

Interreligious relation: Position of women in strengthening Christian and Muslim bonds

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Dates:

Received: 23 Aug. 2021

Accepted: 13 Mar. 2022

Published: 18 May 2022

How to cite this article

Pajarianto, H., 2022, 'Interreligious relation: Position of women in strengthening Christian and Muslim bonds', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 78(4), a7096. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7096>

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Strengthening Muslim–Christian relations is very important for a nation such as Indonesia that has plurality in terms of tribes, ethnicity and religion. This study aims to analyse the role of Muslim women who live in a pluralistic socio-religious situation. This is a qualitative research that uses purposive sampling to determine the informants. The approach used by the Discovering Cultural Themes model is to understand the symptoms of the many themes, cultures, values and cultural symbols. Data analysis was conducted by using software for qualitative research, which is needed in managing data found from the field, in this case, nVivo Basic 12.00 for Windows. The results show that Muslim women translate justice, empathy and rationality in religion by building relationships with other religions. This attitude is part of Islamic teachings that contain moderate, accommodating and tolerant aspects. In addition, culture has encouraged women to blend in and form egalitarian equality in the social and cultural realm. The culture of generosity and mutual help has become a tradition both in religious and customary activities.

Contribution: This article provides an insight into the contribution of Muslim women in strengthening Muslim–Christian relations. This agenda is very important because Islam and Christianity have the largest adherents in Indonesia. This contribution is very important and crucial in the midst of radicalism issues in Indonesia lately.

Keywords: interreligious; role; women; Muslims; Christians.

Introduction

Globally, women and men have a very important part in maintaining the balance of life both in the realm of family, community and interreligious relations. Islam and Christianity as big religions in the world teach to protect women's rights in public (Udoh, Folarin & Isumonah 2020). Religion teaches about equality for both men and women, which manages the rights and roles of both men and women in society (Abdulla 2018), which must continue to be sound both formally and informally (Arisukwu et al. 2021). Women in certain situations are able to do any work for the community without asking for payment and have the same perception and behaviour both in peace and war situations (Abduljaber, Services & Arbor 2021; Chus 2018). Women with high religious motivation are also directly involved in interreligious peace, which has been destroyed by communal violence (Al Qurtuby 2014; Lakawa 2021).

Several findings from previous studies discover that many Muslim women are actively involved in women empowerment, social entrepreneurship and social welfare (Annisa 2012). The weakness of this study is that it does not discuss the role of women in community relations of different religions, whereas other research findings discover that women are important agents and actors in the peace process, both in their roles as mothers, educators, mediators, peace activists and decision makers (Atuhaire 2014). Furthermore, women are involved in all kinds of peace work (Olofsson 2018), including intertribal cultural peace (Pattiasina, Lattu & Nuban Timo 2018) and moderate religious and social services for all religions (Farida 2019). The role of Muslim women to strengthen the Muslim–Christian relations in different religious communities can be encouraged by utilising the awareness of working for the common good (Effendi 2016) and the culture of mutual help (Utomo & Minza 2018). Other studies discover that religious tolerance and gender equality are very important for the sustainability of human life (Al-Hamdi 2015), because women have different perspectives on conflict prevention and can correlate between religious, ethnic, political and cultural differences (Goyol 2019). Islam encourages its people to practice the teachings of ta'awun or mutual help in goodness with anyone, including other people of different religions (Mu'ti 2019). The role of women to help and prosper others is driven by selfish and altruistic motives (Marjanovic, Struthers & Greenglass 2012), both by religious and cultural values that have become a habit in a community.

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Why should women in Indonesia take part in Islamic-Christian relations? Because factually, the violence against religion and belief in Indonesia are still happening: In 2010, there were 81 cases, which were recorded from several regions in Indonesia (Misrawi 2010). In 2015, there were 85 cases; in 2016, there were 97 cases (Wahid et al. 2015); and in 2020, there were 422 violation of religious freedom (Lidwina 2021). Indonesia still has to work hard to address the issue of religious diversity (Ju Lan 2011), with some conflicts occurring as a result of negative stereotypes (Nakaya 2018), the Ambon, Poso and Sambas conflicts led to the marginalisation of indigenous people and the erosion of local traditional buildings, which became the cause of ethnic conflicts (Schulze 2017). Even though in 2020 the Interreligious Harmony Index is in the high category of 67.46 (Burhani et al. 2020), but awareness of various potential conflicts must be internalised in various activities including women.

The role of women is dominated by gender debates where identities and concepts are individual's self-definition as female or male, based on their biological gender as interpreted in culture (Wood & Eagly 2012, 2015). Two big current theories that discuss the roles of men and women are nature and nurture. In linguistic term, nature is understood as a character that is inherent in a person as a natural condition or human nature. Differences between women and men are natural so they cannot be eliminated but have to create a harmonious relationship (Butler 2004). Women in this theory are identified as patient, loving, gentle, motherly, caring and diligent. Thus, they are suitable to take on domestic roles. Meanwhile, men who are assumed to have strong, manly, rational and assertive traits are interpreted as men who are more worthy to take on the roles of leaders, chiefs of households and have a lot of freedom in choosing any role.

Meanwhile, the nurture theory suggests that the differences in masculine and feminine are not determined by biological differences but by social constructs and the influence of cultural factors. The existential feeling of self as a woman or a man usually reflects aspects of biological sex (Miller 2015). In the context of this theory, there is a relative meaning of masculine and feminine concepts. The social constructs differences in society result in the relativity of masculine and feminine attributes indicators between cultures. Certain traits attached to a gender in a community are not necessarily the same as others (Butler 2004). There are roles and tasks that can be interchanged, but there are those that are not usually interchangeable because they are naturally different in nature.

Empirically, the role of women in socio-religious activities, as well as in building socio-religious relations is very prominent in the 'Aisyiyah organisation as a Muhammadiyah women's association. It was founded on 27 Rajab 1335 H/19 May 1917 in Yogyakarta by Nyai Siti Walidah or Nyai Ahmad Dahlan. The first chairwoman of 'Aisyiyah was not Nyai Siti Walidah, but Siti Bariyah. Siti Bariyah did not only study Islam with Kiai Ahmad Dahlan but also studied at the Neutraal Meisjes School (Muthmainnah 2019). In 1928,

'Aisyiyah was listed as one of the pioneering women's organisations or which initiated and was actively involved in the first Indonesian Women's Congress (Kowani) and from 1917 to 1998 was able to show its identity as a Muslim women's organisation, including the development of academic discourses on women rights (Van Doorn Harder 2006).

The locus of this research is Tana Toraja, an exotic area in Indonesia, which is world famous. Based on BPS (Indonesia's central agency on statistics) data, currently it is inhabited by 234002 people, with details based on religion: Protestant 68.66%, Catholic 17.09%, Muslim 12.25%, Hindu 1.74%, Buddhist 0.22% and Aluk Todolo 0.01%. With this composition, Tana Toraja shows religious pluralism in terms of religion and belief. However, they are actually united by a homogeneous ethnic group and a very high culture of mutual cooperation and become social capital in strengthening Muslim-Christian relations in this area. Toraja comes from the words *To Riaja*; *To* means people (*Bugis*) and *Riaja* means above, so *Toraja* means people who live at the top or in the mountains as the antonym of *Luu'*, which means coastal people, who used to have dominance in the highlands (Waterson 2009). In Toraja culture, the personality of the people is strongly influenced by the beliefs of their ancestors named *Aluk Todolo* (Fox 2006).

Then, what are the basic values that move Muslim women who are members of the Aisyiyah organisation in strengthening Muslim-Christian relations? and how are religious and traditional celebrations used by Muslim women to strengthen Muslim-Christian relations? This is the main focus in this research. The theoretical and practical theme of this research is expected to encourage women to play an active role in strengthening Muslim-Christian relations, which are sometimes damaged by radicalism and fundamentalism issues. Women play a significant role in carrying out their position as social bonder in various fields of life (Ruiter & De Graaf 2006), and carried out by women's groups who are members of civil society as actors. Women from various religions have the potential to maintain harmony between religious communities, but this potential has not been fully utilised.

Research methods

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative research is a research model based on the philosophy of postpositivism, which is used to examine the condition of natural objects. It is very difficult to detect the population, which become the informants of this study, because there is not enough data available on the Aisyiyah organisation. There is no specific standard for the number of samples for qualitative research. Furthermore, the data collection method uses observation, interviews and discussions, which require such a long time so it is not possible to take large samples. In addition, qualitative research has three main components to be observed. Firstly, the place where the interaction occurs in the ongoing social situation, in this case at Bittuang Tana Toraja; secondly, the actors who are playing a certain role. In

the context of this research, the actors of the research object are women who are members of the Aisyiyah organisation; thirdly, activities (Tannenbaum 1980), carried out by actors in ongoing social situations. In research activities that will be the research object are all activities related to women's activities in relation to Muslim–Christian relations.

The participants in this study are 21 Aisyiyah women in Tana Toraja. Determination of data sources is performed by purposive sampling, based on certain characteristics (inclusion criteria) that are closely related to the characteristics, which have been known previously, based on the research objectives. The sample is classified into three: Firstly, Aisyiyah's management who have a decree and membership card. Secondly, women who become regular members. Thirdly, women who are Aisyiyah sympathisers and actively participate in activities.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews and documentation was conducted from June to September 2019 in Tana Toraja. The observation used is participant observation with base snowball method. The details of the observation activities are (1) observing women's activities at Christmas and Eid; (2) observing women's activities at the *rambu solo'* traditional party; (3) observing women's activities at *rambu tuka'*; and (4) women's activities in other social activities. The researchers used observation guidelines to record these activities. In order to maintain the validity of the observations, the authors use field notes (Bogdan & Biklen 1997) or commonly called a field notebook. Field notes were used to record various events related to the activities of women who were informants in this study and all were performed manually.

The approach used by the Discovering Cultural Themes model is to collect various themes, cultural focuses, values and cultural symbols in each domain (Spradley 2016). Data analysis was carried out using software for a qualitative study, which was needed in managing data found from the field, in this case, nVivo Basic 10.00 for Windows. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software developed by Qualitative Solution and Research (QSR) international. NVivo is a tool for processing qualitative data through highlighting, taking notes and linking ideas (Jackson 2021). The data analysed was base triangulation data (Mills 2011) through three stages: data reduction, data display, conclusion and verification.

Findings and discussion

Religion and the role of women in Muslim–Christian relations

Muslim women in Tana Toraja adhere to religious values as a guide in interacting with other religious communities, including Christians and the Aluk Todolo. Implemented religious values is middle character (*wasathiyah*), which is translated as moderate Islam. Religion, apart from having a theological dimension, also has a spiritual tradition as a primary mechanism for expressing and reinforcing group

sentiment and solidarity (Durkheim & Swain 2008). An open religious tradition can also be referred to as indigenous and local culture celebrations. The role of women in implementing moderate religious values can be seen from religious activities that always involve other religions' followers.

From the observation of the researchers, women become effective family mediators of different religions to meet and unite. Women are quite dominant in various socio-religious activities. They cook, serve guests and break the ice in a strong brotherhood. In other places, this kind of relationship is probably considered extreme, because it touches the spirit of mutual cooperation and kinship in religious traditions, building places of worship, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The role of women in peace building is multidimensional, and the issues are sufficiently representative and can bring a gender perspective to the main content of a negotiation. Women can contribute a lot to the recovery of post-conflict social, cultural, economic and political conditions. This is the flexibility of women who can enter peaceful spaces that men may not be able to do.

Based on interviews and discussions with informants, researchers conducted coding and interpretation to obtain conclusions about values and religion applied by women in interacting with adherents of other religions. The religious values used by Muslim women to strengthen Muslim–Christian relations are presented in Table 1.

In Table 1, Muslim women use the values of justice, empathy and rationality in building relationships with people of other religions. This attitude is part of Islamic teachings that contain moderate, accommodating and tolerant aspects. This fact implies that tolerance with Christianity is a moderate attitude that must still be based on rationality as long as it is not related to the realm of fiqh. It means that tolerance is not correlated with the Pillars of Islam and other acts of worship.

Moderation in Islam is the implementation of the teachings of the holy book in the Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah: 256 'There is no compulsion in believing the religion of Islam'. which means giving other people the opportunity to practice their religion. Likewise, the accommodative and tolerant aspects are the implementation of the Qur'an Surah Al-Kafirun: 6 'your religion is for you, and my religion is for me'. Theologically, it means that Muslim women make religious

TABLE 1: The religious value of women in Muslim–Christian relations.

No.	Statement/theme	Interpretation/conclusion
1	Everyone has the right to practice their own beliefs (Informants 1, 9, 5, 13)	Justice and/or moderate (Surat al-Baqarah: 256)
2	We help each other and support religious events but do not participate in worship activities (Informants 7, 8, 9, 3)	Empathy and/or accommodative (Surat al-Maidah: 2)
3	We may attend non-Muslim invitations as long as it is not related to worship (Informants 11, 17, and 20)	Rational and/or tolerant (Surat Mumtahan: 51)
4	Your religion is for you and my religion is for me, we apply this by not participating in Christmas celebrations, but we do <i>silatullahmi</i> [visit each other] (Informants 7, 8, 9)	Empathy and/or accommodative (Surat al-Kafirun: 6)
5	Respect other people's religious teachings, without sacrificing my religious principles (Informants 8, 12, 20, 21)	Rational and/or tolerant (Surat al-An'am: 108)

values dominate strongly in the sociological realm concerning adherents of other religions.

At the micro level, the type of mechanism in the socio-religious area played by women has succeeded in preventing internal and interreligious harmony between religious communities and encouraging constructive cooperation. Such a mechanism forms a pattern of functional harmony for a particular geographic area. Socio-religious mechanisms must receive adequate attention in turning off the symptoms of social disintegration. That way, the Muslim minority group can be said to be safe from outside interference, because anyone who wants to disturb Muslims does not only deal with the Muslim community, but also deals with non-Muslims.

Through the role of women, the issue of food in a different theological context which Muslims can and cannot eat becomes clear and becomes a common understanding. Therefore, when Christian families invite them to religious or traditional events, Christian families prepare food that does not contain pork or food that is forbidden in Islam (Interview, female informant; 1, 3, 5, 7). According to one food ingredient informant, the containers used and the cooking were handed over to their Muslim neighbours or relatives so that the food they provide is guaranteed to be halal, and all done by women (Interview, female informant; 9, 12, 19, 21). Likewise at the time of slaughtering sacrificial animals on Eid al-Adha for Muslims, the rest of the meat which have been given based on Islamic law were cooked by women from different religions, Muslim and non-muslim and are eaten together on the *Silaturrehmi*/assemble in Mosque area.

Seen from the religious aspect, Muslim women in Tana Toraja who are a minority in quantity, have high religious enthusiasm, especially those related to relations between communities of different religions. Women naturally in doing internalisation on religious and cultural values related to strengthening Muslim–Christian relations. When they are together, the discussion never leads to theological differences in each religion, but rather to universal issues related to the future of the family. Family members remind each other to do their obligations and to not forget to ask for prayers so that their lives are safe and their family is given sustenance and health (Interviews, female informants; 2, 6, 9, 10). Another quite sensitive theme in inclusive education is joint prayer between Muslims and non-Muslims. In a pluralistic society, praying together is an activity that cannot be avoided both at family events and traditional activities in their family environment. The joint prayer carried out by people of different religions is not led by one person, but the praying is carried out based on their respective religions and beliefs (Interviews, female informants; 1, 6, 5, 11). The choice to choose this way of praying is to respect the differences in religion and beliefs between them and avoid debates related to joint prayer led by non-Muslims.

Cultural values of Muslim–Christian relations

Historically, the Torajanese had an encounter with Islam starting when they were in contact with the Kingdoms of Sidenreng, Bone and Luwu. Although at first the relationship was more dominated by economic interest, especially the coffee trade. Until the end of the 19th century, after more than 230 years of establishing power in South Sulawesi by defeating the Gowa-Tallo Kingdom, it seems that the Dutch have not shown any interest in occupying the Toraja region which is far in the middle of the Sulawesi region (Waterson 2012). The Dutch arrived in the Toraja area in 1905 and succeeded in conquering it completely in 1906. Christianity was introduced in Toraja, not long after the colonial government crushed the resistance of the Toraja people led by Pong Tiku. In 1908 the Dutch colonial government opened *Landschapschool* [self-governing schools] in Makale and Rantepao led by Christian teachers. Even though this government school is 'neutral', the teachers at Landschap taught Christianity to Landschap students (Kobong 2008).

This research found that the communal lifestyle of the Torajanese is reflected in the Tongkonan traditional house philosophy. Tongkonan cannot be owned by individuals, but is owned communally and from generation to generation by the family or clan of the Tana Toraja Tribe (Pakan et al. 2019). Tongkonan consists of the word 'tongkon', which means sitting and gets the suffix 'an' to become Tongkonan. Tongkonan means a seat that implies a place to sit together with members who are gathered to become a group of individuals who come from the same lineage, the house is a symbol of the unity of the cluster called 'Tongkonan' (Pakan et al. 2019). Culture in Toraja has developed into social capital which is very useful for maintaining inter-religious harmony (Pajarianto, Pribadi & Sari 2022).

To this day, the Torajanese consistently maintain the customs inherited from their ancestors. Torajanese recognise two main ceremonies related to the life cycle, namely *Rambu Tuka'* (*Alluk Rampe Matollo*) and *Rambu Solo'* (*Alluk Rampe Matampu*), each has its own characteristics (Adams 2004). The *Rambu Tuka'* ceremony is held to welcome joyful events such as marriage, harvesting (*Alluk Pare*), or entering a new house (*Mangrara Banua*). Meanwhile, *Rambu Solo'* is a reversal ceremony for the soul that died before being buried. In this traditional event, the role of women is very important in facilitating all family members of different religions to attend the event. The instrumental role of women as cooks, makeup artists, guest pickers, and emotional roles is the glue between large families (Interview, female informant; 12, 15, 17, 20). The transcripts summary and analysis from interviews related to cultural values and mechanisms that make Muslim women strengthen Muslim–Christian relations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that Muslim women are accommodating and empathetic towards various activities carried out by both

TABLE 2: The culture value of women in Muslim–Christian relations.

No	Statement/theme	Interpretation/conclusion
1	<i>Rambu Tuka'</i> [harvesting ceremony] and <i>Rambu Solo'</i> [death ceremony] as a meeting place for families of different faiths (Informants 2, 5, 7, 9)	Accommodating and/or empathy
2	The educational value in <i>Rambu Tuka'</i> and <i>Rambu Solo'</i> is mutual cooperation by helping with material and non-material (Informants 7, 18, 9, 21)	Mutual cooperation and/or empathy
3	All families of different religions are given the same opportunity to participate in the <i>Rambu Tuka'</i> and <i>Rambu Solo'</i> ceremonies (Informants 1, 2 and 11)	Egalitarian and/or democratic
4	Women's activities in <i>Rambu Tuka'</i> : <i>Ma'Pangan</i> [welcoming by serving betel, areca nut], <i>Ma'pairuk</i> [women serving dishes to all guests], <i>Ma'tumbuk</i> [the activity of pounding rice on mortar] (Informants 16, 18, 20)	Women's participation

Muslims and Christians. With high spirit of mutual cooperation they mingle and form egalitarian equality in the social and cultural realm. The culture of generosity and mutual help has become a tradition both in religious and customary activities. This activity involves all nuclear families and the wider community of different religions. For the Torajanese, *tongkonan* not only represents a physical manifestation but also represents a group of people (*pa'rapuan*). This is reflected in the term itself, which comes from the word *tongkon* [to sit] together. Thus, *tongkonan* means the centre where people gather for family groups, which come from their ancestors and living descendants (Idrus 2017). *Tongkonan* represents the types and characteristics of the main groups in Toraja society, as a place to discuss and carry out traditional ceremonies and problems of group members in general (Said 2004). This cultural activity is usually carried out for days and all costs incurred are borne by donations and the participation of all families.

Culturally and sociologically, Muslim women in Tana Toraja also collaborate with people of other religions based on cultural values. Muslims– and Christians interact without questioning their religious identity. They establish relationships with relatives or other people of different religions. They show active relationships in everyday life; friendly relations, mutual assistance in social activities, agriculture and even involvement in both traditional and religious meetings outside of the sacrament. There are even some residents who live in the same house with different religions, some whose father is Hindu (*Alukta*), mother is Christian and so on. Toraja culture accommodates all forms of these differences (Interviews, female informants; 13, 15, 18, 21).

Women's activities in building interfaith relations are essential, apart from being shown in the realm of religion and culture. The form is simple but has complex implications for maintaining brotherhood between Muslims and Christians. Brotherhood in the *Tongkonan* extended family, the celebration of *rambu tuka'* [harvest feast], the *rambu solo* ceremony (death ceremony), and taking advantage of religious holidays such as Christmas and Eid to meet outside the sacrament to stay in touch and give each other simple food. This proves that women have a very central role in playing emotional instruments and instrumental in Muslim–Christian relations.

The emotional pattern is expressed in the form of empathy for various activities carried out by other women even though they are adherents of different religions. The activities done by the women are welcoming the guests of the cultural and traditional events, serving food, and even to entertain the family of the dead.

At another locus in Indonesia, women have succeeded in creating a meeting room for women ranging from housewives in activism roles in the smallest environmental units to those involving interfaiths' female religious leaders (Wahyu et al. 2019). To minimise intolerance and the practice of pseudo-tolerance, a meeting room that is intimate and full of a sense of brotherhood is a form of strength that can establish complete peace. The study of *Pela gandong* in Maluku, women play an important role in the practice of cultural peace through social action in the symbolic liminality of *kain Gandong*. Without the role of women who hold the *kain Gandong*, liminality cannot play an effective role in creating a feeling of community and social solidarity, which is indispensable in the rituals of the Muslim–Christian community, such as the inauguration ritual of the King and the *Panas Pela* ritual (Pattiasina et al. 2018). Meanwhile in Central Java, women build the capacity of their communities in providing religious-social service and strengthen a moderate and tolerant understanding of Islam, as well as build internal and interreligious harmonisation by synergising agreements with government agencies and other religious organisations (Farida 2019).

In Buginese who inhabit South Sulawesi, the basic element in gender formation is the division of gender roles, which is formed because of the construction of culture and customs. In general, gender roles are a set of behavioural patterns that become social expectations to be displayed differently from both men and women according to their gender (Ramli & Basri 2021). The women who became informants in this research were not trapped in the prison of the theory of nature who were identified as patient and compassionate figures whose work area was only in the domestic area of household affairs, but women had broken male domination by playing an active role in strengthening Muslim–Christian relations (theory nurture). The theory of nurture does not deny the existence of certain natural characteristics such as pregnancy and childbirth, but in the aspect of social roles, cultural constructs determine the role of women. But the women in this research are very compromising. Towards a balance (equilibrium) that emphasises the concept of partnership and harmony in the relationship between women and men, both at religious events and customs.

From a leadership point of view, Islam views humans from the aspect of the caliph (*khalifah*) not from gender (Munir 1999). Allah *subhana wa ta'ala*, who is believed to be God for Muslims has given the task of caliphate to humans, both men and women, to manage, maintain and develop the earth. Women play an important role in building Muslim–Christian relations by utilising all the potentials that come from within

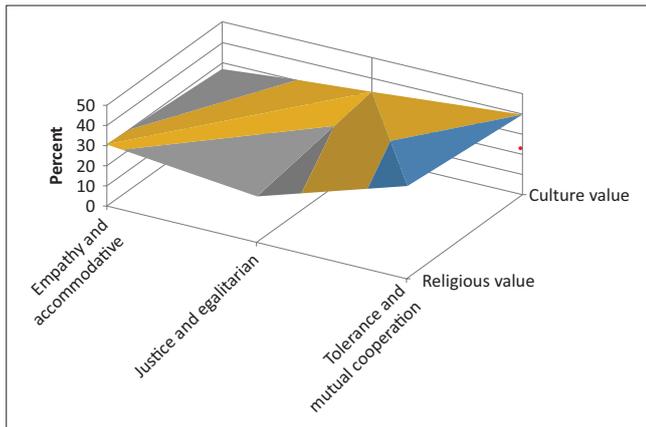


FIGURE 1: Venn diagram of religious and cultural values in Muslim–Christian relations.

women and the support of noble values of religion and culture. One aspect that is owned by women and becomes a reference both nationally and internationally is the large modality of both religion and culture, so that the strengthening of relations between adherents of different religions can be carried out on an ongoing basis. Therefore, the involvement of women, from management, negotiation to conflict resolution must be encouraged continuously.

This study finds essential facts related to the interaction of culture and religion and the role of women in Muslim–Christian relations. Of course, it is a characteristic of a particular community that cannot be generalised but can be replicated in areas with the same characteristics and socio-religious environment as the locus of this research. It can be seen based on the nVivo analysis shown in the Venn Diagram in Figure 1.

Based on the Venn diagram in Figure 1 as much as 23.08% of Muslim women expressed a sense of justice in strengthening Muslim–Christian relations, followed by empathy expressed by 30.77% of informants in Muslim–Christian relations. Meanwhile, 46.15% of Muslim women firmly believed in strengthening Muslim–Christian ties. The percentage distribution of the data indicates an interaction between religious values and cultural values in strengthening the relationship between Muslims and Christians. This means that culturally, the Tana Toraja people have a hereditary tradition to live side by side with adherents of other religions, especially Muslim women who are strengthened by their religious values and teach them to live in harmony with followers of other religions. Muslim women believe in combining these two cultures to establish harmonious relationships with Christians.

It is an interesting blend of religion and culture that reinforce each other, especially for empathy and accommodation. However, this does not mean that tolerance touches the realm of religiosity when it comes to fundamental teachings in religion (*aqidah*), a strong reason for Muslim women to remain based on mutually beneficial relationships

(cooperation). Freedom to carry out religious law is right (egalitarian) because each religious teaching has determined it. At this point, the sense of justice (justice) must be felt by all religious adherents in carrying out the relationship between the followers of the two religions. The interaction model of culture and religion will strengthen religious moderation in various activities and practically enhance Muslim–Christian relations.

Conclusion

Muslim women have an essential role in strengthening Muslim–Christian relations. This role is a manifestation of the noble values of religion, which instruct its adherents to compete in helping each other in goodness. It is also sourced from the local wisdom of the Toraja people, which has been preserved from generation to generation by their ancestors. The Muslim–Christian relationship in this research shows a positive direction with collaboration in various religious, social and customary social activities. It can be a model for areas with the same characteristics as the locus of this study. This contribution will further strengthen religious moderation in various fields to further strengthen Muslim–Christian relations as the two largest religious entities in Indonesia. The limitation of this study is that the locus and samples were taken from a particular and small area, so generalisations cannot be made. Nonetheless, it is possible to replicate it in regions with the same socio-cultural situation.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the Chancellor of the University of Muhammadiyah Palopo for his support in carrying out this research. The results of this study are entirely the responsibility of the author.

Competing interests

The author declares that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Author's contributions

H.P. is the sole author of this article.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards of research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author.

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