

The Strategic Role of Christian Bible or Theological Colleges in Religious Moderation in Muslim Majority Society

Andreas Jonathan

Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, USA
Immanuel Christian University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: andrejo13@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3264-5251>

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Abstract:

Religious moderation remains highly relevant in Indonesia today, as intolerance and extremism continue to emerge and affect various sectors, including higher education and students as the younger generation. Interfaith dialogue is one of the approaches widely used to promote moderation; however, such initiatives are often incidental and have limited impact in transforming individuals from intolerance to tolerance, or from social exclusivism to social pluralism. This study aims to address these weaknesses by examining the transformation process of students who actively participate in interreligious student communities. In addition, it seeks to explore and propose the strategic role of Bible/Theological Colleges (B/TC) in Indonesia in supporting religious moderation efforts. Employing a qualitative approach through interviews, direct observation of interfaith student activities, and literature review, the research finds that sustainable interfaith communities are more effective than incidental dialogues in fostering openness, tolerance, and mutual respect among students of different faiths. The findings indicate that B/TC should not limit their role to serving Christian communities but must also contribute to the common good by collaborating with Islamic Religious Higher Education institutions in establishing long-term interfaith student communities. This study contributes by offering an alternative model of interfaith engagement that strengthens the effectiveness of religious moderation initiatives in Indonesia and provides practical insights for religious higher education institutions in promoting social harmony.

Contribution:

This article contributes by emphasizing the strategic role of Theological Colleges in building sustainable interfaith communities in collaboration with Islamic Higher Education institutions as a concrete effort to strengthen religious moderation in Muslim-majority society.

Keywords: religious moderation; dialogue; student; religious colleges; interfaith community

INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation has become a critical issue in Indonesia, a country with a long tradition of religious plurality. Despite government efforts to institutionalize religious moderation as a national program, intolerance and extremism remain visible across different sectors of society. Higher education is particularly affected, as students are often exposed to radical ideas through peer groups, online platforms, and ideological movements. Surveys conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta¹ and the Setara Institute² reveal that exclusivist attitudes among students are increasing. These findings suggest that universities have become contested spaces where radical and moderate ideologies compete for influence.

One of the most widely promoted approaches to strengthen moderation is interfaith dialogue. However, many of these initiatives remain incidental, event-based, and unsustainable. Ichwayudi demonstrated that interfaith dialogue can reduce radical tendencies among youth, yet most programs depend on formal institutions and rarely ensure long-term follow-up. Jati further showed that interfaith dialogue declined between 2014 and 2020 due to political polarization and the loss of pluralist leaders such as Gus Dur, Romo Mangun, and Ibu Gedong. As a result, interfaith dialogue in Indonesia often fails to produce deep and lasting transformation.³

Although previous studies emphasize the importance of dialogue, they also highlight its limitations. Ichwayudi focused on the effectiveness of dialogue but did not address continuity beyond single events.⁴ Jati stressed the dependence on political figures, while Luji et al. examined biblical values supporting moderation without exploring collaboration with other religions.⁵ These studies collectively portray interfaith dialogue as incidental, figure-oriented, or limited in scope. This leaves a gap in understanding how sustainable, community-based models can be developed, particularly within Christian Bible/Theological Colleges (B/TC).

¹ PPIM & Convey. *Ringkasan Eksekutif Hasil Survei Nasional "Kebinekaan di Menara Gading: Toleransi Beragama di Perguruan Tinggi*. (Jakarta: UIN Jakarta and Convey, 2021).

² SETARA Institute, "Tipologi Keberagamaan Mahasiswa: Survei di 10 Perguruan Negeri", 2019.

³ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Polarization of Indonesian Society during 2014-2020: Causes and Its Impacts toward Democracy". *JSP: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, 26, no. 2, (2022): 152-167.

⁴ Budi Ichwayudi, "Dialog Lintas Agama dan Upaya Menangkal Potensi Radikalisme di Kalangan Pemuda". *Empirisma: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan Islam*, 29, no. 1 (2020): 41-51.

⁵ Daud Saleh Luji, I Made Suardana, Hanna D. Aritonang, & Sipora B. Warella, "Gereja dan Moderasi Beragama". *Moderatio: Jurnal Moderasi Beragama*, 02, no. 2 (2022): 47-58.

The urgency of addressing this gap is reinforced by rising intolerance among the younger generation. The Wahid Institute found that intolerance continues to grow, especially in urban middle-class settings influenced by exclusivist narratives.⁶ PPIM UIN Jakarta reported that one-third of students have low or very low levels of tolerance toward other religions.⁷ Similarly, the Setara Institute documented an increase in exclusivism even in state universities. These patterns demonstrate that higher education has become a key battleground in the struggle between radical and moderate ideologies.⁸ According to Indonesian Vice President Ma'ruf Amin, the urgency of interfaith dialogue is now felt more strongly than in the past. He further emphasized that dialogue in a multi-religious society such as Indonesia constitutes one of the key pillars of national unity and integrity.⁹

Within this context, Christian Bible/Theological Colleges (B/TC) play a strategic yet underexplored role. These institutions prepare future religious leaders, theologians, and community influencers who will shape the outlook of their congregations. However, B/TC environments are often religiously homogenous, with little interaction between Christian students and peers from other faiths. Such conditions risk reinforcing exclusivist attitudes that may later be carried into pastoral or community leadership. Consequently, the involvement of B/TC in interfaith initiatives is both urgent and essential.

Christian theology itself provides a strong basis for engagement in religious moderation. Jeremiah 29:7 instructs believers to seek the welfare of the city where they live, stressing the importance of working for the common good beyond narrow communal interests. This teaching underscores the obligation of Christians to contribute to peace and harmony in pluralistic societies. The principle resonates with the goals of religious moderation, which aim to nurture tolerance, justice, and social cohesion. Thus,

⁶ Huda, Muhammad Nurul. *Intoleransi Kaum Muda di Kebangkitan Kelas Menengah Muslim di Perkotaan*. (Jakarta: Wahid Foundation, 2017); Henri Siagian. "Survei Wahid Institute: Intoleransi-Radikalisme Cenderung Naik". *Media Indonesia*, Januari 18, 2020.

⁷ PPIM & Convey. *Ringkasan Eksekutif Hasil Survei Nasional "Kebinekaan di Menara Gading: Toleransi Beragama di Perguruan Tinggi*.

⁸ SETARA Institute, "Tipologi Keberagamaan Mahasiswa: Survei di 10 Perguruan Negeri".

⁹ Suhartono. "Moderat dan Toleran Hadapi Islam Phobia". *Kompas*, November 27, 2023. <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/wapres-gaungkan-islam-moderat-dan-toleran-hadapi-islam-phobia>; Ayu Rachmaningtyas Tuti Dewanto. "Di Jepang, Wapres Ma'ruf Amin Tekankan Urgensi Penyelenggaraan Dialog Lintas Agama". *Warta Ekonomi*. editor by Ayu Almas. March 8, 2023. <https://wartaekonomi.co.id/read485475/di-jepang-wapres-maruf-amin-tekanan-urgensi-penyelenggaraan-dialog-lintas-agama>.

biblical foundations legitimize and strengthen the participation of B/TC in moderation efforts.

This study addresses the challenges identified above by pursuing two objectives. First, it examines how the limitations of incidental interfaith dialogue can be overcome by studying the transformation of students in sustainable interreligious communities. Second, it explores the strategic role of B/TC in advancing religious moderation through collaboration with Islamic Religious Higher Education institutions. Using a qualitative approach, the research combines interviews, observations, and literature review. The study contributes by offering an alternative model of interfaith engagement that emphasizes continuity and community, while providing both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for strengthening tolerance and social cohesion in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore how interfaith student communities contribute to the cultivation of religious moderation. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences, perspectives, and meaning-making processes, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measures. By focusing on context and interpretation, this approach provides nuanced insights into how Christian Bible/Theological Colleges (B/TC) can engage more strategically in interfaith collaboration.

The research was conducted in Yogyakarta, a city widely recognized as a center for both Christian and Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Participants were drawn from two Christian Bible/Theological Colleges and two Islamic Religious Higher Education institutions that were actively engaged in interfaith student initiatives. A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit participants with direct involvement in interfaith activities. These included dialogue groups, joint community service, and cultural exchange programs. In total, 20 students (10 from B/TC and 10 from Islamic institutions) and 4 faculty members participated in the study, representing diverse academic years and backgrounds.

Data were gathered between March and June 2024 using three primary techniques: in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

Interviews, lasting 45–60 minutes each, explored participants' experiences, motivations, and reflections on interfaith engagement. Participant observation was conducted during interfaith community activities, allowing the researcher to capture interactions, dynamics, and practices in natural settings. Relevant institutional documents, such as program reports, syllabi, and policy guidelines, were also analyzed to provide contextual background.

Data analysis followed the thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke.¹⁰ The process began with transcription and repeated reading of interview data to gain familiarity, followed by initial coding of meaningful units. Codes were then grouped into broader themes that reflected patterns related to religious moderation, student transformation, and institutional involvement. Observation notes and documents were triangulated with interview data to enhance validity and ensure the consistency of the findings. NVivo 12 software was used to organize and manage the data during analysis.

To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria. Credibility was strengthened through prolonged engagement and member-checking, where participants reviewed and verified key findings. Transferability was enhanced by providing rich descriptions of the research context and participants. Dependability was ensured through systematic documentation of research procedures, while confirmability was supported by maintaining an audit trail and reflective researcher notes. Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Kristen Immanuel Yogyakarta. All participants provided informed consent, and their anonymity and confidentiality were strictly protected.

RESULTS

Optimizing Interfaith Dialogue Among Students

From the literature study, the author found that several surveys and research had been conducted by institutions and individuals regarding exposure to religious intolerance and extremism ideologies in various universities. Survey results from PPIM UIN in 2021, for example, found that one-third of Indonesian students had low and very

¹⁰ Virginia Braun & Victoria Clarke. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

low attitudes towards religious tolerance.¹¹ These results show an increase in intolerant and segregative attitudes among students. Research conducted by the Setara Institute in ten state universities (two of which were Islamic Religious Universities) in 2019 also found growing exclusivism among students. In conclusion, the results of this research show a tendency for moderate understanding to be eroded by exclusive understanding.¹² The Wahid Institute also found a similar thing in its 2017 research. The intolerance of the younger generation is occurring amidst the rise of the Muslim middle class in urban areas.¹³

The conditions that occur among the younger generation are no different from what is happening generally in Indonesian society. Research conducted by the Wahid Institute in 2020 found that the trend of radicalism and intolerance in Indonesia tends to increase over time.¹⁴ This means that the struggle to transform society from the influence of intolerant attitudes and extremism will still be a long process. The younger generation (students) will still be one of the main targets for recruitment sources from these intolerant groups.

We can draw a temporary conclusion that religious moderation efforts in higher education have not yet achieved optimal results as expected. This temporary conclusion is also supported by the results of the Discussion "Questioning the Effectiveness and Implementation of Extremism/Intolerance Regulations in Higher Education" held by the Wahid Foundation in 2020.¹⁵

The reality that higher education has become a *battle-field* for ideological struggle between radicals and moderates in the student world is also found in interviews conducted by the author with several Muslim and Christian students who are students at religious universities in big cities, such as Yogyakarta. In big cities like Yogyakarta, many students are found to come from areas outside Yogyakarta. Of those who come from regional areas, it is found that the majority of them live and go to school in religiously

¹¹ PPIM UIN Jakarta and Convey. "Ringkasan Eksekutif Hasil Survei Nasional "Kebinekaan di Menara Gading: Toleransi Beragama di Perguruan Tinggi".

¹² SETARA Institute. "Tipologi Keberagamaan Mahasiswa: Survei di 10 Perguruan Negeri", 2019

¹³ WAHID Institute, "Intoleransi Kaum Muda di Kebangkitan Kelas Menengah Muslim di Perkotaan", 2017.

¹⁴ Media Indonesia, 2020, "Survei Wahid Institute: Intoleransi-Radikalisme Cenderung Naik", accessed 1 August 2023 <https://mediaindonesia.com/politik-dan-hukum/284269/survei-wahid-institute-intoleransi-radikalisme-cenderung-naik>.

¹⁵ Alamsyah M. Ja'far, "Menyoal Efektivitas dan Implementasi Aturan-Aturan Ekstremisme/Intoleransi di Perguruan Tinggi" (Jakarta: WAHID Foundation, 2020).

homogeneous environments. Some of them have lived since childhood in a village/village that is one hundred percent Muslim. Some of them have been attending Islamic boarding schools since elementary school. Even though there are also those who go to state schools, they do not find friends of different religions. This kind of condition can last until high school. Even though some of them attended public schools when they were in high school where there were several non-Muslim students, they didn't really socialize with the non-Muslim students. And finally they took higher education at an Islamic University where they practically never met people of different religions on campus. On the Islamic campus, they also join homogeneous religious-based student organizations (for example HMI, PMII, or KAMMI).

Fortunately, they live in the city of Yogyakarta, which has a very heterogeneous population, so it still provides opportunities for them to have encounters with people who are different. However, not all students want or have the desire to explore outside. Many of these students are quite satisfied with socializing with fellow Muslim students.

The students the author interviewed on average had similar backgrounds. What differentiates them from their friends is that they have the curiosity to meet others who are different. So when they get information, either from social media or from friends, about activities from interfaith communities, they want to try and explore.

The author researched and made direct observations in activities carried out by an interfaith community known as the Young Interfaith Peacemaker Community (YIPC). The students the author interviewed were those who had joined and been quite actively involved in YIPC for at least one year. Students like the interview writer above have experienced progressive changes since they joined and participated in activities at YIPC. This change occurred because of processes within YIPC that were deliberately designed for this transformation. This means that even though this encounter was natural, it was purposeful.

An example is the initial activity held by YIPC called Student Interfaith Peace Camp (SIPC). Almost all students who join YIPC start by taking SIPC. SIPC is a transformation model designed by YIPC. SIPC is an activity where participants from different religions stay together for three days and two nights. Almost all activities are carried out together, so encounters with others are bound to occur. This *Peace Camp* is designed to be interactive and participatory, where all activities and sessions are facilitated by

facilitators and there are no speakers giving lectures. The two main pillars of YIPC are peace education *and* interfaith *dialogue*. This is the uniqueness and strength of YIPC compared to other activities and communities. There are many other peace activities that are more based on human values without touching on religion. This is often less effective for those who have a lot of negative prejudice towards people of different religions. They want to live in peace with everyone and respect diversity, but the religious prejudices and misunderstandings they have had since childhood have not been resolved.

Meanwhile, there are also interfaith dialogue activities carried out by several other organizations. In general, dialogue is carried out by listening to the speaker and then ending with questions and answers. There was almost no interaction between the audience/participants in the dialogue. And once the dialogue ends, there is no follow-up. Dialogue activities like this are quite effective in cognitively changing one or two misunderstandings about other religions. However, there are still quite a lot of prejudices and misunderstandings that cannot be answered through just one dialogue. In addition, the absence of direct interaction with those who are different eliminates aspects of social interaction that people who live in homogeneous environments have not had so far.

Herein lies the uniqueness and strength of an *interfaith-based peace community* which is very effective in experiencing a transformation from exclusivity, intolerance, even extremism to become more moderate, tolerant people, even able to appreciate and celebrate diversity without losing their faith. exclusive. The longer a person is processed in a community like this the greater the changes that occur.

What happened in YIPC is as Miroslav Volf said. Volf differentiates exclusivism and pluralism into two aspects: the faith/ religious aspect and the social aspect.¹⁶ Faith is a person's free choice without coercion and cannot be forced. Forced faith is not true faith. A person who is exclusive in aspects of his faith (religious exclusivism) is a person who believes that his faith and religion are the best and true for him. On the other hand, there are people who have pluralist faith beliefs (religious pluralism). He believes that all religions are the same. They all teach goodness, and everyone can enter heaven in their own way.

¹⁶ Miroslav Volf, *Flourishing: Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2017).

In general, those who are classified as exclusive in their faith will also act socially exclusive (social exclusivism). They find it difficult to mix with different groups, always denigrate those of different religions, become arrogant and intolerant and ultimately become extremists who understand that it is lawful for people who are different from themselves to be eliminated (killed). This kind of attitude often becomes a problem in relations between religious communities. Meanwhile, on the other hand, it is often understood that social pluralists (social pluralism), namely those who are tolerant and can get along with those who are different, are the only ones who are pluralists in faith.

The reality today is that religious people who are exclusive by faith are the majority. Changing them to a pluralist faith is not easy, especially when it comes to truth claims. According to Volf, the key to world peace is when a person is both exclusive and pluralist in his faith, what is important is that he is socially pluralist.¹⁷ So the most important thing is that even though someone has exclusivity in faith, he can be a social pluralist. The challenge is how can there be a transformation from social exclusive to social pluralist? From Table 1, the goal of the religious moderation process is the transformation of people in quadrants 1 and 3 into quadrants 2 and 4.

Table 1. Transformation from Social Exclusive to Social Pluralist

	Social Exclusivism	Social Pluralism
Faith Exclusivism	2	4
Faith Pluralism	6	8

YIPC makes all its activities based on the Holy Bible. There are two strengths of this approach: first, it can effectively attract faith-exclusive people. People who are exclusive in their faith generally place the Holy Bible as the highest authority in their life of faith. Therefore, through a Bible-based peacebuilding approach, they do not feel threatened compared to a secular or humanist approach.

The second, In fact, according to Volf, many people are intolerant and have extremist ideologies because their knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is only partial.¹⁸ If every religious person has a more complete understanding of the Holy Book, they will certainly become more tolerant people. This means that religious moderation will actually occur if someone studies religion/the Holy Bible completely and completely, not

¹⁷ Miroslav Volf, Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal, & Mellisa Yarrington (eds.). *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbour*. (Michigan/ Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2020).

¹⁸ Miroslav Volf, *Flourishing: Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World*.

half-heartedly. In general, every religion has a kind of "Golden Rule", namely "do to others what you want others to do to you" and "don't do to others what you don't want others to do to you". This golden rule will encourage someone not to be intolerant.

Apart from that, especially Judaism, Christianity and Islam, there is a point of similarity which is called "A Common Word".¹⁹ Both Islam and Christianity acknowledge that the core teachings of the Holy Bible/religion are "Love God and love others". In full, according to the Holy Bible, this is called the Greatest Law which is written in Matthew 22: 37-40 *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. That law is the first and greatest. And the second commandment, which is the same, is: Love your neighbor as yourself."* Through this A Common Word or Great Commandment, every religious follower will be encouraged to change into someone who is no longer socially exclusive. Everyone who truly loves God should love his neighbor as himself. This should make a person socially pluralist.

In YIPC, when a person is encouraged to be more serious and complete in studying the Holy Scriptures, he will become a more tolerant person and love fellow human beings, whatever religion he adheres to. The teachings of this Holy Book are the basis for building peace with anyone, including how to interpret teachings with nuances of intolerance and violence which are often used for intolerant attitudes and actions in every religion. So, exclusivism in faith but social pluralism is something that is very possible and should happen.

Interfaith dialogue in YIPC is also carried out to help everyone eliminate prejudices and misunderstandings, both in matters of a theological and practical nature. Listening to each other's clarifications is a way of dialogue that is carried out respectfully and peacefully. Peaceful dialogue like this can be carried out because it has first been based on an agreement to obey the Holy Scriptures which command every follower to love God and fellow human beings.

Apart from dialogues that clarify prejudices and misunderstandings, YIPC also carries out dialogues on the Scriptures called Scriptural Reasoning. Scriptural Reasoning is a very effective dialogue, especially for exclusivist believers.²⁰ By studying directly from

¹⁹ Miroslav Volf, Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal, Mellisa Yarrington (Eds.), *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbor*.

²⁰ Marianne Moyaert, "Scriptural Reasoning as Inter-religious Dialogue", in *The Willey-Blackwell Companion to Inter-religious Dialogue* edited by Catherine Cornille (West Sussex: Blackwell, 2023).

primary sources, namely the Holy Bible, each person is helped to appreciate other people's Holy Books and can draw positive lessons from the Holy Scriptures. Scriptural Reasoning is very good for interfaith dialogue because dialogue participant interaction is carried out optimally in a small group where each participant can give their opinion. Scriptural Reasoning is actually a tradition that started in the academic world but can also be carried out by any group.

As happened to the YIPC members whom the author interviewed, a change in attitude from social exclusivism to social pluralism can happen to those who remain exclusive in their faith and do not change them to become pluralists in their faith. In fact, in some cases, some people who previously studied the Holy Bible less seriously became more serious about studying the Holy Bible because they followed YIPC.

Another strength is that YIPC is a community. YIPC not only organizes an activity but builds sustainable relationships in the community. One encounter/dialogue cannot automatically erase all negative prejudices that have been embedded in a person since childhood. The meeting at Peace Camp was just the starting point of a process of change that took quite a long time. In fact, according to Johanes Banawiratma, there are seven levels of interfaith dialogue: life dialogue, social ethics, faith experience, religious tradition, theology, action, and finally intra-religious.²¹ So that someone can experience all levels of this dialogue, of course not just in one encounter. Ideally, dialogue will escalate from the level of conversation to the level of joint action. It is through interfaith-based communities like this that the weaknesses of interfaith dialogue which are only incidental can be overcome.

DISCUSSION

The Role of Bible or Theological College (B/TC)

B/TC should be able to have a strategic and significant role in the religious moderation movement which currently has not been widely implemented. Why strategic? Because students at B/TC are a segment of society that is very vulnerable to being influenced by intolerant attitudes and religious extremism. Because almost all students in B/TC are very close to or even currently experiencing double exclusivism:

²¹ Johanes B. Banawiratma, "Apa itu Dialog?" in *Dialog Antar Umat Beragama: Gagasan dan Praktis di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta & Bandung: CRCS UGM & Mizan, 2020).

faith exclusivism and social exclusivism (quadrant 1 in Figure 1). In terms of faith, it is almost certain that the majority who study religious knowledge will become increasingly exclusive. However, if it is not accompanied by intentional efforts to meet people who are different, then it will definitely be difficult for them to move to quadrant 3. As a result, socially they will remain in quadrant 1.

Take for example a student at a B/TC. The campus is very likely to be homogenous, all Christian. Both lecturers, students and employees are all Christians. Moreover, if B/TC has a dormitory for its students, then practically every day they will only be on campus and the dormitory and will never have the opportunity to meet anyone who is different. Every weekend, they would leave campus for service. But usually they will serve in a church. So still 24/7 they are in a Christian environment. Can you imagine if students like this would later graduate and become community leaders/pastors in churches? Do you think they will bring their congregation to interact with people of different religions? Is it likely that they will pass on the prejudices against non-Christians that they still had when they became pastors? The same thing can also happen with Muslim students from Islamic Religious Universities.

Indeed, one method that is often used is to discuss religions at Religious Higher Education.²² This may be quite effective at the knowledge level, but it cannot meet the need for direct interaction with others which would certainly have a stronger impact. Efforts for religious moderation among internal Muslims are more intensive than among Christians. And often Christians do not feel the need for religious moderation, because in the minds of Christians there are no Christian terrorists. However, in everyday life, intolerant attitudes can appear in many cases.²³

However, Christians and especially the B/TC must look further than just internal religious moderation among Christians, which is often considered not really necessary. The effort to meet Christian students with Muslim students from Religious Higher Education is a form of concern and strategic role of Christians for the life of the nation

²² Zainal Abidin Bagir, ""Mengkaji Agama secara Dialogis di Perguruan Tinggi" in *Dialog Antar Umat Beragama: Gagasan dan Praktis di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta & Bandung: CRCS UGM & Mizan, 2010).

²³ Yan Suhendra & Susanti Embong Bulan. "Kasih Allah Akan Dunia Ini: Panggilan Umat Kristen untuk Mengasihi Indonesia (God's Love for this World: Christians Call to Love Indonesia)". *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 3, no. 1 (2021): 51-71.
<https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v3i1.34>.

and nation.²⁴ This means that this should be an obligation for Christians and especially B/TC.

Practically, the formation of an interfaith student community (for example Christian – Muslim) requires cooperation from both parties. For example, UIN Sunan Kalijaga and Immanuel Christian University Yogyakarta formed a Peace Dialogue Community and a Student Peace Dialogue Community. Even though these two communities are still in the pioneering stage and are not yet as effective as YIPC, the dialogue programs held have attracted a lot of attention and have been participated by many people. This can also be seen as a form of community service from higher education. If this collaboration can be developed more seriously and in the long term, it will have a wider impact both on other religious campuses and on the community. This campus-based interfaith student community will certainly be more sustainable and focused. This is where B/TC needs to see its strategic role in collaborating with and inviting B/TC to carry out a religious moderation program for the common good and collectively.

CONCLUSION

To make religious moderation efforts, especially among the younger generation/students, get more effective and optimal results, a joint effort is needed to form an interfaith community based on the Holy Bible. The aim of this community is to provide a means for the process of transforming thought patterns and attitudes. Meeting students of different faiths needs to be a continuous and long-term forum so that students who initially behave intolerantly (social exclusivism) can change to become tolerant and able to build relationships with those who are different (social pluralism).

The formation of an interfaith student community forum needs to be seen as a strategic role for Religious Higher Education. Students at Religious Higher Education are among the groups most vulnerable to intolerance because their encounters with those who are different are very minimal. Especially for B/TC,

²⁴ Andri Vincent Sinaga, Ronald Engelhard Mussu, & Oey Natanael Winanto. "Kerukunan Beragama Di Tengah Perbedaan Agama-Agama Dan Moderasi Beragama: Sebuah Perspektif Teologis". *Journal of Religious and Socio-Cultural* 6, no. 1 (2025): 45-66. <https://doi.org/10.46362/jrsc.v6i1.230>.

they need to be more concerned and actively involved in religious moderation efforts together with Islamic Religious Higher Education.

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