




Development of a religious non-radicalism model from local churches' perspectives



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Religious institutions often encourage religious radicalism among their adherents in a pluralistic society. Therefore, there is an urgency for a religious non-radicalism model, especially in local churches in Maluku and North Maluku, Indonesia. This study emphasises the role of local churches in maintaining the integrity of society through a model of religious non-radicalism that reflects a wise way of believing and bringing goodness to humanity. This research employs a qualitative phenomenological approach to examine religious non-radicalism based on Pancasila, Ernest Renan's concept of living together and a theology of utilitarianism. The study engages in dialogue with social and cultural capital within the context of local churches, particularly in Maluku and North Maluku. It maps the concept of religious non-radicalism in local churches, focussing on social and cultural capital as well as understanding related to religious non-radicalism. The research then analyses empirical experiences and the implementation of teachings, regulations and programmes in local churches teachings, regulations and programmes) and developed into churches. This analysis leads to the development of a model of religious non-radicalism from the perspectives of these churches. The key finding of this research, which contributes novelty to the article, is the model of religious non-radicalism at the levels of Gereja Protestan Maluku, including Synod, Klasis [Classis] and Congregation. This model is derived from the cultures based on the perspectives of local churches. Cultural institutions such as Pela Gandong, Ain ni Ain and Saruma serve as solid foundations for the lives of the orang basudara and can be instrumental in fostering coexistence amid religious differences while rejecting violence in the name of religion in social life.

Contribution: This article contributes to the development of a religious non-radicalism model from the perspective of local churches to maintain peace.

Keywords: religious non-radicalism model; Pancasila; social and cultural capital; local church; harmony.

Introduction

Religious teachings often serve as the basis and tool used by religious institutions to encourage radicalism among their adherents in a pluralistic society, making it challenging to maintain unity and peace. Yewangoe emphasises that religious harmony in Indonesia is an important issue, as it continues to experience friction, particularly regarding clashes between Christian and Muslim communities, especially in Ambon (Yewangoe 2018a:59–60). The urgency of a religious non-radicalism model, particularly in local churches in Maluku and North Maluku, Indonesia, is essential. Local churches play a crucial role in maintaining societal integrity through a model of religious non-radicalism that promotes a wise approach to belief and fosters goodwill towards humanity.

The church, as a religious institution, should consistently contribute in multiple ways to the common interests of Indonesia's pluralistic society while adhering to its unique identity in alignment with the Pancasila ideology. It is the church's obligation to exist not for its own sake, but as a part of a solidarity-driven society, working to strengthen, advocate for and provide solutions to the various issues that cause suffering to all creation (Yewangoe 2021). The church does not close itself off to the truths found in other religions, acknowledging the significance of their existence as well (Yewangoe 2018b:20).

The church's religious non-radicalism attitude needs to be implemented, so that the church should be open and inclusive towards adherents of other religions and beliefs, even perpetuating

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harmony and synergy in transformative action and dialogue in society (Yewangoe 2018a). This emphasises that the church is obliged to involve society by exploring various shared social and cultural resources that have shaped its theological understanding, regulations and practices, and at the same time need to be reconstructed, so that they are relevant, where the church is located (Ruhullessin 2020). Therefore, Ernest Renan's concept of the desire to be together in one nation because the society has the same goals and interests (Renan 1994) can be the basis for the church to the discourse based on Pancasila in Indonesia.

Religious non-radicalism is an ideal condition for social life in Indonesia. Indonesian state has based and promoted the society's interreligious life that defends life together with religious non-radicalism in accordance with the Pancasila ideology in a sustainable manner. Likewise, the local churches have significant roles in society as well as supporting the existence of the Indonesian state, but at the same time, it is still questionable how can the roles of the local churches be developed in the long term. How can the churches manage the social and cultural capital they have as well as the society around them in order to embody a society's life that believes in God while upholding Pancasila? In order to build the progress of the Indonesian state, especially from a religious perspective, local churches, namely the grassroots, should study and develop religious non-radicalism on an ongoing basis. However, it seems that the local churches are not yet serious about this. Therefore, Yewangoe emphasises that in a world still plagued by injustice, violence and terrorism, churches that respond bravely to these challenges do so intelligently, avoiding the trap of an arrogant ecclesia triumphant mentality and strive to create a common oikos for all (Yewangoe 2021:218). In this way, the churches contribute to the development of the Indonesian nation through their care for various national problems while acting in solidarity and criticism (Yewangoe 2018a:129).

The attitude of non-radicalism is closely related to non-violence. According to Glennsmiley, non-violence recognises the essence of humanity contained in every human being and the struggle aims to awaken the conscience of the perpetrators of the crime and not the personality of an individual (Smiley 2009:99). Non-violence also aims to achieve truth, because truth is the only goal and God is the Truth (Gandhi 2009:15). Non-violence is a response to radicalism movements that arise as results of humanity and tolerance that have faded, as well as religious fanaticism that is too high (Siswadi 2022:48–65).

Previous studies have examined religious non-radicalism, including: *Violence and Vengeance: Religious Conflict and Its Aftermath in Eastern Indonesia* (Duncan 2013), *Resolusi Konflik: Jembatan Perdamaian* (Malik 2017), *Islam dan Kristen: Dinamika Pascakonflik dan Masa Depan Perdamaian di Ambon* (Al-Qurtuby 2018), *The Sufi Order against Religious Radicalism in Indonesia* (Ahmad et al. 2021:1–11), *Mitigating Radicalism amongst Islamic College Students in Indonesia through Religious Nationalism* (Nafi'a et al. 2022:1–11),

Counter-narrative Strategies in Deradicalisation: A Content Analysis of Indonesia's Anti-terrorism Laws (Setiyono & Rasyid 2022:1–8), *The Role of Religious and Cultural Education as a Resolution of Radicalism Conflict in Sibolga Community* (Dasopang et al. 2023:1–7) and *Islamic Devotion in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand as a Deterrent against Religious Extremism* (Soebahar et al. 2023:1–6).

Based on research targeting the issue of religious radicalism in Indonesia, several studies focus on the communal conflicts between Christian and Islamic communities in Maluku from 1999 to 2004, as well as in other regions at different times, along with their impacts and recovery efforts (Masita 2023; Nafi'a et al. 2022; Renan 1994; Ruhullessin 2020). However, these studies have not elaborated on Pancasila. Then, there are also several studies that focus on the nationalism of Indonesian Christian and Islamic communities in Maluku (Duncan 2013; Malik 2017). However, these studies have not recognised the urgency of bringing the social and cultural capital of a pluralistic society into dialogue with religious non-radicalism in local churches. Additionally, there are studies on moderate teachings from Islamic perspectives that engage with Pancasila rather than relying on the perspectives of local churches (Ahmad et al. 2021; Al-Qurtuby 2018; Nafi'a et al. 2022). Meanwhile, this research will focus on a phenomenological approach to religious non-radicalism based on Pancasila, engaging with the social and cultural capital within the context of local churches, particularly in Maluku and North Maluku. In other words, previous studies have not thoroughly examined the roles of local churches in fostering harmonious coexistence with religious non-radicalism in alignment with Pancasila, which is the central issue of this research.

The research method used is qualitative, drawing on the views of Edmund Husserl as developed by Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra. The interpretive paradigm of qualitative research aims to provide meaning to the phenomena being studied based on factual reality, ensuring that the quality of data is maintained throughout the research (Ahimsa-Putra 2009). The focus of this perspective is on awareness to describe phenomena without being quick to judge them. Therefore, the researcher's awareness of explaining the phenomena under study is prioritised, which is in line with openness to understanding various views, knowledge, values, norms, rules and relationships, as well as the behaviour of individuals and society collectively as they are (Ahimsa-Putra 2009). In this research, the phenomenon of the religious non-radicalism model that is in line with Pancasila is the main study material. In this research, religious non-radicalism in local churches will be mapped (social and cultural capital; understanding related to religious non-radicalism), analysed (empirical experience; implementation in local church teachings, regulations and programmes) and developed into a model of religious non-radicalism from the perspectives of the local churches.

Mapping social and cultural capital at the local church level in Maluku and North Maluku

Bourdieu defines social capital as a collection of actual or potential resources that are interrelated to create institutionalised and long-term networks, thereby conceptualising mutually beneficial friendship relationships (Boerdieu 1986). Hasbullah further explains that social capital emphasises the dimensions that make people unite to achieve common goals on the basis of togetherness in which they are bound by values and norms that grow and are adhered to (Hasbullah 2006). *Gereja Protestan Maluku* (GPM) [Protestant Church of Moluccas] has 34 *Klasis* [classis]¹ spread across Maluku and North Maluku. Each *Klasis* has social and cultural capital that contributes to strengthening life together among religious communities and minimising the emergence of conflicts between religious communities. Based on the results of interviews obtained at the *Klasis* GPM in Pulau Ambon (Ambon City), *Klasis* GPM in Kairatu (Seram Bagian Barat), *Klasis* GPM in Masohi (Masohi), *Klasis* GPM in Kei Kecil (Tual) and *Klasis* GPM in Bacan (Maluku Utara), it is found that the five areas of GPM ministry had a social perspective that binds living relations together and a local culture that plays a role in strengthening fraternal relations between religious communities, including Ambon City, West Seram (Kairatu) and Central Maluku (Masohi) that have culture of *Pela-Gandong*, Southeast Maluku (Tual) that has culture of *Ain ni Ain* and Bacan (Labuha) that has the culture of *Saruma* (Dias 2023).

The life of *orang basudara* [fraternal relationship], which becomes the legacy of their ancestors, should be preserved and passed on throughout history. If conflicts occur between groups that can spread to religious sentiments, the culture of *Pela-Gandong*, the culture of *Ain ni Ain* and the culture of *Saruma* remind them that they are *orang sodara* [relatives] who should *hidop laeng sayang laeng* [live loving each other], *hidop laeng tolong laeng* [live helping each other], *hidop laeng bantu laeng* [live helping each other] and should not to be hostile to each other and make things difficult for one another. These cultures are still alive to maintain fraternal relations between Christians and Muslims in Ambon, Kairatu, Masohi, Tual and Bacan.

Mapping the local churches' understanding of religious non-radicalism in harmony with Pancasila

Gereja Protestan Maluku understands that its duties and functions are manifestations of God's work, aimed at fostering intensive encounters with the world and humanity. This openness is intended as a response to the complex, multidimensional challenges of human life. Between 2005 and 2015 in the *Pola Induk Pelayanan and Rencana Induk*

Pengembangan Pelayanan (PIP-RIPP) [Service Master Pattern and Service Development Master Plan] GPM embodied a transformative ecclesiological perspective by developing the praxis of ministry to being the church for the poor and being the church for others (Werinussa 2017). Based on such church vision, two problematic poles emerged at that time, namely: poverty as a direct result of multidimensional crises (social, economic and humanitarian crises) and the importance of interreligious peace. *Gereja Protestan Maluku* believes that restoring the socio-economic condition of society is the same task as restoring the condition of interreligious or intergroup peace (Maspaitella 2017).

Then, between 2015 and 2020, GPM developed an understanding of ecclesiology that translated the concept of becoming an *Orang Basudara* Church, namely a prophetic imperative that requires an effort to continue the struggle for peace as a way for GPM to meet others equally and carry out a spiritual sharing process to strengthen the ties of living together on the basis of the socio-cultural wisdom of the people in Maluku and North Maluku. This also becomes the foundation for fostering awareness of fraternity in Indonesia that is built from the basis of national wisdom, namely Pancasila that contains a set of virtues and common good for living together as a nation (Timo 2017).

The *Orang Basudara* Church emphasises that GPM builds an inclusive perspective in the context of a multicultural society in Indonesia. Here, the term of *Orang Basudara* Church does not mean that GPM wishes to include the Muslims as part of the fellowship of believers in Christ or members of GPM. *Gereja Protestan Maluku* views others as brothers and sisters, including those of different religions. The value of fraternity as the heart of the theology of religions makes all religions able to maintain a harmonious life while increasing social resilience to ward off radical religious teachings that damage the foundations of fraternity (Watloly 2017). Specifically, for GPM, the fraternal relationship is something sacred because the fraternity is established based on a sacred customary oath by drinking blood that binds the life of fraternity as younger and older siblings even though they have different religions, such as that depicted in the *Pela Gandong* culture in Central Maluku (Hehanussa 2009). This strengthens their solidarity and inclusive spirituality to help each other in religious and social life. The view continues to be developed by GPM at the Synod level in the church ministry programme contained in PIP-RIPP Phase II 2020–2025, which focusses on developing interfaith cooperation to manage humanitarian problems. Furthermore, church ministry programmes at the *Klasis* and Congregation levels, especially in the *Bidang Pengembangan Oikumene Semesta* [Universal Ecumenical Development Field], Scope of Interreligious Cooperation, are guided by the PIP-RIPP GPM that places an emphasis on cooperation between religions and beliefs to manage humanitarian problems (MPH Sinode GPM 2016a).

Gereja Protestan Maluku has an inclusive religious view that departs from a theological praxis in the context faced by GPM in connection with the Maluku and North Maluku

1. *Classis* [*Klasis*] is a regional service unit of the GPM which includes a number of congregations formed as a response from the church to geographical challenges in order to facilitate the implementation of church services.

conflicts in 1999 as a period of social humanitarian crisis. This crisis made GPM choose to fight for life, against violence, reject deception, build theological repentance and strengthen cohesion. All of these choices are processed through actions of peace and fraternity with others and the universe created by God (Maspaiteella 2017). Gereja Protestan Maluku recognises that all human beings in the world and all religious believers on earth are members of God's family who should help, support, assist and bear each other's burdens. The family of God is interpreted as a form of complete social relations but not easily resolved and scattered because all human beings and all religious believers are equal inhabitants of one earth and live on the same land. This is the basis for the members of GPM to live together with all religious communities (indigenous or ethnic religions, such as *Nuauulu* [an indigenous belief], Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism). Realising a pattern of living together in such a way allows religions to live in an atmosphere of love without dogmatic burdens. Fraternal relations are the essential dogma of religions, and without them, religion loses its essence as a form of human reflection on the relationship of dependence between one another, human beings and God (Maspaiteella 2017).

Mapping the implementation of religious non-radicalism in Gereja Protestan Maluku teachings, regulations and programmes

In the GPM teachings that underlie all church ministry movements, it is revealed that the GPM's attitude towards other religions is that other religions are accepted and recognised as religions that also teach truth and goodness to their adherents. Therefore, GPM needs to build relationships that respect each other and the differences of other religions, besides GPM carries out ongoing dialogue in daily life (life and/or heart dialogue). The dialogue prioritises mutual respect among humble individuals, like Jesus, who open their hearts, accept one another and work together to build a community of love. For GPM, religious differences do not hinder church members from living together and collaborating in various ways. Gereja Protestan Maluku believes it is essential to collaborate with other religions, as they also share the responsibility to promote goodness for humanity and the universe. This includes seeking prosperity and upholding justice and truth for all people and the world created by God (Himpunan Pemahaman Iman GPM 2019).

In the teachings of GPM, it is also explicitly revealed that the church's attitude towards radicalism in religion is that GPM rejects radicalism in religion, including Christianity. For GPM, the differences that exist in each religion are riches that should be respected and appreciated. Therefore, insulting and mocking other religions are unacceptable (Himpunan Pemahaman Iman GPM 2019). Gereja Protestan Maluku recognises that there are no distances or barriers between ethnicities and religions. Distances and barriers are opened not only by information and communication in the current

global era but also by awareness of humanity as a universal reality. Gereja Protestan Maluku understands that humanitarian problems are not problems of one nation or one religion but problems of all nations and religions. Therefore, GPM is called to build a positive attitude towards humanity. The whole humanity of a Christian (a Catholic or a Protestant) or a Muslim or a Hindu or a Buddhist or a Confucian is the same and equal because each person is created by God. The whole of humanity should not be compartmentalised for any reason, including religious and national reasons (Himpunan Pemahaman Iman GPM 2019).

The GPM's attention to life and humanity has been implemented in the GPM's agenda since 1999–2002 when the church focussed on the agenda of ending humanitarian conflicts and their escalation, including handling refugees and social, psychological and physical relocation, rehabilitation and reconciliation, in addition to peace and trust building. Furthermore, the PIP-RIPP of GPM 2005–2015 increasingly directed GPM to continue the peace and trust-building agenda as an ecclesiastical movement that is open to encounter with others. To emphasise GPM's commitment to realising peace and trust building, GPM discussed the GPM Church Order [*Tata Gereja*] GPM, between 2010 and 2015, by recognising the existence of other religions as part of the GPM ministry. This is a conscious effort to establish the GPM paradigm of peace and fraternity from theological and ecclesiological perspectives (Maspaiteella 2017).

Several GPM programmes at the Synod level were carried out to minimise segregation between Christians and Muslims because of conflicts and rebuild life together post-conflict, namely: fostering intensive social interaction and communication at their respective locations and organising dialogue and cooperation between religious communities. These programmes include the presence of GPM priests living in the Islamic Village in Tulehu, Batu Merah and Kebun Cengkeh between 2005 and 2006. This programme produced good results in reducing suspicion of each other. At the level of religious leadership, togetherness is carried out intensively to encourage each other and develop the congregations together. The Chairman of the GPM Synod between 2005 and 2010, John Chr. Ruhlessin, was asked several times to deliver lectures in the context of *Buka Puasa* (Breaking Fast Together). Islamic leaders were also asked to deliver lectures and spiritual guidance to pastors and congregations of GPM as one of the implementations of *Orang Basudara Church* (Maspaiteella 2017).

Furthermore, the PIP-RIPP of GPM 2016–2025 mandates GPM to further increase peace and trust-building efforts by strengthening the basis of understanding and awareness of fraternity among church members and the wider community. Therefore, GPM expands the area of peace education with a view of fraternity, not only to relations between human beings and religious believers but also between human beings and all of God's creation. The atmosphere of fraternity is also expanded to understand relations between citizens of

the nation or to build fraternity as fellows of Indonesians. Interfaith dialogue and cooperation are increasingly being promoted targeting social problems, reducing the practice of politicising religion in government and distributing the benefits of development policies equally and fairly (Maspaiteella 2017). The *Baku Dapa Anak & Remaja* [Meeting of Children and Teenagers] at the GPM Synod level that was carried out on between 01 June 2024 and 26 June 2024 at the Klasis GPM Masohi also involved Muslim Teenagers who participated as a form of joint commitment to maintaining interfaith relations in Maluku.

Gereja Protestan Maluku ministry programmes at the Klasis and Congregation levels are also oriented towards improving interreligious relations that are handled by the Universal Development Sector, Scope of Interreligious Cooperation and Beliefs in GPM. The ministry programme related to relations between religions at the Klasis and Congregation levels is a derivative programme from the PIP-RIPP GPM between 2016 and 2025, at the Synod level. The Klasis GPM Kairatu (West Seram) ministry programme between 2019 and 2021, which was handled by the Scope on Cooperation between Religions and Beliefs in GPM, had an agenda for increasing relations and cooperation between religions and other beliefs to deal with social problems. These programmes at Klasis GPM Kairatu between 2019 and 2024 were prioritised for developing the congregations that coexist with other religions, fostering relations between religions and beliefs through communication and dialogue forums and social ministry between religious believers and other beliefs, as noted in 2023 at the Klasis GPM Kairatu programme. This interreligious cooperation agenda has been realised at the congregation level, such as in the Jemaat GPM Kamal and Klasis GPM Kairatu, where the cleaning of the church building and the Pastory's construction of Jemaat GPM Kamal are not only carried out by Christians but also with the participation of Muslims from Kamal. Likewise, when the mosque was being built in Kamal, Christians in the area assisted with the construction and cleaning as a gesture of solidarity between religious communities. The programme of Klasis GPM Kairatu through the Fellowship [*Kring*] of Imanuel was also oriented towards maintaining harmonious interfaith relations by providing social assistance to Islamic boarding schools and Islamic orphanages in Kamal in 2023.

Then, the Klasis GPM Masohi programmes that oriented towards improving interreligious relations and cooperation were also paid attention by the Universal Ecumenical Development Sector through Scope of Interreligious and Belief Cooperation in the form of interreligious dialogue and communication between religious leaders to overcome and deal with social problems that affected religious communities, where religions could be dragged into group problems that could trigger interreligious conflicts at the Klasis GPM Masohi, between 2020 and 2024. Angkatan Muda GPM (AMGPM) in Masohi also joined together to maintain interreligious fraternal relations through the joint participation of the AMGPM and Islamic youth in the film festival in

Masohi. This activity aimed to open up the relationships with each other. Apart from that, when Islamic youth performed *Sholat Idhul Adha* at the mosque, the AMGPM maintained security and a smooth prayer process among Muslims. Likewise, during the Christian Christmas celebration ministry, the Islamic youth participated in maintaining the security and smoothness of Christian Christmas services.

The church's attention to the importance of improving interfaith relations among church members in the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon also finds a place in the Strategic Plan of Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon 2021–2025. This Strategic Plan emphasises that congregations that have direct contact with other religious communities, Jemaat GPM Rehoboth, Jemaat GPM Bethesda and Jemaat GPM Pniel Bentas need to carry out activities to build a harmonious life with the Muslim community. Apart from that, Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon strengthens the understanding of the people and servants regarding the reality of pluralism as a gift from God. Furthermore, good communication (dialogue) and cooperation with Muslims are carried out by involving government officials at *Rukun Tetangga/Rukun Warga*, villages, subdistricts, the City Government of Ambon, Provincial Government of Maluku and other stakeholders. This agenda is carried out in order to eliminate attitudes of exclusivism and intolerance among Christians in the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon as attitudes that are contrary to the essence of the life of *orang basudara* among the society of Maluku and Ambon City at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, in 2021. Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon previously carried out strengthening interfaith relations targeted at the grassroots level in 2019. This programme was targeted at interfaith women's groups within Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, in 2019. In 2021, a service agenda was also carried out to develop interreligious cooperation through joint action activities providing basic necessities to other religious communities in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, in 2021. Furthermore, interfaith (Christian and Muslim) youth meeting activities were being programmed in 2022 targeting youth groups of the Jemaat GPM Bethesda, Pniel Bentas, Amahusu and Pohon Mangga (Islam area) at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon in 2022. Joint actions between Christians in Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon and other religious communities were carried out to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing business capital [*papalele*] for the Jemaat GPM Tunj and basic food supplies for Islamic boarding schools at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, 2023. Likewise, the teenagers' agenda for interfaith gatherings involving teenagers from Jemaat GPM Bethesda, Pniel Bentas, Amahusu and Pohon Mangga (Islam area) was held in June 2023 and June 2024 at the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, in 2023 and 2024. Interfaith discussion activities (Church youth and Muslims) about radicalism to build awareness of relations between brothers and sisters of different beliefs were also carried out by the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, in 2023.

Besides that, Klasis GPM in Kei Kecil (Tual) and Klasis GPM in Bacan priority programmes oriented towards improving interreligious relations and communication between religious leaders to overcome and deal with social problems that include religious elements as a provocation for the emergence of large-scale conflicts are also on the agenda in Klasis and Congregation levels at the Klasis GPM Kei Kecil, between 2020 and 2024. At the Congregation level within the Klasis GPM Kei Kecil, Jemaat GPM Anugerah collaborates with the regional government and other religious leaders through the Congregation Council and pastors to engage in dialogues aimed at maintaining security and order in Tual, Southeast Maluku Regency. Additionally, Jemaat GPM Anugerah's Easter agenda, which included the Way of the Cross activity involving Catholic and mosque youth, was successful and well received. The involvement of Jemaat GPM Anugerah's members in maintaining security and facilitating fasting and *Takbiran* Evenings was carried out by Muslims in Tual. The Chairman of the Jemaat GPM Anugerah is also a member of the Forum *Kerukunan Umat Beragama* (FKUB), which collaborates with other religious leaders to discuss and find solutions for resolving disputes between communities in Tual. Likewise, if there are Catholic activities, the Jemaat GPM Anugerah also supports them. For example, when the Amboina Diocese arrived in Tual, the congregation welcomed them into the church building of the Jemaat GPM Anugerah. Jemaat GPM Anugerah is also involved in interfaith youth camp activities in Tual. The participation of the Congregation Council of Jemaat GPM Anugerah to build relations between religious believers extends to the environment, where they live or when there is friction involving Protestant youth and Catholic youth, they mutually protect young people in their respective environments, so that the friction does not escalate into conflicts that are widespread. This is achieved through effective communication and coordination with the Environmental Head of GPM.

Jemaat GPM Tual together with the Klasis GPM Kei Kecil also held an Interfaith Discussion activity in Tual City involving Protestant, Catholicism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The results of this activity invited religious communities to maintain mutual peace and fraternity. This was created through security actions carried out by Christian youth when Muslims celebrated *Idul Fitri* in Tual City. Likewise, during Christmas, Muslim youth took part in maintaining security during Christian Christmas services. The pastors of Klasis GPM Kei Kecil also joined together to celebrate the *Idul Fitri* holiday by gathering together with Muslims as a commitment to building harmonious relations with Muslims in Tual. The Chairperson of the Klasis GPM Kei Kecil and the FKUB in Tual City always together discuss problems that occur in Tual City. The results of the meeting directed religious communities to maintain religious tolerance. Therefore, the Protestant leaders were responsible for conveying the results of the meeting to AMGPM, Catholic leaders and Islamic leaders to the mosque teenagers to maintain a tolerant life for each other. Communication between Congregation Councils with

the local government and the traditional parties [*tiga batu tungku*] is also carried out to prevent widespread conflicts between communities and maintain harmony between religious communities in Tual City.

Tolerance between religious communities in the Klasis GPM Bacan was developed by the church through actions carried out during the *Hari Raya Idul Fitri* and *Hari Raya Kurban*, where the church was present to take part in all of these religious celebrations. The church also supported Muslims' religious celebrations in Bacan by providing sacrificial animals. Likewise, if Christmas was celebrated by Christians, Muslims would also support it by maintaining security during the Christmas service. This showed that there were no boundaries and distance between Christians and Muslims in Bacan. Communication between church leaders at the Jemaat GPM Labuha and Muslim figures, Sultan of Bacan, was also carried out by the Chairman of the Congregation Council and the Pastor of the Jemaat GPM Labuha, Bacan, together with the members of the Jemaat GPM Labuha, Bacan. This happened when Muslims celebrated *Idul Fitri* at the Kedaton Kesultanan Bacan, and the Chairman of the Congregation Council and Pastor of the Jemaat GPM Labuha, Bacan, together with members of the Jemaat GPM Labuha, Bacan, participated in it. They took part in visiting the Sultan of Bacan and his people at the Kedaton Kesultanan Bacan. This was carried out to strengthen ties with Muslims as well as maintain religious harmony in the Kesultanan Bacan.

Analysis of empirical experience and implementation of religious non-radicalism in local church teachings, regulations and programmes

The church's open and inclusive attitude towards adherents of other religions and beliefs as well as perpetuating harmony and cooperation in transformative action dialogue makes the church meaningful for humanity. Yewangoe views that by this attitude the presence of the church in the world will always be felt by humanity, not just Christians (Yewangoe 2013). In the context of Indonesia as a pluralistic country based on Pancasila, a church that is open and inclusive towards adherents of other religions and beliefs increasingly emphasises the existence of a church that campaigns for its desire to live together, even though it has to live in the diversity, especially religious diversity. The desire to live together like this is what Renan believes is the source of the formation of a nation (Renan 1994). The church's desire to live together in the religious differences of Indonesian society confirms itself as an agent for the realisation of the meaning of Pancasila values.

Pancasila as the ideology of the Indonesian nation contains the values of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the church as part of state life in Indonesia should understand the importance of Pancasila and play an active role in exploring the values contained in Pancasila to be implemented

into everyday church life (Timo 2022). The church needs to develop teachings that are in line with Pancasila values to maintain religious harmony in Indonesia's diverse society. The church's teachings prioritise the values of fraternity and humanity between fellow human beings in order to prevent radicalism that undermines the unity and integrity of all Indonesian society.

Exploring the GPM's roles regarding empirical experience and implementation of religious non-radicalism in church teachings, regulations and programmes at the Synod, Klasis and Congregation levels in five regions (districts and cities), namely: Ambon City, West Seram Regency (Kairatu), Central Maluku Regency (Masohi), Tual (Southeast Maluku) and South Halmahera Regency, North Maluku (Bacan), show that GPM is a church that declares itself to be a religious non-radicalist church in that kind of context. Gereja Protestan Maluku has made itself explicit as a church that is anti-radicalism and loves peace as well as a church that embraces adherents of other religions and beliefs to live together in the Republic of Indonesia (RI). Gereja Protestan Maluku's attitude is clearly expressed in the GPM Church's teachings that GPM rejects radicalism in religions including Christianity. Gereja Protestan Maluku respects the differences that exist within each religion. At the same time, GPM is hostile to insulting and ridiculing other religions as something that cannot be accepted as true (Himpunan Pemahaman Iman GPM 2019). This GPM attitude is a universal attitude that applies institutionally and functionally in church service programmes at the Synod, Klasis and Congregation levels. Even the GPM regulations that have the main position, namely the Church Order, have explicitly expressed the recognition of the existence of other religions as part of the GPM ministry (Maspaiteella 2017).

Implementation of GPM's Church Teachings and GPM's Church Regulations regarding open relations between churches and other religions as well as rejection of radicalism is manifested in ministry programmes at the Synod level through PIP-RIPP GPM, Klasis through the Strategic Plan and Annual Ministry Programme and the Congregation through the Strategic Plan and Annual Ministry Programme. PIP-RIPP GPM that mandates the church to increase peace and trust-building efforts by strengthening the basis of understanding and awareness of fraternity among church members and the wider community is part of the imperative that requires the church to build relationships with adherents of other religions and beliefs. Therefore, ministry programmes at the Synod, Klasis and Congregation levels, especially Klasis and congregations in the Klasis GPM Pulau Ambon, Klasis GPM Kairatu, Klasis GPM Masohi, Klasis GPM Kei Kecil and Klasis GPM Bacan, have been related to the agenda of Interfaith Relations and Belief Systems handled by the Universal Ecumenical Development Division. The integrated GPM agenda from the Synod, Klasis and Congregation levels shows GPM's commitment to the importance of building fraternity between GPM and religious communities. This commitment builds fraternity while also contributing to the

integrity of Indonesia as a large and diverse nation. This kind of commitment is conveyed by Yewangoe as a form of the church practising the values of Pancasila, especially Principle 1 'Belief in One Almighty God'. God in Christianity fills it with a personal God in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God who incarnates is a God who loves all human beings, including the Indonesian people (Yewangoe 2018b). Such a view is a statement that gives confirmation to Christians to love and respect other people who have different religions. Therefore, religion is not something to be shown off, especially by denigrating other religions but by being a channel of blessings to all. Religion should be practised humbly. At this point, Christians have the opportunity to testify about the Christian faith in a very real context, the context of Pancasila within the Indonesian State and Nation that embraces all differences in the diction of 'one nation', namely the Indonesian nation (Yewangoe 2015, 2018b). This is a manifestation of the operationalisation of the theology of utilitarianism that is a Christian doctrine that aims to advance the good of humanity and encourage human progress and happiness, because God, the Benevolent Creator, wants His human creation to do so (Flannagan 2023).

Gereja Protestan Maluku supports the spirit of unity in the bonds of fraternity as Moluccans who share the culture of *orang basudara*. Even though the Maluku society has different religions such as Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religious beliefs, their fraternity is bound by the culture of *Pela Gandong*, *Ain ni Ain* and *Saruma*. Watloly reveals that being Maluku people means being *orang basudara* with all the people of the pluralistic Province of Maluku. Within the *orang basudara*, there is a sense of fraternity between *Sarane* (Christianity) and *Salam* (Islam), and there are *Pela Gandong*, *Kai Wait*, *Ursia-Urlim*, *Lorsiv-Lorlim*, *Duan Lolat*, *Kalwedo* and *Sioli Lieta*. Thus, the construction of Maluku's Christianity should reflect the Christianity of the *orang basudara* for other religions (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and indigenous religions in Maluku) as well as the beliefs that live in Maluku. The Christians of Maluku are not Christians who are hostile to the fellows of *Salam* of *orang basudara* (Islam), Buddhism, Hinduism and indigenous religions in Maluku, but rather Christians who are tasked with channelling the love and saving work of God in Jesus Christ to embrace, unite, care and develop the integrity of the existence of *orang basudara* with their fellow brothers and sisters of other religions (Watloly 2017).

Development of a religious non-radicalism model from local churches' perspectives

Model development aims to enhance the functioning of a specific product. Through this model, individuals will gain a clearer understanding of the problem being addressed. The GPM model of religious non-radicalism in Maluku and North Maluku, developed from this research, focusses on religious non-radicalism from the perspective of local church cultures. *Pela Gandong*, *Ain ni Ain* and *Saruma* are cultural institutions

of the Maluku people that serve as solid foundations for the lives of the *orang basudara*. They can foster coexistence amid religious differences and promote a rejection of violence in the name of religion within social life. Culture, as the glue of fraternity among different religions, is essential. Therefore, the cultural values and traditions inherited from our ancestors should be passed down through generations, ensuring that the spirit of fraternal love amid diversity remains vibrant. The spirit of the *orang basudara* fosters the awareness that, despite differing religions, all people share a common ancestry. We are united by the blood that flows from the same ancestor. In this way, the divisions that often arise from religious conflicts and can be exploited by radicalism can be addressed through a culture of fraternity among communities.

Religion is basically a foundation, belief and guidance to life, but religion is often used as a scapegoat for the emergence of radicalism in society. Diversity in Indonesia as is in Maluku has the potential to cause violence between religious communities. The condition of religion that often becomes a source of radicalism because of various human interests makes the project of religious harmony through the agenda of preserving and actualising the cultural values of the *orang basudara* necessary in everyday life. The cultural heritage of ancestors owned by people of different religions needs to be developed to strengthen harmonious and peaceful religious relations (Huda & Khasanah 2019).

Maluku is rich in fraternal cultures that foster relationships among people of different religions and beliefs. The cultures of *Pela Gandong*, *Ain ni Ain* and *Saruma* promote mutual respect among religious communities and village residents, having developed since their origins. These fraternal relationships are founded on genealogical kinship, stemming from an ancient agreement to support each other's ancestors. For instance, in the *Pela Gandong* tradition, differences do not lead to conflict; instead, they are reconciled through a promise and oath as *orang basudara*. *Pela Gandong* serves as an identity that unites society beyond religious boundaries. It embodies a set of fraternal values that uphold common interests, including tolerance, integration, reconciliation and solidarity. This relationship is solidified through traditional vows, binding people of the same blood who share commitments, ideals and goals. Together, they strive to maintain their cultural identity and strengthen feelings of fraternity and solidarity within a shared space that includes adherents of different religions, specifically Islam and Christianity, in Maluku (Adriaansz, Lattu & Pilakoannu 2019).

The culture of *Ain ni Ain* in Tual, rooted in the Kei community's philosophy of life, relies on fraternal relationships inherited from their ancestors. *Ain ni Ain* embodies the values of tolerance, mutual love and respect, unity and fraternity. It transcends religious differences, as *Ain* in Kei means 'one' (one in diversity) and *Ni* means 'to have or own'. Thus, *Ain ni Ain* serves as the foundation of Kei society, where everyone is regarded as a brother or sister within one family. This perspective fosters mutual security and order while upholding human dignity and respecting human rights.

These values were tested during the ethnic, religious and racial conflicts that occurred in Maluku in 1999. In that challenging period, *Ain ni Ain* played a crucial role in helping the Kei people live side by side and accept one another. The Kei community embraces *Ain ni Ain* as a cultural principle that promotes harmony and opposes violence, including violence committed in the name of religion (Kotin & Refo 2023; Kudubun 2016; Renhoat 2023; Nuruddin & Aksa 2022).

Saruma in Bacan, South Halmahera-North Maluku, embodies the same values of fraternity as *Pela Gandong* and *Ain Ni Ain*. It carries a philosophical meaning in social life, emphasising that everyone lives under one roof, highlighting the absence of differences among individuals. A community composed of followers from various religions is considered one family, where mutual respect and tolerance among believers are essential. The *Saruma* relationship bridges the gap between followers of Islam and Christianity, promoting a harmonious, safe and comfortable coexistence (Dias 2023). For the people of Bacan and South Halmahera, *Saruma* represents the values of fraternity, unity and peace within their diverse communities, helping to mitigate various conflicts they encounter. In *Saruma* culture, all differences, including religious ones, are seen through the lens of unity – one house, one soul or one heart – reflecting a cultural tradition passed down through generations by the ancestors of the Kesultanan Bacan (Usman 2006).

The fraternity fostered by the cultures of *Pela Gandong*, *Ain ni Ain* and *Sarumah* can serve as a foundation for strengthening harmonious relations between religious communities. The values of fraternity embedded in these important cultures are seen as noble treasures that cannot be undermined by the greed and radical lifestyles of individuals. This is a crucial priority for religion, particularly for GPM, which is dedicated to promoting peace and prosperity in the world. This perspective aligns with GPM's teachings, which emphasise the need for the church to cultivate interfaith relations with a focus on respecting life. According to GPM, no religion has the right to hate, discriminate against, eliminate or destroy a minority deemed foreign because of differing beliefs or ethnicities. In the event of a conflict, it should be resolved non-violently, within the framework of respect for life and humanity (MPH Sinode GPM 2016b).

In addition, GPM upholds solidarity and justice for the welfare of Indonesian society, advocating for those who are oppressed, poor and marginalised. Dialogue and cooperation are also central to GPM's approach, serving as dynamic, creative and fundamental responses to the challenges of religious pluralism (MPH Sinode GPM 2016b). For GPM, dialogue should be framed within the context of faith, life and work. Moreover, GPM promotes tolerance and truth to foster a peaceful, fraternal life together. Therefore, without tolerance, mutual respect and appreciation, it is impossible for religious individuals to cultivate a peaceful fraternal life that honours human dignity (MPH Sinode GPM 2016b).

The teachings of GPM regarding tolerance, particularly in the context of religious non-radicalism, align with the concept of tolerance that prioritises religious non-radicalism in Islam. Anandari and Afriyanto explain that tolerance is a modern concept that describes an attitude of mutual respect and cooperation among diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural, political and religious communities. Tolerance is a noble principle that is an integral part of religious teachings, including Islam, aimed at fostering universal fraternity (Anandari & Afriyanto 2022). Furthermore, Anandari and Afriyanto emphasise that maintaining harmony among religious communities is a core principle taught in Islam. By living in harmony, both Muslims and non-Muslims can foster mutual respect and appreciation, leading to increasingly harmonious relationships (Anandari & Afriyanto 2022).

Religious non-radicalism emphasises the essential nature of religion: bringing peace and rejecting violence. Therefore, religion should shape the lifestyles of its followers, rather than fostering exclusive sentiments that view those of different faiths as enemies. When exclusivity develops among religious individuals, they become vulnerable to exploitation and conflict with one another. Thus, promoting a lifestyle among religious people that embrace humanity and fraternity is essential. From an Islamic perspective, Islamic fraternity [*Ukhurwah Islamiyah*] highlights the social aspects of worship as the foundation for building a fraternal community. The virtue of *Ukhurwah Islamiyah* can eliminate hostility, egoism and self-interest, fostering a spirit of cooperation that establishes a strong sense of fraternity among all people. This reflects Islam's commitment to upholding relationships of fraternity that transcend boundaries, such as differences in ethnicity, skin colour, language and even religion or belief (Hurrodiah & Yasir 2021).

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Authors' contributions

J.R.S., H.H.H. and R.R.T.S. collaboratively conceived the central idea for the research. J.R.S. led the project from

conception to the completion of the final article, conducting, analysing and finalising both the research and the article submission. H.H.H. contributed to the conception of the research throughout the entire process. R.R.T.S. also contributed to the conception and played a key role in editing, reviewing and finalising the article for submission.

Ethical considerations

This article follows all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human and animal subjects.

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Data availability

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

Disclaimer

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