Konghucu	
1	Medan Kota	57,062	13,443	9,075	3,592	6,323	12	89,507
2	Medan Timur	103,098	14,060	9,501	1,545	4,437	10	132,651
3	Medan Barat	68,987	23,875	5,718	3,979	3,387	10	105,956
4	Medan Baru	40,353	22,244	6,067	1,779	3,444	7	73,894
5	Medan Belawan	83,859	24,052	8,426	972	5,864	13	123,186
6	Medan Labuhan	118,323	36,258	3,093	1,675	4,227	11	163,587
7	Medan Deli	98,564	25,670	9,100	2,940	5,532	15	141,821
8	Medan Sunggal	107,986	17,819	8,632	2,747	3,226	12	140,422
9	Medan Tuntungan	37,496	30,316	10,491	352	805	12	79,472
10	Medan Denai	109,870	47,728	8,921	411	2,706	9	169,645
11	Medan Johor	107,567	24,639	8,508	216	2,052	6	142,988
12	Medan Amplas	98,462	25,120	10,067	1,458	3,476	7	138,590
13	Medan Tembung	108,678	27,099	15,100	1,846	5,279	12	158,014
14	Medan Helvetia	92,897	43,881	10,099	2,494	4,114	12	153,497
15	Medan Petisah	52,795	22,620	2,470	7,168	3,741	13	88,807
16	Medan Polonia	37,881	17,201	8,004	2,612	4,225	11	69,934
17	Medan Maimun	47,253	5,821	3,062	2,746	6,567	15	65,464
18	Medan Selayang	66,750	37,872	2,904	2,764	882	9	111,181
19	Medan Perjuangan	78,453	22,969	10,096	1,063	4,191	12	116,784
20	Medan Marelan	119,369	10,739	8,000	6,095	3,547	9	147,759
21	Medan Area	86,473	7,745	7,105	1,092	5,752	13	108,180
Jumlah		1,722,176	501,171	164,439	49,546	83,777	230	2,521,339

The harmony of religious people in the city of Medan is inseparable from the full support of the Medan city government. Based on the results of an interview with the Mayor of Medan, represented by the field of community welfare, Mr. Agus Maryono said that, the

city of Medan is a city with minimal interfaith conflicts, even if there is a potential conflict, it usually occurs due to personal / social matters that are then drawn to religion, for example the problem of establishing a house of worship that has not received permission or the problem of changing the status of a residential house to a house of worship, however, this did not become a major conflict because the city government directly coordinated with the FKUB to conduct mediation with relevant parties.

concluded that the communication carried out by religious figures is a bgian of conflict management that is effectively carried out because religious leaders are an important pillar in society as truth conveyers so that they are used as role models by each religious follower. Internet andsocial media are used as a forum and public rung through a virtual world that is used by the people of Medan city in voicing and echoing the values of harmony and harmony between religious people.

A. Challenges in implementing Cyber-based Conflict Management in the people of Medan

Religious leaders have an important role in caring for the harmony of diverse people in the city of Medan, but of course in realizing these ideals the Forum for communication between religious people (FKUB) experienced several challenges in caring for the harmony of religious people in Medanpara City religious leaders (Burhan, 2017). Religious leaders must be responsive and wise in utilizing and using technological developments in proselytizing, because it can be seen by everyone from various religions. Religious leaders must be wise in communicating and disseminating information related to religious teachings. The community is

not fully prepared to face challenges as a result of the development of the internet with social media, especially in communicating and social media. The emergence of religious figures who are fully not familiar with religion, so that the information circulating cannot be ascertained to be true. The lack of wisdom of the community in receiving information about religion that is not necessarily the truth, so that it can cause hoaxes and conflicts between religious people

In addition to the challenges above, there are also several obstacles in maintaining harmony between religious people (Wirman, 2018), namely, the greater desire of a religious person to increase the number of adherents of his religion rather than to improve the quality of religious people. Socio-cultural circumstances that are easily tinkered with by society, so that harmony can still be achieved but the religion loses its meaning, function and meaning. The will to establish a house of worship regardless of the situation and conditions of the number of adherents of the local religion so as to offend the religious people. Using the majority as a means of settlement so that it will cause problems. For example, the ownership of educational funds and facilities to impose their will on students who study. Shifting the basic ordinances of life of kinship or mutual aid towards individualistic life.

However, after observations and interviews with major religious figures in the city of Medan, these problems almost never arise in the multicultural community in the city of Medan. In several interviews and observations made by researchers, there are several efforts made by religious leaders in creating harmony between religious people in a multicultural society in the city of

Medan, including, strengthen the basics of internal harmony between religious people and governments. Building social harmony and national unity in the form of efforts to encourage and direct all religious people to always live in harmony in the frame of theology and implementation in creating togetherness and an attitude of tolerance. Creating a life that is conducive to fostering internal life harmony between religious people. Creating a community life that supports and is tolerant of each other in an activity between people in harmony. Providing socialization of love in life between religious and social people. Provide an understanding to the community that differences in beliefs are a reality of life that can beautify the meaning of religious life. Eliminate suspicion of adherents of other religions. Make a full effort to always instill spiritual values about divinity so that there are no deviations in the values of society and social values of religion. Make social media a positive forum in spreading information on harmony between religious people. Urge the public to be wise in social media without involving sara elements in every post made.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and facts in the field, several points were found related to the communication strategy of religious figures based on cyberculture in realizing the harmony of religious people in Medan City. Religious leaders in the city of Medan have mostly participated in using advances in information technology as a forum in spreading religious rules. Social media that is often used by religious leaders and religious organizations in the city of Medan in spreading religious teachings and rules

to realize religious harmony includes websites, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TV channels, and Zoom meetings. In the 5.0 era, the use of the internet in an effort to realize the harmony of religious people, especially in the multicultural society in Medan City, is a must, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic as it is today. The challenges of using religious figures in the face of cyberculture include hoax news that spreads among the public that is not certain of the truth, content that spreads propogation so as to cause commotion, easy access to pronographic and pornographic content.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

1. Medan City Religious Harmony Forum
2. Medan City Ulema Council
3. Ministry of Religious Affairs of Medan City
4. Indonesian Church Union medan city area
5. Khonghucu Religious Upper House in Medan City
6. Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia Medan City Area
7. Representative of Indonesian Buddhists in Medan City Area

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