The Social Reality of Cross-religion youth community in Indonesia

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Abstract

The study aims at identifying how the social reality of cross-religion youth community in playing the role and implementing the ethics of preaching throughout Indonesia so that a life setting of plurally harmonious plural society with different religious backgrounds. In conducting the study, the theory of social construction has been adopted. Through this theory, the thoughts of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann identify that the process of social reality does not present itself as it is but, instead, the process of social reality is accepted and interpreted through a dialectical process with long and recurrent feedback among the social actors. Furthermore, the study itself is a descriptive qualitative research using the phenomenological approach. The type of the study itself is field research, which makes use of the phenomenological approach in order to specifically find the reality that has taken place within the society. The results of the study have found the reality that the cross-religion youth community has shaped using the method of preaching that goes in accordance with the teachings of each religion. In this occasion, the cross-religion youth community has been established as an organization by the society of different religious backgrounds in order to help and care with each other through a number of cooperation for the sake of the common goodness so that communal activities can be performed in order to create inter-religion community harmony.

Keywords: Social Reality, communication, Cross-religion youth community, Preaching

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with the largest Moslem population in Asia and even in the world. The number of Indonesian populations nowadays has been predicted to be around 250,000,000 people with diverse tribes, dialects, religions, and cultures. As a description of the vast number of Indonesian populations, Tjahjo Kumolo, as having been quoted by Tribun Newspaper Central Java (Kumolo, 2016), states that the number of Indonesian populations by June 30th, 2016, has been 257,912,349 people. This number is presumably to increase by 2020.

As a state that has gained her independence since August 17th, 1945, up to date Indonesia consists of around 30 provinces and hundred regencies. Specifically, Indonesia consists of 34 provinces, 486 regencies and cities, 6,793 districts, 72,944 villages, and 81,253 urban villages. Departing from these figures, the big six religions in Indonesia consist of Islamism, Catholicism, Christianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. In addition, some
Indonesian people also adopt minor religions such as Taoism, Bahaism, and tribal beliefs. Definitely, all of these figures sum up the diversity in the country.

Indonesia is a unitary state that consists of numerous ethnical, cultural, and religious plurality, which has been an inherent identity within the society. Therefore, such pluralism should be understood as the reality in which people should be grateful since it resembles the wealth of the nation. In terms of geographical situations, Indonesia consists of thousand islands and this leads to the appearance of numerous primordial bonds and identities that have been inherent to the Indonesia herself. Despite the difference among them, these primordial bonds and identities are united under the principle of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika within the frame of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

In terms of numerous religions that the Indonesian people have embraced, based on the data that have been issued by the Statistics Indonesia in 2013, 207,176,162 Indonesian people are Moslem, followed by Christian (16,528,513 people), Catholic (6,907,873 people), Hindu (4,102,116 people), Buddha (1,703,254 people), and Confucius (117,091 people). Despite the plural religions, in several parts of Indonesia there are still inharmonious relationship among the communities of these religions due to the unexpected issues.

Departing from these findings, it is deemed important by the government, in this case the Ministry of Religion, to analyze the case of the relationship among the religious communities in Indonesia specifically in relation to the religion moderation. The reason is that the various communities of religion in Indonesia can lead to a number of vulnerabilities due to the different understanding and, at the same time, such different understanding can lead to the sense of suspicion among these religious communities. If such situation is not immediately and properly handled, then sooner or later disintegration will appear among the religious communities in Indonesia.

One of the possible factors that lie behind the predicted disintegration is the fanatism within the religious communities themselves. Unfortunately, it is sometimes this fanatism that unites the esoteric and exoteric areas within the religious transcendence, resulting in the fact that the society has never reached any point of agreement. Such situation happens because of the sensitive issues that linger around the conflicts of religion, making the researcher wonder about the building pattern that should be implemented within the society in order to forge the harmonious life within the society of different religions can be harmonious and tolerant. As having been well understood, although the largest Indonesian populations are Moslem, not all Indonesian people embrace Islam as their religion.

In relation to the previous paragraph, the provinces in which the Moslem population has been minority are the Province of Bali, the Province of East Nusa Tenggara, the Province of North Sulawesi, and the Province of Papua. Despite the different religions, one used to say that majority or minority does not matter since the most important thing is how to implement the teachings of each religion properly and correctly. Not only that, the sense of mutual appreciation from one religion to another becomes the ultimate teaching of each religion which should be contemplated by the communities. Unfortunately, this ultimate teaching is always abandoned when it comes to the conflict of religions.
Interestingly, although Indonesia consists of diverse tribes, dialects, cultures, and political parties, in some regions there have still been inharmonious relationship between the communities of certain religions and this kind of issue has been recurrent with unexpected cause. Ever since the fall of the New Order in 1998, the inharmonious relationship within the communities of certain religions has started to appear to the surface. The cause behind such inharmonious relationship is various, for example: (1) the inharmonious relationship between certain tribes; (2) the political issues; (3) the construction of prayer houses that does not meet the regulations stipulated by the government; and (4) political issues.

All of these situations have caused the inharmonious relationship among the religion communities and might even hinder the process of establishing harmonious relationship among the religion communities. It is based on this finding that there should be cross-religion youth community organization in each religion because such cross-religion youth community organization can serve as the motor of the inter-community religion harmony throughout Indonesia. Looking at the necessity of the establishment for such an organization, both of the Ministry of Religion and the given mass organizations should become the stakeholder within the internalization of the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika principles in pursuing cross-religion preaching activities toward all religion communities in the country. By holding onto the principle of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, the peaceful and harmonious life among the religion communities in Indonesia, especially in terms of worship, can be established in the country.

This can be seen in the da'wah process carried out by youth in Indonesia. Da’wah is the process of ameliorating the negative conditions (thoughts, feelings, behaviours) of a person or society (Briandana: 218). Specifically, the da’wah of Islam is defined as an activity to call or invite humans to change to prevent ignorance (Weng, 2018). Based on the explanation above, da’wah activities can succeed if optimally supported by an effective communication process. The communicator or preacher must also pay attention to his or her appearance and the message to be conveyed to the mad’u so that an active communication process is established (Bakti, 2003). Departing from the overall explanation, the researcher would like to review further the reality that has been shaped by the cross-religion youth community in carrying out their role and ethics within their preaching activities in Indonesia.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Social Construction

The discussion on social construction cannot be set apart from the thoughts of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. In order to understand reality, there should be coordinated effort in attending to the process of exchange in which mind becomes the characteristics of human beings. In this case, the meaning is processed and understood by the social actors through the transformation from the meaning into the reality. The continuous transformation will eventually shape the social reality as the results of meaning construction that has been understood by the social actors. The assumption that has been developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatises in Sociological of Knowledge is the process of social reality that does not present itself as it is but, instead, the
process of social reality that is accepted and interpreted through a dialectical process with long and recurrent feedback among the social actors.

Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann state that social process is created through individual actions and interactions in which individuals intensely creates a reality that is intended to be possessed and experienced subjectively. The construction presents itself through individual action and interaction continuously toward the reality that has been possessed and experienced with the other individuals subjectively (Parera & Frans, 1990). In relation to the statement, the inter-subjective social symptoms have two dimensions namely the objective dimension and the subject dimension. Since communities do not have knowledge and understanding over their own life, they still belong to the objective dimension. Thus, all perspectives within the daily life departs from the personal thought without being influenced by the external thinking. On the contrary, the subjective understanding refers to the individual understanding from the external aspects.

The process of individual contemplation toward the environment and the individual himself is a process of externalization, objectivization, and internalization which takes places between the individual and the community. Berger & Luckmann has found the concept that links the subjective reality and the objective reality and this concept is known as dialectics. The linkage between the two types of reality is known as externalization-objectivization-internalization. Externalization refers to the self-adjustment with the socio-cultural world as the product of human beings. The individuals within the process of externalization identify themselves with the social roles that have been assigned by the existing institutions. Then, objectivization refers to the social interaction that has been institutionalized, that has undergone the process of institutionalization, or that has undergone the symbol internalization.

Communities create, establish, and maintain social meaning or reality that has been commonly agreed. In turn, they internalize the social meaning or reality into the guidelines of their daily life. Therefore, the social meaning or reality has turned individuals and communities to be the most important part of social constructors since they have become the constructed part within their mind. The statement is in line with the thoughts of Waters, which state that human beings create social realities that become the elements of coercion within themselves (Basrowi & Sukidin, 2002).

2.2 Theory of Cross-Cultural Understanding

In order to preach, the cross-religion youth community need a concept about identity and ethnicity, which has been the result of the social construction. The presence of such social construction leads to the creation of certain label or identity, which symbolizes the origin, the culture, or the peculiarity of certain groups. This identity is important for either a tribe or an ethnic because it preserves the continuity from the past to the future. In other words, almost all cultural identities, in relation to the identity of fraternity, be it the racial fraternity or the ethnical fraternity, is formed within the context of mutual relationship.

Bennet, Bennet & Allen (2003) state that cross-cultural understanding refers to the capacity to move from the ethnocentric attitude to the appreciative attitude toward the other culture in order to behave appropriately within the different cultures. Similarly, Corbett (2003) states that cross-
cultural understanding is more of the capacity to imitate the native speaker. In this regard, cross-cultural understanding puts a language learner into the position of a messenger or a diplomat who is capable to view and communicate with the different cultures through the perspective of the person holding the capacity. Culture plays an important role in the era of globalization nowadays. However, culture also has some obstacles that can hinder the inter-cultural negotiation and communication. The obstacles in understanding cultures are as follows: (1) Northouse-Ethnocentrism; and (2) Northouse-Prejudice. Northouse- Ethnocentrism proposes that ethnocentrism is the tendency of an individual to put their own group in an organization. In this category of cultural obstacle, people tend to assign higher trust and priority to their own ethnic, race, or culture in comparison to the other ethnic, race, or culture. On the contrary, the Northouse-Prejudice proposes that prejudice refers to the attitude, the belief, or the emotion that an individual has with regards to other individuals or groups on the basis of invalid or groundless data.

2.3 Concept of Inter-Religion Community Harmony

According to the Department of Religion Affairs the Republic of Indonesia, inter-religion community harmony is one of the main pillars in maintaining the unity and the sovereignty of the state. The term harmony itself is defined as the condition and the living condition that reflect the peaceful, orderly, serene, and cooperative situations in accordance with the religious teachings and the Pancasila personality. In other words, inter-religion community harmony refers to the social condition in which all religions and their disciples can live side by side without diminishing the fundamental rights of the disciples from each religion to perform their rites. In this regard, Said Agil explains that the inter-religion community harmony in Indonesia has been mapped in the form of the Harmony Trilogy namely: (1) the harmony within the disciples of the same religion, which refers to the harmony among the schools or the sects that belong to the same religion community; (2) the harmony among the disciples of the different religions, which refers to the harmony among the disciples of different religions from one another; and (3) the harmony between the disciples of religion community and the government, which refers to the harmony and the conformity between among the disciples of the religion communities, the officials of the religion communities, and the officials of the government through the understanding toward the society the religious Indonesian nations (Agil, 2005).

The Indonesian government has afforded the creation of the harmonious inter-religion community life through the concept of Tri Inter-Religion Community Harmony, or simply known as Tri Harmony. Recalling the diversity of Indonesian people in terms of ethnicity, culture, tribe, and religion, there should be a concept that enables the creation of peaceful and harmonious society since diversity is always vulnerable to conflicts. Being aware of the resistance within the inter-religion community conflicts, a number of policies that have been designed by the government are issued in order to improve the situations. Indeed, a number of regulations have been approved in order to minimize the conflict of interest among the religion communities that can take place at any time. These regulations include the discussions over the inter-religion community harmony on four main issues namely: (1) house of worship construction; (2) preach of religion; (3) religious assistance from foreign parties; and (4) foreign workers in the domain of religion. One of the strategies for strengthening the national
harmony is to create the inter-religion community harmony through the development of multiculturalism on all elements of society under the expectation upon the creation of a society that does not only admit the diversity but also lives in mutual appreciation, respect, communication, and openness. In this kind of society, there shall be no sense of suspicion since all people are tolerant and provide the place for any religion, belief, tradition, custom, and even culture. The most important thing is that through such society a sense of helping each other can be developed as a manifestation of humanity that departs from the teachings of each religion.

3. Methodology

The study adopted the phenomenology approach, which described the phenomenon of the role and the ethics that the cross-religion youth community performed in preaching the teachings of their religion. Thus, the type of the study was the field research, which had essentially been the method to identify specific reality that had been taking place within the society (Kartono, 1990, p.32). Then, all of the necessary data in the study were collected through a number of sources. The data were collected through the use of two data gathering instruments namely: (1) in-depth interview; and (2) documentation study. The data that had been attained in the study consisted of the primary data sources and the secondary data source. The primary data source was attained directly from the respondents through an in-depth interview with the informants and the direct observation toward the research site. On the contrary, the secondary data source was attained from the textbooks, the journals, the magazines, and the online articles that had been relevant to the research.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 The Reality of Relationship among the Religion Community Youth Organizations in Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the countries with the largest population in the world. Referring to the survey data from Worldometers that have been released by the United States Census Bureau, Indonesia has occupied the fourth position of the countries with the largest population in the, amounting to 273,523,615 people (Iswara, 2021). Despite having occupied the fourth position, the total area coverage of Indonesia itself is 1,811,570 km square, resulting in the population density level 151 people per km square. At the same time, the growth rate of Indonesian population has been the second highest among the top five countries with the largest population in the world, namely 1.07 percent per year.

Furthermore, referring to the data from the Statistics Indonesia, the results of 2020 Census show that the number of Indonesian populations has been 270,200,000 million people. The distribution of the population can be found in Figure 1 below.
From the data in Figure 1 above, it is apparent that the total population of the Millennial Generation and the total population of the Gen Z comprise 25.87% and 27.94% respectively. Looking at this figure, it can be defined that Indonesia has a promising future from these generations of youth. As a unitary state that consists of diverse ethnicities, cultures, and religions, which have been the inherent identity of the society, such diverse backgrounds should be understood as a fact to be grateful for since this diversity has been the heritage of the nation. Such diverse backgrounds are possible to take place because of the Indonesian geographical conditions since the country consists of thousand islands, resulting in the establishment of numerous both primordial bonds and primordial identities that relate to the peculiar characteristics of the Indonesian people themselves. Fortunately, the different identities, as well as the primordial bonds, are united under the principle of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The diversity in Indonesia has led to the numerous tribes such as Java, Batak, Bugis, and alike and all of these tribes are distributed into numerous religions. Departing from the statement, Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann through their book entitled The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociological of Knowledge (1996) describe the social process through the action and the interaction in which individuals continuously create the realities that they have already had and they have experienced subjectively. Similar situation is also found within the reality of the cross-religion youth community when they preach the teachings of their religion to their fellow disciples.

In carrying out the assigned duties, the cross-religion youth community should not be set apart from providing the assistance to the inter-religion community in Indonesia. In Indonesia alone, there are huge numbers of mass organizations with the backgrounds of religion. Some of these organizations are Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Persis, Al-Irsyad al Islamiyah, Ittidaiyah, Perti, Mathlaul Anwar (MA), Az-Zikra, The Union of Moslem People (Persatuan Umat Muslim), Ikadi, PITI, Indonesian Islamic Society (Syarikat Islam Indonesia), Al Washliyah, HMBI, Church Council in Indonesia (Persatuan Gereja Indonesia or PGI), The Bishops...
Conference of Indonesia (Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia or KWI), the Representatives of Indonesian Buddhist Disciples (Perwakilan Umat Buddha Indonesia or WALUBI) the Union of Indonesian Buddhist Disciples (Persatuan Umat Buddha Indonesia or Permabudhi), Parisa Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI), and the High Council of Confucianism in Indonesia (Majelis Tinggi Agama Konghucu di Indonesia or Matakin) (Laeis, 2020).

In relation to this solid and undeniable fact, the Forum of Harmonious Relationship among Religion Community is established in order to create and maintain the harmonious relationship among the disciples of diverse religions in Indonesia. In carrying this duty, the Forum is assisted by the Cross-religion youth community. Therefore, the Cross-religion youth community also plays a role in creating and maintaining the harmonious relationship among the disciples of diverse religions through several sectors. The Cross-religion youth community itself has implemented the role and the function optimally especially in the socialization of harmonious relationship among the disciples of diverse religions in accordance with the fundamental consensus with regards to the four pillars of the nation. The role and the function of the Cross-religion youth community are implemented in the form of discussion activities, dialogue and leisure walks. All of these activities are effective because these activities are able to establish the mutual respect among the disciples of diverse religions.

Throughout the history of Indonesia, a number of inharmonious relationships among the disciples of different religions have been recorded in some regions such as Poso (and the surrounding areas of Central Sulawesi, 1998-2000), Ambon (1999), and East Java (October 10th, 1996) altogether with the other regions. These inharmonious relationships once have made the relationship among the religion communities become inharmonious especially on the “grassroot” level. For example, in 2000, right when the Christian people held the Christmas Eve Celebration, a number of bombings took place in several churches around Jakarta, resulting in the high sense of suspicion and inharmonious inter-religion community relationships especially in the city. As having been covered by a number of mass media in Indonesia, the churches that had been bombed at that night were the Cathedral, the Canisius Church, the Saint Joseph Church, the Koinonia Church, and the Ecumenical Christian Church (Liputan 6, 2000). It was based on the bombings that the guard over the churches in the Province of Jakarta Special Capitol and the other regions had been increased at that time.

Then, on November 13th, 2016, there was another bombing that took place in front of the Ecumenical Christian Church in Samarinda, the Province of East Borneo (Damanik, 2016). On July 17th, 2015, right at the time when the Moslem people were about to conduct the Eid Mubarak Prayer, a shophouse was burned by a group of young people in Tolikara, Papua (Ilham, 2015). Not only that, on July 29th, 2016, there were four pagodas and one Buddhist temples that had been burned by a group of people in Tanjung Balai, North Sumatera (Array, 2016).

Rowell & Sinclair Community College in M. Jacky (2015, pp.32-33) states that social reality is constructed on the basis of daily social experiences that an individual or a group of individuals have. In relation to the statement, the incidents that have been previously mentioned can cause the inter-religion community relationship to be disturbed. This is the solid reason why every Christmas the churches in Jakarta and in other regions of Indonesia are heavily
guarded so that religious rites will not be disturbed. Similar to the situation, the case in which a group of people from the Curug Mekar Urban Village has refused the establishment of the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI, Gereja Kristen Indonesia) Yasmin, Bogor, on January 10th, 2008, is also another evidence of the inharmonious relationship between the Moslem people and the non-Moslem people. Although the government has made some intervention, the conflict has not been solved yet. Thus, such inharmonious relationship among the disciples of different religions in Indonesia can deteriorate the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Hans Kung explains that no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. The religion implies the significance for the disciples of religions to create peace so that the whole world can be peaceful. This matter is very important to highlight since it describes the two major religions in the world that have had inharmonious relationship, namely Christian and Islam, resulting in the huge sense of hostility among the disciples of the two religions.

The inharmonious relationship among the disciples of the two religions is described well by the conflict between the Palestinian Moslem and the Israelite Christian. Although the conflict between the two communities is not mainly caused by their religion, the countries, most of which are Islam or Christian, always regard the conflict between the two communities as the inharmonious relationship between Islam and Christian. Referring to the policy issued by Donald Trump (the President of the United States of America, who has recently been replaced by President Joe Biden), the immigrants who came from the Islamic countries had been banned from their entrance to the soil of the United States of America. The policy thus triggered the inharmonious relationship between Moslem people and Christian people. The relationship itself was deteriorated a little bit further since Islam had been considered as a threat for the United States of America since the government had been highly concerned with Islam under the administration of President Donald Trump.

In Indonesia, the case is a little bit different. On December 2nd, 2016, there was a massive demonstration in Jakarta. In this massive demonstration, millions of Moslem people from all regions in Indonesia gathered in the National Monument in order to retaliate the statement made by the Governor of the Province of Jakarta Special Capitol at that time Basuki Tjahaya Purnama which had been considered as a blasphemy for the teachings of Islam. The demonstration itself was initiated by several Islamic mass organizations with the support from their members. Through the massive demonstration, the Moslem people demanded that the Governor Basuki Tjahaya Purnama (who happens to be the descendants of Chinese and non-Moslem) should be put on a trial in accordance with the governing legislation in Indonesia since he had insulted Al-Qur’an, specifically Surah Al-Maidah Verse 51 (Wedo, 2017). Although the demonstration did not lead to the inter-religion community conflict, the political situation was on a high hostility and the inter-religion community relationship, especially in Jakarta, had become inharmonious.

The inharmonious relationship seems to not only take place between the Moslem people and the Christian people but also within the Moslem people, as having been found in the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. This incident took place in the Cigelis Village, the District of Cikeusik, the Regency of Pandeglang, the Province of Banten. The incident itself involved a group of Moslem people who defended the pure teachings of Islam
and the group of Ahmadiyah disciples, whose Islamic teachings had been considered as heresy by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI, Majelis Ulama Indonesia).

Five years later, another conflict among the Moslem people themselves took place in the Antibar Village, the District of East Mempawah, the Regency of Mempawah, the Province of West Borneo. The incident involved the Moslem people in Mempawah and the Moslem people under an organization named the Movement of Archipelago Dawn (Gafatar, Gerakan Fajar Nusantara). The inharmonious relationships between the two Moslem communities had been on the rise since January 19th, 2016. As the solution to the conflict, the members of Gafatar organization were asked by the regional government to return to their hometown throughout the Java islands.

Departing from the above explanations, it is clear that the inharmonious relationships have been caused by both the internal conflict and the external conflict within the religion communities. If these conflicts are not properly managed, then the inharmonious relationship among the religion communities can be turned into a tool for disintegrating the unity of the Republic of Indonesia by the irresponsible parties. In order to solve such conflicts, there should be different approaches, methods, and problem-solving skills since Indonesia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religion country. Therefore, the inter-religion community conflict will always linger and it can take place at any time in any place and this solid fact highlights the needs to pursue proper problem solution.

4.2 The Role of Cross-religion youth community

As an organization, cross-religion youth community consists of the young people with different religious background. These people form a community in order to create the harmony among the religion communities. The cross-religion youth community themselves are established by the religion communities in order to know, help, and respect each other for the sake of the common goodness. This initiative is pursued by holding a number of activities together in order to create the inter-religion community harmony. In other words, the presence of the cross-religion youth community is intended to symbolically pioneer the inter-religion community harmony in Indonesia.

The inter-religion community harmony becomes an important foundation within any multi-ethnic and multi-religion society. Otherwise, the inharmony within the multi-ethnic and multi-religion society will always linger. The reason is that the inter-religion community harmony is the final process that has been accumulated from a number of previous process that has taken place in any layer of society. Therefore, the final process will not be manifested if the religion communities still consider that the people outside their communities are a threat, resulting in the disrespect, the groundless prejudice, and the extreme hatred.

In order to manifest the final process, there should be mutual respect, mutual assistance, and mutual appreciation among the religion communities. In other words, the different religions and beliefs in Indonesia should not be brought under a single religion by means of force; instead, the differences among the religion communities should underlie the mutual respect and appreciation especially within the cross-religion youth community in relation to the preach of their respective religious teachings. Looking at the overall situation, the inter-community
religion harmony should be manifested within the society. At the same time, the cross-religion youth community should be the role model within the society since youth community nowadays has been expected to serve as the motor and the guard of the inter-religion community harmony throughout Indonesia.

Horoepoetri, Arimbi, and Santosa (2000, p.31) states that role serves as a strategy. The proponents of this principle argue that role serves as a strategy to gain support from the public (public support). The statement is based on the understanding that any society that perceives the access to the public decision-making and concern, then society will document every level of decision. Discussing about the role of the cross-religion youth community in Indonesia, it is highly apparent that the cross-religion youth community has an important duty in communicating and synchronizing the solutions for the social conflicts within the communities. In this regard, the role of the cross-religion community youth can be exerted through a number of activities such as dialogues and inter-religion partnership. In turn, it can be expected that the appearance of the positive public attitude toward the diversity of the religions has strong correlation with the amount of knowledge that an individual has with regards to the diverse religion communities.

4.3 The Creation of Inter-Religion Community Dialogue and Cooperation

One of the duties that has been assigned to the cross-religion youth community is to initiate the inter-religion community dialogue. A number of issues within the inter-religion community conflicts can be solved through the dialogue instead of the law-violating actions. The occurrence of the inter-religion community conflicts is believed to be caused by the lack of inter-religion community meeting and dialogue. Without the dialogue, the inter-religion community relationship will be loose and thus the sense of suspicion and hostility will soon appear among the religion communities.

Paying attention to the conflicts that have involved the Moslem people around the world, Waardenburg (1979) proposes the needs of dialogue, specifically the inter-faith dialogue, between the leaders from both religions, namely Islam and Christian. The dialogue between Islam and Christian is believed to be one of the ways for improving the relationship between the two religions. He perceives that the occurrence of multiple conflicts between Islam and Christian has been caused by the lack of the dialogues between the two religions. Within the dialogue, the concept of pluralism and multiculturalism should be emphasized within both the Islam communities and the Christian communities altogether with the other religion communities.

Still according to Waardenburg (1979), the disciples of both Islam and Christian should be encouraged to take participation into the dialogue and embrace the concept of pluralism and multiculturalism so that the inter-religion community conflict can be avoided or, in other words, so that the disciples of the two religions can mutually respect one another. In addition, Waardenburg (1979) also states that the presence of the inter-religion community dialogue is good because the dialogue can provide an opportunity for the disciples to explain their respective dialogue. If the dialogue is already in effect, then the stereotype (prejudice) and the
misunderstanding that often trigger the conflict will eventually be replaced with the mutual respect and appreciation toward the people from the different religions and beliefs.

If the dialogue is implemented, then the stereotype (prejudice) and the misunderstanding that often triggers the inter-religion community conflict can be replaced by the sense of mutual respect among the religion communities. In turn, if the inter-religion community dialogue and cooperation can be continuously developed, then the inter-religion community conflict will never occur again and thus the peace among the inter-religion communities can be achieved. In several regions of Indonesia, the inter-religion community dialogue has been initiated despite the lingering inter-religion community conflict, which often occurs at the “grassroot” level. Unfortunately, the conflict at this level is often uncovered by the monitoring of the security officers. Such condition shows that the inter-religion community dialogue has not achieved the satisfying results since the dialogue tends to take place only among the religious leaders. Definitely, such dialogue has not touched the “grassroot” level. As a result, the inter-religion community harmony has only been established on the level of the leaders instead of the “grassroot.” Not only that, the internal religion community dialogue has often been abandoned since, in some occasion, the religion community conflict takes place among the people who share the same religion.

To pursue a life of co-existence among the religion communities with a high sense of peace and tolerance should be pursued, indeed, but such a life of co-existence cannot be considered as the inter-religion community dialogue yet. The reason is that the inter-religion community dialogue is not only a matter of communicating or sharing information about the people who share the same or the different religion but also an effort of gaining trust from other people with regards to the proper understanding toward the given religion by means of communication. By doing so, the other people will listen and thus will have better understanding toward the given religion.

The reality behind the inter-religion community dialogue is not intended to lead to conversion, or to make other people embrace the intended religion, although accepting new people who have just embraced the given religion can be considered as a good conversation initiative (Izzah, 2013, pp.1-22). Thus, such dialogue should be based on the issues that entail two religion communities or more so that the issues can be properly solved. By getting more familiar to the inter-religion community dialogue, a sense of fraternity and mutual trust will continuously develop with one religion community to another. In order to achieve this end, the dialogue should not only cover the indoor activities such as discussions and seminars but also the outdoor activities such as the social ones.

4.4 The Concept of Ethics within the Cross-Religion Youth Community

4.4.1 The Teachings of Tolerance within the Cross-Religion Youth Community

In the understanding of preaching, especially with regards to the religious teachings, the ethics of the cross-religion youth community should be based on the ethics of diversity instead of hatred to the other religion communities. The ethics in preaching the religious teachings should be conducted through a tolerant manner. For example, if the members of the cross-religion youth community are Moslem people then they should be able to display the tolerant version
of Islamic teachings to the disciples of other religion communities through the inclusive and friendly Islamic messages. Similarly, the members of the cross-religion youth community from the other religion communities should pursue the same tolerant, inclusive, and friendly teachings.

Every religion is believed to have the teachings that can ease the heart and the mind of other people because principally all religions teach kindness and mutual assistance among the fellow human beings and even the fellow creatures of God. Such good teachings should be implemented in the daily life within the relationship among the fellow human beings and even within the relationship between the human beings and the nature. For an instance, Islam urges the disciples to deliver the Islamic messages by means of preaching the calling for the truth so that human beings can achieve the salvation both in the world and the afterlife (Fushshilat, 41:33).

The nature of the preaching itself is more of an invitation or an appeal; therefore, the preaching should not be forced to the other people (see Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:256). Therefore, as a religion Islam provides an opportunity for the other religion communities to develop themselves and the disciples of the religion communities other than Islam to carry out the teachings of their own religions. In other words, the teachings of Islam often explain about tolerance that can be pursued toward the disciples of each religion community and these teachings have been emphasized among the Moslem members of any cross-religion youth community.

4.4.2 The Prominence of Similarity within the Cross-Religion Youth Community

Looking at the similar traits among the members of the cross-religion youth community in Indonesia, actually it is already clear that all religions in the world share similarity in their preaching despite the differences among the religion communities. Therefore, with the preaching, it is better to discuss the similarity rather than the differences among the religion communities. The teachings of any religion definitely encourage the disciples to help each other and to spread kindness to other people for the interest of mankind.

One verse in Al-Qur’an explains the importance of providing mutual assistance as follows:

And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty (QS Al-Maidah: 2). The similar message is also found in one verse of the Bible as follows: There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land (Deuteronomy 15:11). Interestingly, such message can be found in the teachings of Confucianism as follows: (1) Ren/Jin/Jen: affection, sense of truth, virtue, self-awareness, nobility and solidarity, fraternity, and defense of truth. If every disciple of Confucianism can carry out the teachings of Jen properly, then the sense of hatred and hostility shall disappear as it will be replaced by the sense of mutual assistance under humility.

5. Conclusions

Departing from the results of the study and also the discussions within the study, the researchers would like to draw the following conclusions. First of all, in terms of preaching, the reality that the cross-religion youth community has established is located at the heart of the top six
religions in Indonesia namely Islamism, Catholicism, Christianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. At the same time, the same reality is also located in the middle of the disciples of minor religions in Indonesia such as Taoism, Bahaism, and tribal beliefs throughout Indonesia. From the perspective of Indonesian diversity, the rich religious backgrounds have impacted the method of preaching that the cross-religion youth community members pursue. Within the preaching, the cross-religion youth community should create mutual understanding with the disciples from the other religion communities. The mutual understanding that has been created by the disciples of each religion community is intended to internalize the sense of tolerance and mutual respect within the society. At the same time, the mutual understanding can also serve as a tool of communication in appreciating the diversity and creating the harmony inside. In this regard, the cross-religion youth community has optimally implemented the role and the function especially in socializing the inter-religion community harmony in accordance with the fundamental consensus within the four pillars of nation through discussions, dialogues, and inter-faith leisure walk. The presence of such activities is believed to be able to create the good friendship among the religion communities.

Despite the tolerance and the mutual respect, the inharmonious relationship between certain religion communities is still found such as in Poso (and the surrounding areas of Central Sulawesi, 1998-2000), Ambon (1999), East Java (October 10th, 1996), and other regions in Indonesia, causing the high sense of suspicion and hostility especially in the “grassroot” level. In order to improve the situation, within the creation of tolerance in the middle of the society the cross-religion youth community members believe that all religions have similar objectives but these objectives are achieved through different methods. Therefore, the members of the cross-religion youth community hope that all of the different perspectives can meet at a single consensus or understanding with regards to the inter-religion community tolerance and harmony.

The cross-religion youth community should establish a dialogue with the society and, at the same time, the cross-religion youth community should also become the role model for the society of religions. Nowadays, one of the duties that the cross-religion youth community should fulfill is to promote and maintain the harmony within the religious societies throughout Indonesia. The establishment on the concept of inter-religion community harmony should be put into actualization by the cross-religion youth community in Indonesia through the understanding toward the term “pluralism” itself. A good example of such preaching has been displayed by one of the youth organizations in Indonesia named Nasyiatul Aisyiyah. The members of the youth organization implement the principle of tolerance and mutual respect by basing their preaching onto Al-Qur’an Surah An-Nahl Verse 125. Last but not the least, in preaching the cross-religion youth community should always put forward the importance of understanding the cultures from the different tribes, religions, and races. The internalization toward such understanding can help avoiding the friction that leads to the conflicts among the religion communities due to the cultural, ethnical, religious, and even political factors.

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