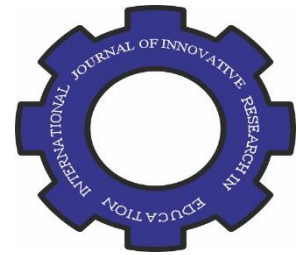




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Utilizing educational technology to enhance access to local wisdom practices in promoting religious moderation

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the role of educational technology in facilitating the practice of local wisdom to promote religious moderation. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, involving the community of Ramah Agung Village, North Bengkulu Regency, Indonesia. This village was selected due to its high level of religious diversity, influenced by religious leaders, local government, and community members. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis, focusing on local traditions such as Galungan, Kuningan, Ngaben Masal, Pura anniversaries, cremation ceremonies, and Christmas celebrations. The validity of the data was ensured through the observation persistence technique using the triangulation model. The findings indicate that educational technology serves as an effective tool for practicing local wisdom in a multicultural society. It enhances accessibility to cultural and religious practices while encouraging continuous innovation. The study provides a model for integrating technology into religious moderation efforts, offering insights for policymakers and educators in fostering social harmony within diverse communities.

Keywords: Educational technology; inter-religious harmony; local wisdom; religious moderation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that has a diverse society with various ethnicities, groups, races, cultures, customs, and religions. Religious diversity has a very large influence (Fitriani, 2020). Religions that entered and influenced the creation of religious plurality in Indonesia include Islam, Protestant Christianity and Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism (Sumbulah, 2015). The relationship between culture and religion is revealed in the motivations and manifestations of cultural expressions (Zhao et al., 2022). Culture reveals how humans experience and understand the world; religion is the fundamental way in which humans experience and understand the world (Abdulla, 2018; Isang & Dalmasius, 2021; Sun et al., 2024). Religion is seen as a substantive basis expressed in culture. Religion cannot be a cultural area that stands alone or is indifferent to the development of other cultures. Conversely, religion can encourage cultural expression, with culture as a means for humans to express the goals and meanings that religion gives (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). Religion accommodates good culture and traditions in social life.

A moderate attitude toward religion has been demonstrated by the founding fathers of the Indonesian nation. They agreed on Pancasila, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the 1945 Constitution, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as a guide for the life of the nation and state. The practice of religious moderation is always correlated with culture, especially because the dynamics of people's lives are determined by the culture they have. Culture has a role in justifying the system of religious orientation and community personality (Ksiazkiewicz & Friesen, 2021). Forms of culture are objects that are created, in the form of behavior and tangible objects, such as behavior patterns, language, social organizations, religion, and art, all of which are local wisdom. Local wisdom is an ethical and cultural value that are passed down from generation to generation (Suwito Eko et al., 2020; Rudnev et al., 2024). Local wisdom is the ability to adapt, regulate, and foster natural and cultural influences that drive the transformation and creation of cultural diversity (Farhan & Anwar, 2016; Zhang et al., 2023).

The emergence of modern technology will lead people to think pragmatically, tend to be hedonic, have a capitalist mentality, and lose their spirituality. Because of this, the spiritual side is very vital in protecting oneself from the attacks of modernity and anthropocentric views, which are increasingly eroding the faith of mankind. In other words, religion is the lifeline of humankind in responding to life's problems. Religion can enhance the positive role by reducing and promoting the prevention of negative acts (Chen et al., 2021). As a heterogeneous nation, divine and ardi religions have grown and developed and at the same time have contributed to the diversity of the people in Indonesia. The characteristics of a multicultural society can be seen in religion, socio-economic status, relations between individuals and groups in society, as well as religion-based art and culture (Kholis & Mufidah 2020; Al Fozai, 2023).

Social capital in religion, culture, and local wisdom needs to be explored, maintained, identified, and perpetuated by the community as a collective memory of the cultural wealth of the Indonesian people. Culture is the basis for shaping people's perspectives on diversity (Wortman & Lewis, 2021). Culture and religiosity are highly valued in many societies and shape public health beliefs and behaviors. Rewriting religious moderation with a cultural approach and local wisdom is currently very important amid modernization and global cultural hegemony.

Religious moderation must be understood as a balanced religious attitude between religious practice and respect for the religious practices of other people of different beliefs. The movement for inter-religious tolerance must be developed by promoting a culture of dialogue and unlimited solidarity through symbols of peace based on local cultural wisdom. Religious moderation is very important because the tendency to overly practice religious teachings often results in unilateral truth claims. Practicing religious moderation, in essence, also maintains internal harmony between religious adherents so that the nation's living conditions remain peaceful and life goes on harmoniously.

An interesting topic of study to be discussed at this time is the study of building local culture-oriented religious moderation. Studies related to culture, religion, and freedom of religion. However, the reality is that

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in most cases, culture and religion are not that different, with cultural practices becoming "religious" and religious ideas becoming part of the culture (Adcock, 2021).

1.1. Purpose of study

Building upon the background of this issue, this study seeks to examine the role of local culture and wisdom in fostering religious moderation within society. Cultural competence, at both individual and institutional levels, enhances understanding of its relevance in addressing cultural challenges within social contexts (Matthews & Van Wyk, 2018). The central focus of this research is to explore the implementation of local wisdom in religious moderation through the integration of educational technology. Furthermore, the study aims to investigate the utilization of educational technology as a medium for promoting local wisdom in the practice of religious moderation.

2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

2.1. Research design

The method used in the study is descriptive qualitative. This research focuses on the application of technology in trends in local wisdom practices to moderate religion.

2.2. Participants

This research involved the community of Ramah Agung village, North Bengkulu Regency, Bengkulu, Indonesia. The village was chosen because it has unique education and cultural diversity. Rama Agung Village is currently composed of various tribes and religions, which is its uniqueness as a nation and state. Protestant Christian Churches totaling 6 Churches (GEKISIA, GPDI, HKBP, GKII, GKPS, dan GMI), Churches Katholik (Gereja ST. Thomas), 2 mosques (mosques Al-Kautsar, mosques Al-Jihad), 2 temples (Pura Dharma Yatra, Pura Dalem), Vihara (Vihara Kharuna Phala) standing strong and close together which shows the harmonization of harmony in diversity in Rama Agung Village.

2.3. Data collection instruments

The data in the research are obtained using observation, interviews, and document studies. Observation is carried out by observing the conditions around tourist attractions and the social activities of the local community. Interviews are conducted in two stages, namely, structured and non-structured. Document study is done by searching for documents and publications that are supportive of research activities. Interviews were conducted with religious leaders and village and community governments.

2.4. Procedure

The gathering is carried out directly with local Tradisi during the Galungan holidays, Kuningan holidays, Ngaben Masal, Puree birthdays, crematoriums, and Christmas. Development of a Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model by carrying out the following activities: a) collecting various sources and statistical data in the form of religious harmony, culture, cultural development and control, religious diversity, and language, b) potentials of local wisdom, and c) community involvement. At this stage, the draft of the Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model was also validated, and the focus group discussion and revision were also carried out with expert input.

Evaluation is the last stage, consisting of formative and summative evaluations. The research was conducted in the form of a formative and summative evaluation in the form of the development of a Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model and an activity test. Gradually the evaluation is carried out according to the stages of its development. The aspects evaluated are: sustainable destination management, Human Resources, and implementing organizations.

2.5. Analysis

Test the validity of the data using the observation persistence technique, namely the triangulation model. Source triangulation is related to examining the sources used in the study to the point of saturation so that

their validity is not in doubt. Time triangulation, that is, the researcher did not make one or two observations or studies. Triangulation of the content by which the researcher directs to the content presented in this study.

3. RESULT

3.1. Trend of local wisdom practice of religious moderation

The decision of the Regent of Bengkulu to conduct studies on religious moderation villages became a reference in the development of a Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model. This potential is material for the government in making policies to develop a Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model in North Bengkulu. The development of local resource potential through Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village is one of the policy strategies to increase the potential and capacity of local resources.

The design of the Local-Based Religious Moderation Village Model is focused on a) harmonious livelihood, b) peace and peace between religious people with principles, inclusive, moderate, tolerant, equity, peace, c) a society that is open in seeing differences and diversity, d) middle ground, not extreme, fair and balanced, e) respecting religious differences, equality before the law and peace, and f) m creating religious harmony, religious moderation which is used as a lifestyle, based on local wisdom developed: a) capable of enduring external culture, b) capable of having the ability to accommodate elements of outside culture, c) capable of having the ability to integrate elements of outside culture into indigenous culture, d) capable of controlling, and e) c gives direction to the development of culture.

The implementation of the Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model is applied in people's lives to live in harmony, which is shown by a moderate, tolerant, equity, and peaceful attitude. Religious orientation based on local wisdom must give direction to cultural development.

3.2. Local culture-based religious moderation

Rama Agung Village has diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, background, and religion, so it needs to prioritize religious moderation values such as a fair and balanced attitude, tolerance, egalitarianism, deliberation, and straight and firm as has been proclaimed by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic Indonesia (2019) so that a peaceful environment can be created and counteract radical attitudes in society. The existence of differences in the environment of Rama Agung Village is not a reason for people to be at odds with each other but makes differences as glue and unity.

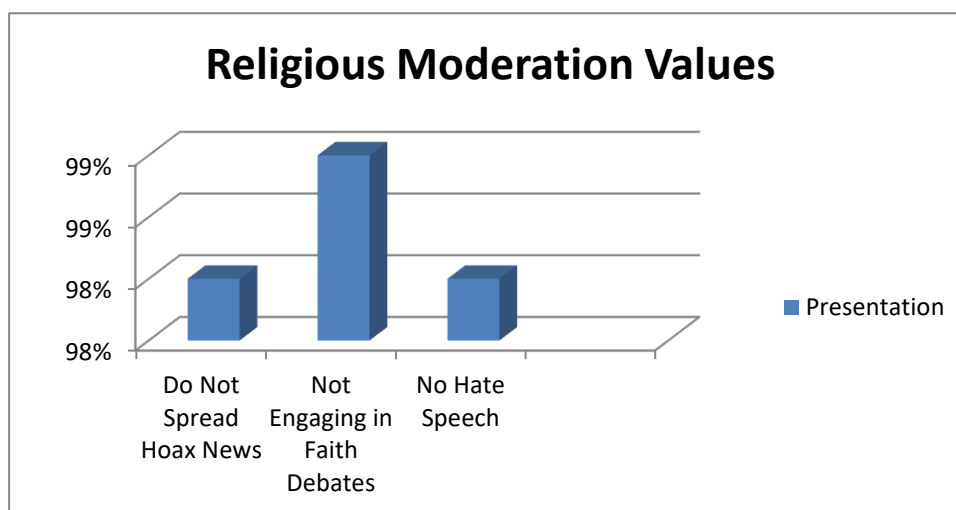
The village head hopes for harmony in the community. He also stated that so far, there has been no inter-religious conflict in his village. During his leadership visit, the school residents took part in the campaign of religious moderation both within the community of his village and in other village communities as well as tourists who came to the village of Rama Agung.

According to a religious leader, religious moderation in the village of Rama Agung, called Swandiati, has been carried out well, called Swandiati. Figures or teachers have an important role in forming a multicultural society that can coexist (Hjerm et al., 2018). All villagers put forward the value of moderation with mutual respect, respecting others who are different in ethnicity, background, culture, and religion, which is the hallmark of this village. The same thing was also said by a religious leader named Putu Juitama. For him, religion is a matter of personal faith adherents. However, the matter of applying the values of religious moderation such as tolerance, cooperation, mutual respect, and deliberation has been implemented in the village.

As far as he has observed for 32 years, there has never been a dispute or friction between religions at this institution, whether it comes from the public or visiting tourists. The same thing was narrated by a religious leader named Christian Christina Poniarti. According to him, both the community and tourists in this village mingle with each other regardless of the religion they adhere to. Tolerance is highly upheld so that disputes or conflicts never occur.

Figure 1

Percentage of religious moderation values



The opinions of religious leaders indicate that religious moderation is well-lived by the whole community. By the answers, the respondents said the values of religious moderation had been maximally applied by the community in their daily life in the village environment. This research shows that 98% of villagers answered that they had never spread hoax news related to other religions on social media. Meanwhile, 99% of the villages that answered said they had never been involved in a debate of faith with other religions in the community. Other data also states that 98% of villagers have never been involved in hate speech against friends of different religions in the village, such as bullying, ridiculing, and laughing at friends of other religions who are leading prayers in activities in the village.

3.3. Educational technology as a means to introduce trends in the practice of local wisdom of religious moderation to the wider community

The development of advances in information and communication technology brings progress that is very fast at this time. One of them is a website that has many uses for individuals, organizations, and governments that present information through social media or digital media. This is of particular concern, especially for village administrations, to develop services and improve various aspects of life.

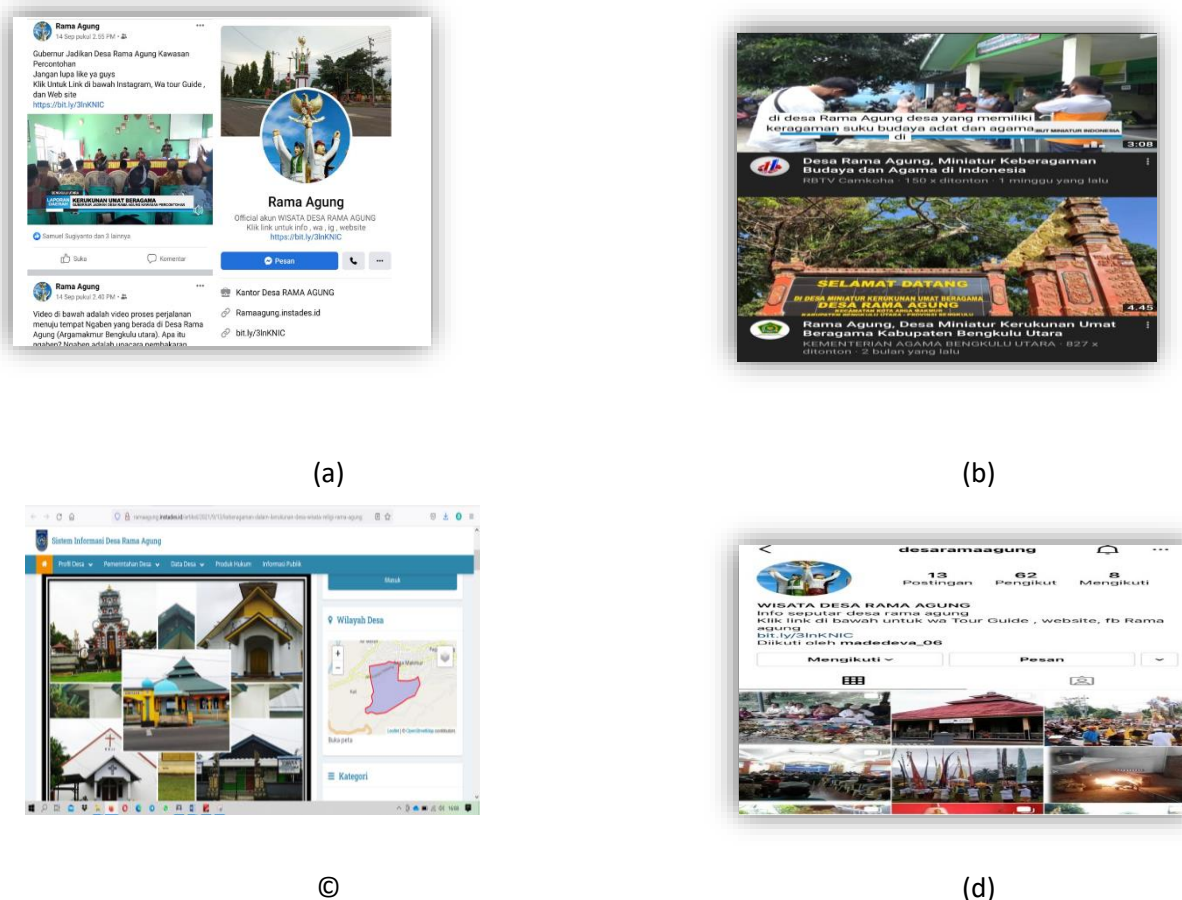
The village has a very important role in encouraging its people to continue to innovate in terms of the economy, community empowerment, and community development to technology to facilitate village community access. Village social media was built to be an official village public service built by local village officials as well as a means for promotion so that it is better known by the wider community. Seeing the relatively high penetration of internet use, it is not surprising that digitization is a strategic effort to foster religious moderation based on local wisdom. Therefore, proficiency in using digital media is an important factor for village managers.

The social media used by the village of Rama Agung includes Facebook, YouTube, and websites which can be seen in Figure 2.

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Figure 2

Social media as a local wisdom practice in moderating religious diversity



4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of local wisdom in fostering religious moderation within the diverse community of Rama Agung Village. The research demonstrates that cultural competence, both at the individual and institutional levels, plays a critical role in maintaining harmony among different religious groups. The integration of educational technology as a medium for promoting local wisdom in religious moderation is also explored, showing its potential to disseminate inclusive values to a wider audience.

The study affirms that the practice of local wisdom serves as an essential mechanism in fostering a culture of religious tolerance and moderation. The traditions observed in Rama Agung Village, particularly during religious festivals such as Galungan, Kuningan, Ngaben Masal, and Christmas, illustrate how cultural values are embedded within daily life. The existence of multiple places of worship in close proximity signifies a strong commitment to harmonious coexistence among different religious communities. This environment nurtures a balanced approach to religious practice, aligning with the principles of inclusivity, tolerance, and mutual respect.

Furthermore, the presence of religious leaders and village authorities who actively engage in promoting religious moderation underscores the effectiveness of leadership in sustaining these values. Their narratives suggest that the village has successfully mitigated potential conflicts through dialogue and cultural understanding. The local wisdom-based approach to religious moderation highlights the community's ability

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to integrate external influences while maintaining core traditional values, as emphasized by Hjerm et al. (2018).

The research findings indicate that Rama Agung Village exemplifies a model of religious moderation that aligns with the principles set forth by the Ministry of Religion of Indonesia (2019). The community's adherence to values such as tolerance, egalitarianism, and fairness reflects a deep-rooted cultural norm of coexistence. Data collected from respondents reinforce this notion, revealing that the vast majority of villagers (98-99%) have never engaged in activities that could incite religious discord, such as spreading hoaxes, participating in interfaith disputes, or engaging in hate speech.

This high level of religious tolerance can be attributed to the village's commitment to fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding. Religious leaders, including Putu Juitama and Christian Christina Poniarti, emphasize that religious differences do not hinder social cohesion; rather, they enrich the cultural fabric of the village. This demonstrates how religious moderation when grounded in local wisdom, contributes to a peaceful and integrated society.

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has provided new opportunities to amplify the practice of local wisdom-based religious moderation. In Rama Agung Village, digital platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and official village websites have been utilized to disseminate information about religious moderation and intercultural harmony. The village administration plays a crucial role in leveraging these digital tools to educate the wider community on the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for religious diversity.

The strategic use of social media not only facilitates information sharing but also fosters greater engagement among residents and external audiences. Digital literacy has become an essential skill for village officials and community members, enabling them to harness technology to promote their local wisdom practices effectively. The digitization of religious moderation efforts serves as a model for other multicultural communities aiming to cultivate harmony in a rapidly globalizing world.

The findings from this study offer valuable insights for policymakers seeking to develop frameworks that support religious moderation initiatives. The successful implementation of the Local Wisdom-Based Religious Moderation Village Model in Rama Agung Village suggests that similar strategies could be adapted in other multicultural communities. Policymakers should consider integrating digital tools into religious moderation programs to maximize outreach and effectiveness.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of digital platforms on religious moderation efforts, as well as the potential challenges associated with the digital divide in rural communities. Additionally, comparative studies involving other culturally diverse villages could provide a broader understanding of how local wisdom and educational technology can collectively enhance religious moderation on a larger scale.

5. CONCLUSION

Technology serves as a vital tool for integrating local wisdom into the practice of religious moderation within multicultural societies. Educational technology plays a significant role in expanding access to local wisdom practices, facilitating religious promotion, and fostering community innovation. Village social media, in particular, is instrumental in driving economic growth, community empowerment, and social development. Therefore, digital literacy is essential for village administrators to effectively leverage these platforms.

Religious moderation is not only a perspective but also a way of conducting oneself and practicing religion in a balanced and non-extremist manner. Its integration with local cultural values has been proven to foster religious harmony. Religious moderation is understood as a collective commitment to upholding balance, values, norms, and customary laws.

This research highlights the application of technology as a strategic tool for preserving religious harmony within communities. The findings offer valuable insights that can serve as reference material for local and national policymakers in formulating strategies to maintain social stability and security.

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