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# RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS, MEDIATION, AND MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING: THE ROLES OF FKUB IN RESOLVING WORSHIP PLACE DISPUTES IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

Indonesia's religious diversity presents ongoing challenges in managing disputes over houses of worship, particularly when administrative regulations intersect with community relations and religious identities. This study examines the dynamics of religious conflicts, the mediating roles of the Forum for Religious Harmony (known as Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama, FKUB), and the extent to which its mediation practices reflect principles associated with multicultural counseling. A qualitative comparative multiple-case study was conducted in Bogor City, West Java, and Aceh Singkil District, Aceh. Data were drawn from interviews with eight key participants representing FKUB, government institutions, religious leaders, and community representatives, supplemented by field observations and document analysis. The data were analyzed through within-case analysis followed by cross-case comparison. The findings show that disputes in both sites were initially associated with the establishment, legality, or use of houses of worship, but developed into broader interreligious tensions when administrative disagreements interacted with mistrust, competing interpretations, and communication problems. FKUB functioned primarily as a mediator and dialogue facilitator linking religious communities, government actors, and local stakeholders, although the form and intensity of mediation differed across the two cases. The findings further indicate that several mediation practices, including perspective-taking, neutrality, culturally sensitive communication, and collaborative dialogue reflect principles associated with multicultural counseling, even though participants did not formally identify these practices as multicultural counseling interventions. This study contributes by demonstrating how multicultural counseling can serve as an analytical lens for understanding culturally responsive, community-based mediation in religious-conflict settings.

**Keywords:** Multicultural counseling; Religious conflict; Conflict mediation; Religious harmony; FKUB; Indonesia

## Abstrak

Keberagaman agama di Indonesia menghadirkan tantangan yang berkelanjutan dalam pengelolaan sengketa terkait rumah ibadah, khususnya ketika regulasi administratif beririsan dengan hubungan sosial masyarakat dan identitas keagamaan. Penelitian ini

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mengkaji dinamika konflik keagamaan, peran mediasi Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB), serta sejauh mana praktik mediasi yang dilakukan mencerminkan prinsip-prinsip yang berkaitan dengan konseling multikultural. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus multipel komparatif dengan pendekatan kualitatif yang dilaksanakan di Kota Bogor, Jawa Barat, dan Kabupaten Aceh Singkil, Aceh. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan delapan informan kunci yang mewakili FKUB, lembaga pemerintah, tokoh agama, dan perwakilan masyarakat, serta dilengkapi dengan observasi lapangan dan analisis dokumen. Data dianalisis melalui analisis dalam kasus (within-case analysis) yang dilanjutkan dengan perbandingan lintas kasus (cross-case comparison). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sengketa di kedua lokasi pada awalnya berkaitan dengan pendirian, legalitas, atau penggunaan rumah ibadah, tetapi kemudian berkembang menjadi ketegangan antarumat beragama yang lebih luas ketika persoalan administratif berinteraksi dengan ketidakpercayaan, perbedaan interpretasi, dan masalah komunikasi. FKUB berfungsi terutama sebagai mediator dan fasilitator dialog yang menghubungkan komunitas keagamaan, aktor pemerintah, dan pemangku kepentingan lokal, meskipun bentuk dan intensitas mediasi berbeda pada kedua kasus. Temuan lebih lanjut menunjukkan bahwa sejumlah praktik mediasi, termasuk pengambilan perspektif, netralitas, komunikasi yang sensitif secara budaya, dan dialog kolaboratif, mencerminkan prinsip-prinsip yang berkaitan dengan konseling multikultural, meskipun para partisipan tidak secara formal mengidentifikasi praktik tersebut sebagai intervensi konseling multikultural. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menunjukkan bahwa konseling multikultural dapat digunakan sebagai lensa analitis untuk memahami mediasi berbasis komunitas yang responsif secara budaya dalam konteks konflik keagamaan.

***Kata kunci**:* konseling multikultural; konflik keagamaan; mediasi konflik; kerukunan umat beragama; FKUB; Indonesia

## مستخلص

يمثّل التنوع الديني في إندونيسيا تحديات مستمرة في إدارة النزاعات المتعلقة بدور العبادة، ولا سيما عندما تتقاطع اللوائح الإدارية مع العلاقات المجتمعية والهويات الدينية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل ديناميات النزاعات الدينية، ودور الوساطة الذي يضطلع به منتدى الوئام بين الأديان (*Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama* – FKUB)، ومدى انعكاس ممارسات الوساطة التي يقوم بها على المبادئ المرتبطة بالإرشاد متعدد الثقافات. اعتمدت الدراسة تصميم دراسة حالات متعددة مقارنة بمنهج نوعي، وأُجريت في مدينة بوغور بمقاطعة جاوة الغربية، ومقاطعة آتشيه سينغكيل بإقليم آتشيه. جُمعت البيانات من خلال مقابلات مع ثمانية مشاركين رئيسيين يمثلون منتدى الوئام بين الأديان، والمؤسسات الحكومية، والقيادات الدينية، وممثلي المجتمع، إلى جانب الملاحظات الميدانية وتحليل الوثائق. وقد حُللت البيانات باستخدام التحليل داخل كل حالة (*within-case analysis*)، ثم أُجريت مقارنة بين الحالات (*cross-case comparison*). وأظهرت النتائج أن النزاعات في الموقعين ارتبطت في بدايتها بإنشاء دور العبادة أو وضعها القانوني أو استخدامها، ثم تطورت إلى توترات أوسع بين أتباع الأديان عندما تداخلت الخلافات الإدارية مع انعدام الثقة، وتباين التفسيرات، ومشكلات التواصل. كما اضطلع منتدى الوئام بين الأديان بدور أساسي بوصفه وسيطًا وميسّرًا للحوار يربط بين الجماعات الدينية والجهات الحكومية وأصحاب المصلحة المحليين، مع اختلاف شكل الوساطة وكثافتها بين الحالتين. وتشير النتائج كذلك إلى أن عددًا من ممارسات الوساطة، بما في ذلك تبني وجهات نظر الأطراف المختلفة، والحياد، والتواصل المراعي للحساسية

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الثقافية، والحوار التعاوني، تعكس مبادئ مرتبطة بالإرشاد متعدد الثقافات، على الرغم من أن المشاركين لم يعرّفوا هذه الممارسات رسميًا بوصفها تدخلات في الإرشاد متعدد الثقافات. وتتمثل إسهامات هذه الدراسة في إظهار أن الإرشاد متعدد الثقافات يمكن أن يُستخدم بوصفه منظورًا تحليليًا لفهم الوساطة المجتمعية المستجيبة ثقافيًا في سياقات النزاعات الدينية.

**الكلمات الرئيسية:** الإرشاد متعدد الثقافات؛ النزاع الديني؛ وساطة النزاعات؛ الوئام بين الأديان؛ منتدى الوئام بين الأديان(FKUB) ؛ إندونيسيا

## A. Introduction

Indonesia is widely recognized as a pluralistic nation characterized by extensive diversity in culture, ethnicity, religion, and social identity. This diversity constitutes an important social resource, but it can also create challenges when differences in identity, interests, and interpretations are not effectively negotiated.[1]

In a plural society, conflict may weaken shared social values and challenge the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* when differences are accompanied by limited cross-cultural understanding.[2]

Indonesia's multicultural context highlights the importance of promoting tolerance and mutual understanding in managing religious and cultural.[3]

Religious conflict in Indonesia takes multiple forms, including communal conflict, intra-religious or sectarian conflict, and conflict associated with political escalation.[4]. Previous cases demonstrate that initially localized disputes may develop into broader interreligious tensions, as occurred in Maluku.[5], while prolonged conflict involving minority religious communities has also been documented in relation to Ahmadiyah groups.[6]

Disputes surrounding houses of worship represent another important form of religious conflict, as illustrated by the case of Aceh Singkil, where tensions have involved religious

[1] Muhammad Ryan Sanjaya, "New Evidence on Ethnic Diversity and Social Capital in Indonesia," *Jurnal Ekonomi & Amp; Studi Pembangunan* 23, no. 1 (2022), https://doi.org/10.18196/jesp.v23i1.13863.

[2] Ceceng Saepulmilah, Luqman Al-hakim Musthafa, and Uus Ruswandi, "Building Harmony in Diversity : A Study of Pluralism and Multiculturalism in Indonesia," *Electronic Journal of Education, Social Economics and Technology* 6, no. 1 (2025): 1136–47, https://doi.org/10.33122/ejeset.v6i1.733.

[3] Amin Maulani, "Tranformasi Learning Dalam Pendidikan Multikultural Keberagaman," *Jurnal Pembangunan Pendidikan: Fondasi Dan Aplikasi* 1, no. 1 (2013): 29–44, https://doi.org/10.21831/jppfa.v1i1.1049.

[4] Zaenuddin Hudi Prasojo and Mustaqim Pabbajah, "Akomodasi Kultural Dalam Resolusi Konflik Bernuansa Agama," *JURNAL AQLAM – Journal of Islam and Plurality* 5, no. 1 (2020): 1–28, http://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/AJIP/article/view/1131/772.

[5] Jamin Safi, "Konflik Komunal: Maluku 1999-2000," *ISTORIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Sejarah* 13 (December 28, 2017), https://doi.org/10.21831/istoria.v13i1.17615.

[6] Bakhtiar Hasan and Ayub Mursalin, "Konflik Komunal Mengatasnamakan Agama Di Indonesia: Analisis Terhadap Konflik Ahmadiyah Dalam Pemberitaan Media, 2005-2011," *Kontekstualita* 26 (January 1, 2011): 71–114.

communities, regulatory arrangements, and differing perceptions of legitimacy and justice.[7] Intra-religious differences may further complicate these dynamics, as religious conflict is also shaped by doctrinal interpretations and internal group differences.[8] Religious identities may also become intertwined with broader political interests and social polarization.[9] In line with this, the dynamics of ethnic and religious conflict in various regions are closely linked to political developments.[10]

These studies demonstrate that religious conflict cannot be understood solely as a disagreement over theological beliefs. Conflicts may also involve administrative regulation, competing interests, communication problems, community relations, and interactions between majority and minority groups. Disputes over houses of worship are particularly relevant because they bring these dimensions together: questions of religious identity and freedom intersect with legal-administrative procedures, local community responses, and institutional decision-making. Consequently, resolving such disputes requires more than regulatory enforcement; it also requires mechanisms capable of facilitating communication, accommodating different perspectives, and maintaining relationships among religious communities and governmental actors.[11]

Within this context, the Forum for Religious Harmony (*Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama*-FKUB) occupies an important position in facilitating dialogue and mediating relations among religious communities, local government, and community stakeholders. The relevance of FKUB becomes particularly evident in conflicts surrounding houses of worship, where administrative disputes can develop into wider social and religious tensions. Mediation in such settings involves engagement with groups that may hold different religious identities, cultural assumptions, interests, and interpretations of the conflict. Therefore, understanding the

[7] Mallia Hartani and Soni Akhmad Nulhaqim, "Analisis Konflik Antar Umat Beragama Di Aceh Singkil," *Jurnal Kolaborasi Resolusi Konflik* 2, no. 2 (2020), https://doi.org/10.24198/jkrk.v2i2.28154.

[8] Abdul Hakim, "Konflik Sektarian Dan Perkembangan Pemikiran Dalam Islam," *SAFINA Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2016).

[9] Aisyah Dara Pamungkas and Ridwan Arifin, "Demokrasi Dan Kampanye Hitam Dalam Penyelenggaraan Pemilihan Umum Di Indonesia (Analisis Atas Black Campaign Dan Negative Campaign)," *DIKTUM: Jurnal Syariah Dan Hukum* 17, no. 1 (2019): 16–30, https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v17i1.641.

[10] Mohammad Takdir, Mushthafa, and Rozinah, "THE DYNAMICS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN INDONESIA : Contestation and Resolution of Religious Conflicts in The New Order Age," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies* 33, no. 1 (2025): 103–21, https://doi.org/10.22219/ljih.v33i1.39958.

[11] Sayuthi M Amin et al., "Resolving Inheritance Conflicts and Their Legal Repercussions in Aceh: A Sociological and Anthropological Look at Peace Initiatives Using Customary Courts," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 8, no. 1 (2025): 166–89, https://doi.org/10.22373/akx7xp17.

role of FKUB requires attention not only to its institutional function but also to the interpersonal and culturally sensitive processes through which mediation and dialogue are conducted.[12]

Multicultural counseling provides a relevant analytical perspective for examining these processes because it emphasizes awareness of cultural differences, understanding of diverse perspectives, empathy, and sensitivity to sociocultural contexts.[13] Differences in cultural orientation can influence how individuals and groups perceive problems, communicate their interests, interpret the behavior of others, and respond to conflict. Accordingly, principles associated with multicultural counseling may be useful for examining conflict-resolution practices involving culturally and religiously diverse communities.[14] In this study, however, multicultural counseling is not assumed to constitute a formal intervention implemented by FKUB. Rather, it is used as an analytical lens for examining whether selected mediation practices reflect principles such as perspective-taking, cultural sensitivity, non-judgmental engagement, and culturally responsive communication.

Despite the existing literature on religious conflict, interreligious tensions, disputes over houses of worship, and culturally sensitive approaches, an important analytical issue remains insufficiently developed. The studies discussed above primarily explain the forms, causes, and dynamics of religious conflict or emphasize the broader need for accommodation in multicultural settings. Less attention has been given to how institutional mediation practices in disputes over houses of worship can be examined through the perspective of multicultural counseling. In particular, the relationship between FKUB-mediated dialogue and principles associated with multicultural counseling has not been sufficiently articulated within the literature reviewed in this study. There is also a need to understand how these mediation processes operate across different local contexts rather than treating religious conflict as a uniform phenomenon.

To address this gap, the present study comparatively examines religious-conflict mediation in Bogor City, West Java, and Aceh Singkil District, Aceh. Both cases involve disputes surrounding houses of worship and the participation of FKUB and other institutional

[12] Miftahus Sholehudin et al., "Marriage Annulment Due to Apostasy: An Empirical Exploration of the Socio-Religious Perspective of FKUB Malang City," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 9, no. 1 (2026): 263–83.

[13] D. W. Sue, *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice (5th Ed.)* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc. 18, 2008).

[14] N. Harun et al., "Integration of Islamic Law Principles in Overcoming Failure: Mediate Family Cases in The North Sulawesi Religious Court," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 9, no. 1 (2026): 215–35, https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v9i1.34080.

and community stakeholders,[15] yet they differ in their specific administrative, social, and interreligious dynamics. Comparing these cases makes it possible to identify both shared patterns and context-specific differences in conflict escalation, institutional mediation, and culturally responsive practices.

Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions:

1. How do disputes over houses of worship emerge and develop in Bogor City and Aceh Singkil District?
2. How does FKUB mediate religious conflict in the two cases, and what similarities and differences characterize its role?
3. In what ways do the mediation practices identified in the two cases reflect principles associated with multicultural counseling?

By addressing these questions, this study seeks to contribute to a more contextualized understanding of religious-conflict mediation in Indonesia. Empirically, it compares two distinct cases of disputes surrounding houses of worship. Analytically, it examines how administrative, communicative, institutional, and interreligious dimensions interact in the development and management of conflict. Conceptually, it explores the analytical value of multicultural counseling principles for understanding culturally responsive mediation practices without equating institutional religious mediation with formal counseling intervention.

## B. Method

### 1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative comparative multiple-case study design [16] to examine religious conflict, institutional mediation, and the accommodation of multicultural counseling principles in the resolution of disputes over places of worship in Indonesia. The study focused on two bounded cases: Bogor City, West Java, and Aceh Singkil District, Aceh. The use of a comparative case-study design enabled the study to examine each conflict within its particular social, religious, administrative, and institutional context while also identifying similarities and differences across the two cases. Bogor City constituted the first case, centered on the prolonged dispute surrounding the GKI Yasmin Church and its building permit. Aceh Singkil constituted the second case, focusing on disputes surrounding the establishment, authorization, and use of

[15] Marhaeni Saleh, Rahmawati, and Muhammad bin Abubakar, "Theological Influenceson Religious Perceptionsin South Sulawesi: A Mashlahah-BasedStudy of the FKUB," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (2025): 1087–1107, https://doi.org/10.22373/6jtqa602.

[16] Lisa Given, "The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods" (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008).

Christian houses of worship. The unit of analysis was the process of religious conflict resolution involving the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) and other relevant stakeholders, with particular attention to the origins and escalation of conflict, mediation and dialogue processes, stakeholder involvement, and practices reflecting principles of multicultural counseling.

## 2. Research Sites

Bogor City and Aceh Singkil District were examined because both represented significant cases of prolonged religious conflict involving disputes over houses of worship and the involvement of FKUB in mediation and conflict-resolution processes. Although the two cases shared a common issue concerning the legality, establishment, or use of houses of worship, they differed in their local socio-religious and institutional contexts. In Bogor City, the conflict centered on the GKI Yasmin Church following the issuance of Building Permit No. 645.8-372/2006 on July 19, 2006. The dispute subsequently developed around community approval, allegations concerning administrative documents, the revocation of the building permit, relocation, and prolonged disagreement between the church, sections of the local community, and government authorities. FKUB became involved in repeated mediation involving religious leaders, community representatives, government officials, and church representatives. In Aceh Singkil, religious conflict primarily concerned the construction, legalization, and continued use of churches without formal permits. The dispute involved differences concerning previously established agreements on the number of churches, the use of unlicensed worship buildings, enforcement actions by government authorities, and relations between Muslim and Christian communities. FKUB, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, religious leaders, and community representatives participated in dialogue and mediation processes.

The comparison of these two cases therefore made it possible to examine how similar disputes surrounding houses of worship developed and were mediated within different local contexts.

## 3. Participants

The empirical findings reported in this study were derived from eight key participants comprising four participants from Bogor City and four from Aceh Singkil District. The participants represented institutional, governmental, religious, and community perspectives directly relevant to the conflicts and their resolution. In Bogor City, the participants consisted of a FKUB chairperson (HB), a subdistrict government official (JEN), a representative of a Muslim professional organization (AP), and a Christian religious leader or pastor (TS). In Aceh

Singkil, the informants consisted of an Islamic religious leader (RL), a representative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (HN), a Christian community representative (CM), and an FKUB representative (MN). The inclusion of participants from different institutional and religious backgrounds enabled the study to capture multiple perspectives on the origins of conflict, administrative and social disputes surrounding houses of worship, interreligious and intra-religious dynamics, institutional mediation, and community-based conflict resolution.

To protect participants' identities, abbreviated codes were used instead of their full names.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics and Study Sites

| Participant Code | Institutional/Community Role | Study Site |
|---|---|---|
| HB | FKUB chairperson | Bogor City |
| JEN | Subdistrict/local-government official | Bogor City |
| AP | Representative of a Muslim professional organization | Bogor City |
| TS | Christian religious leader/pastor | Bogor City |
| RL | Islamic religious leader | Aceh Singkil |
| HN | Representative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs | Aceh Singkil |
| CM | Christian community representative | Aceh Singkil |
| MN | FKUB representative | Aceh Singkil |

## 4. Data Sources and Data Collection

Data were obtained through interviews, field observations, and document analysis, with relevant literature used to provide conceptual and contextual support for interpreting the empirical findings.

## 5. Interviews

Interview data constituted a central source of empirical evidence. Interviews involved eight key informants representing FKUB, local government, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Muslim and Christian religious communities, and relevant community organizations.

The interviews explored participants' understandings of the origins and development of religious conflict, disputes surrounding the establishment and licensing of houses of worship, factors contributing to conflict escalation, relations among religious communities, the role of government and FKUB, mediation and dialogue processes, and practices used to restore or maintain religious harmony. The diversity of informants enabled the researchers to examine the conflicts from different institutional and community perspectives rather than relying upon a

single stakeholder account. In Bogor, perspectives were obtained from FKUB, local government, a Muslim organization, and the Christian community. In Aceh Singkil, perspectives were obtained from an Islamic religious leader, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Christian community, and FKUB.

### 6. Field Observation

Field observation constituted an additional source of empirical data. Observational evidence was used particularly to examine contextual conditions surrounding places of worship and the implementation of regulations concerning worship buildings. In Aceh Singkil, field observations identified worship buildings operating without formal permits, including some residential buildings that had been informally used as places of worship. These observations were interpreted cautiously and considered together with interview accounts and documentary information, rather than being used as a precise quantitative estimate of the number of unlicensed worship buildings. Observational evidence also provided contextual information for understanding the social environment in which religious interaction, mediation, and conflict-resolution activities occurred. .

### 7. Document Analysis

Documentary materials were examined to complement interview and observational evidence and to establish the administrative and regulatory contexts of the two cases. In the Bogor case, documentary information included the building permit for the GKI Yasmin Church, identified as IMB No. 645.8-372/2006, issued on July 19, 2006, as well as information concerning the subsequent revocation of the permit. In the Aceh Singkil case, documentary and official information concerning the number, licensing status, sealing, and use of church buildings was considered in conjunction with interview and observational evidence. The analysis also considered the regulatory context governing the establishment of houses of worship, particularly Joint Ministerial Regulation No. 9 and No. 8 of 2006. Relevant scholarly literature was used to contextualize the cases and support the theoretical interpretation of religious conflict, mediation, and multicultural counseling. Scholarly literature was treated as contextual and interpretive material rather than as equivalent to primary interview and observational data.

### 8. Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the general processes of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, combined with within-case and cross-case analysis appropriate to the comparative case-study design.[17]

[17] Catherine Houghton et al., "Qualitative Case Study Data Analysis: An Example from Practice," *Nurse Researcher* 22, no. 5 (May 15, 2015): 8–12, https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.5.8.e1307.

**9. The analysis proceeded in several stages.**

First, interview accounts, observational evidence, and documentary information were organized according to the two study sites, Bogor City and Aceh Singkil District. This initial organization enabled each case to be examined within its own local context before comparison between the two cases. Second, the empirical material was reduced by identifying information directly related to the major research concerns, including the origins and escalation of religious conflict, disputes surrounding houses of worship, communication among stakeholders, institutional responses, mediation processes, the role of FKUB, and practices associated with multicultural counseling. Third, related evidence was organized into broader analytic categories. Three major categories emerged consistently from the empirical material: (1) forms and dynamics of religious conflict; (2) the role and function of FKUB in promoting religious harmony and mediating conflict; and (3) the accommodation of multicultural counseling principles in conflict-resolution practices. Fourth, a within-case analysis was conducted for each site. For Bogor City, the analysis examined the GKI Yasmin dispute, the development of the conflict from an administrative dispute into broader interreligious tension, mediation efforts, community and governmental involvement, and internal disagreement within the Christian community concerning relocation.

For Aceh Singkil, the analysis examined disputes concerning church licensing and construction, the enforcement of previous agreements, Muslim-Christian relations, and the mediation roles of FKUB and governmental institutions. Fifth, a cross-case comparison was conducted to identify similarities and differences between Bogor and Aceh Singkil. The comparison showed that both cases were strongly associated with disputes surrounding the establishment or legality of houses of worship and that administrative disagreements could develop into broader interreligious tensions when accompanied by ineffective communication, competing interests, and distrust. At the same time, differences in local context, stakeholder configuration, and the specific dynamics of the disputes were retained in the interpretation. Sixth, findings concerning FKUB were compared across the two cases. Particular attention was given to its role as mediator, dialogue facilitator, institutional bridge, and intermediary among religious communities, government institutions, religious leaders, and local communities.

Finally, conflict-resolution practices were interpreted through the conceptual lens of multicultural counseling. The analysis focused particularly on practices involving dialogue, understanding different perspectives, neutrality, empathy, cultural sensitivity, communication, and efforts to achieve mutually acceptable solutions. The concept of multicultural counseling

was therefore used to interpret practices identified in the empirical material rather than to assume that participants themselves formally employed the term.

## C. Result

### 1. Forms of Religious Conflict in Indonesia

#### *a. Case Study: Bogor City*

Findings from interviews indicate that the religious conflict in Bogor originated from the issuance of a building permit (*IMB No. 645.8-372/2006*) for the construction of the GKI Yasmin Church on July 19, 2006. According to the FKUB chairman (HB), the conflict emerged due to misunderstandings and the absence of agreement between local residents and the church regarding the construction.

Despite more than 45 mediation meetings facilitated by FKUB involving community leaders, Islamic leaders, pastors, and church representatives, no consensus was achieved. As a result, the Bogor municipal government revoked the permit in 2011. This decision intensified tensions between Muslim and Christian communities, leading to the sealing of the church building and public protests. Christian congregants responded by holding worship services on public sidewalks, which were perceived as disruptive by local residents.

Further findings from the subdistrict head (JEN) reveal that although the conflict initially stemmed from administrative issues, it gradually escalated into a broader interreligious conflict. The prolonged dispute caused significant social impacts, including community polarization and repeated clashes since 2006.

Additional insights from AP (a representative of a Muslim professional organization) indicate that the conflict was also fueled by allegations of document falsification and the spread of provocative narratives. The lack of effective communication among stakeholders contributed to recurring tensions, including demonstrations and forced dispersal of worship activities.

Moreover, the data reveal that the conflict was not only interreligious but also intra-religious. According to Pastor TS, divisions occurred within the Christian community regarding the relocation of the church, with some groups supporting relocation and others rejecting it. This internal disagreement further complicated the resolution process.

***b. Case Study: Aceh Singkil District***

Findings from Aceh Singkil show that religious conflict primarily revolves around the construction and legalization of houses of worship. According to RL (an Islamic religious leader), the conflict emerged due to the existence of numerous churches that lacked official permits and exceeded previously agreed limits.

Field observation constituted an additional source of empirical data. Observational evidence was used particularly to examine contextual conditions surrounding places of worship and the implementation of regulations concerning worship buildings. In Aceh Singkil, field observations identified worship buildings operating without formal permits, including some residential buildings that had been informally used as places of worship. These observations were interpreted cautiously and considered together with interview accounts and documentary information, rather than being used as a precise quantitative estimate of the number of unlicensed worship buildings. Observational evidence also provided contextual information for understanding the social environment in which religious interaction, mediation, and conflict-resolution activities occurred.

HN, a representative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, identified permitting issues as a central aspect of the conflict. Field observations documented the presence of worship buildings operating without formal permits, including some residential buildings that had been informally used as places of worship. Interview accounts further indicated that the continued use or reopening of previously sealed buildings contributed to recurring tensions between community groups. Acts of violence, including the burning of a church, were also reported during the broader escalation of the conflict. However, the available evidence does not establish a direct causal relationship between the reopening of sealed buildings and the subsequent violence.

From the perspective of the Christian community (CM), the conflict is rooted in earlier agreements limiting church construction. However, over time, the number and size of churches increased due to the growing needs of congregations. This situation created tension, particularly when enforcement actions targeted unlicensed buildings.

**2. The Role and Function of FKUB in Promoting Religious Harmony**

***a. Case Study: Bogor City***

Findings indicate that FKUB plays an important role in mediating religious conflict. According to HB, FKUB seeks to act as a neutral and inclusive institution by bringing together representatives from various religious groups, including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, as well as legal advisors and

government stakeholders. From HB's perspective, this multi-religious composition supports FKUB's role in facilitating dialogue among parties with different interests and religious backgrounds.

FKUB facilitated dialogue by bringing together religious leaders, community representatives, and local government officials, either through formal meetings or direct community engagement. This mediation process aimed to bridge differences and identify mutually acceptable solutions.

JEN emphasized that conflict resolution required collaborative efforts involving multiple stakeholders, including religious leaders, community figures, and local authorities. Approaches included direct communication with residents, engagement with religious leaders, and efforts to prevent escalation of conflict at the grassroots level.

AP further highlighted that FKUB played a significant role in facilitating dialogue and mediating disputes, particularly by organizing discussions among all parties involved. Although earlier mediation efforts had not resulted in consensus, these efforts subsequently contributed to an agreement to relocate the church to a new site.

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Pastor TS noted that FKUB also supported internal community processes, including discussions and counseling within the church congregation to address differing perspectives regarding relocation. This indicates that FKUB's role extended beyond intergroup mediation to supporting intra-group reconciliation.

***b. Case Study: Aceh Singkil District***

In Aceh Singkil, FKUB also plays a significant role in mediating religious conflict. According to MN (FKUB representative), the institution adopts a neutral position by involving representatives from different religious groups and facilitating dialogue between them.

The mediation process includes collecting perspectives from each group separately, identifying key issues, and formulating recommendations for local government. This approach helps build trust and ensures that all parties are represented.

HN explained that FKUB, in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, also organizes interfaith meetings aimed at promoting mutual understanding and maintaining harmony. These activities emphasize shared identity and coexistence rather than focusing solely on conflict issues.

Interestingly, findings from CM indicate that in some communities, strong interreligious harmony has been achieved. Social interactions such as mutual participation in social events and interfaith family relations reflect a high level of integration, which is partly attributed to the continuous efforts of FKUB.

**3. Accommodation of Multicultural Counseling in Conflict Resolution**

***c. Case Study: Bogor City***

Findings indicate that although stakeholders are not formally familiar with the concept of multicultural counseling, its principles are implicitly practiced through mediation processes.

HB explained that FKUB's approach focuses on continuous mediation involving multiple stakeholders, including religious leaders, communities, and government actors. This process emphasizes understanding different perspectives and fostering mutual agreement.

JEN confirmed that mediation is conducted carefully due to its sensitivity to religious and human rights issues. The process requires neutrality, continuous engagement, and a balanced approach to decision-making.

Additionally, Pastor TS highlighted the role of pastoral counseling within the Christian community, which continues to address internal conflicts and strengthen social relationships among congregants. This indicates that counseling practices complement mediation efforts in conflict resolution.

***d. Case Study: Aceh Singkil District***

Similar findings are observed in Aceh Singkil. According to MN, FKUB functions as a mediator that assists communities in resolving conflicts by facilitating dialogue and encouraging collective solutions.

HN emphasized that government institutions also play a role in supporting mediation efforts, acting as facilitators and working collaboratively with FKUB and community leaders. Continuous dialogue is considered essential to ensure that all parties can express their perspectives and reach mutual understanding.

**4. Cross-Case Comparison**

**Table 2. Cross-Case Comparison of Religious Conflict and FKUB Mediation**

| Analytical Dimension | Bogor City | Aceh Singkil | Cross-Case Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Conflict Trigger** | The conflict was initially triggered by the issuance of a building permit (*IMB* | The conflict was primarily triggered by the construction and use of | In both cases, religious conflict initially developed around houses |

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| | | *No. 645.8-372/2006*) for the construction of the GKI Yasmin Church. The dispute was subsequently intensified by disagreements between local residents and the church, allegations of document falsification, and provocative narratives. | houses of worship that were considered unlicensed or inconsistent with previously agreed limitations on church construction. | of worship, but the specific triggers differed. Bogor centered on a disputed permit and its subsequent revocation, while Aceh Singkil centered on the legality, number, and continued use of houses of worship. |
| 2. | **Legal/ Administrative Conditions** | The church initially obtained a building permit in 2006, but the permit was revoked by the municipal government in 2011. The administrative dispute subsequently became intertwined with religious and social tensions. | The central administrative issue concerned the absence of formal permits for churches and the continued use of buildings that had reportedly been sealed. Existing agreements concerning the number and construction of churches also became an important reference point. | Administrative and legal issues were central in both cases. However, Bogor involved a disputed permit and its revocation, whereas Aceh Singkil involved the absence of permits, enforcement, and alleged violations of existing agreements. |
| 3. | **Community Dynamics** | Prolonged conflict generated polarization among local communities and repeated demonstrations and clashes. Worship activities on public sidewalks became another source of tension. | Community tensions developed around the construction, sealing, and reopening of worship buildings. Repeated disagreements over enforcement contributed to escalating tensions between communities. | Both cases demonstrate that an initially administrative dispute can become embedded in broader community relations, producing polarization, mistrust, and recurring tensions. |
| 4. | **Minority–Majority Relations** | The conflict involved tensions between Muslim residents and a Christian congregation. The dispute also revealed diversity within the Christian community itself concerning relocation. | The conflict involved tensions between the Muslim majority and Christian communities concerning access to and regulation of houses of worship. | In both cases, the religious minority–majority relationship formed an important social context. However, the Bogor case additionally demonstrates intra-religious diversity, showing that religious communities are not internally homogeneous. |

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| 5. | **Role of Government** | The municipal government was involved in the administrative process, including the revocation of the church permit and efforts to address the prolonged dispute. Government actors also participated in conflict-resolution processes with FKUB and community leaders. | Government institutions, particularly the Ministry of Religious Affairs and local authorities, were involved in monitoring religious-worship issues, supporting mediation, and formulating or enforcing administrative measures. | Government actors were important in both cases, functioning both as administrative authorities and conflict-management actors. The cases also demonstrate the difficulty of balancing regulatory enforcement with the maintenance of interreligious harmony. |
| 6. | **Role of FKUB** | FKUB functioned as a mediator and facilitator of dialogue among religious leaders, community representatives, government officials, and other stakeholders. It reportedly facilitated more than 45 mediation meetings. | FKUB functioned as a mediator by collecting perspectives from different religious groups, facilitating dialogue, and providing recommendations to local government. | FKUB played a broadly similar role in both cases: mediation, facilitation, representation, and dialogue. However, the intensity and duration of mediation were particularly prominent in the Bogor case. |
| 7. | **Dialogue and Mediation Process** | Mediation involved repeated meetings among community leaders, Islamic leaders, pastors, church representatives, government actors, and other stakeholders. The process sought to understand different perspectives and identify mutually acceptable solutions. | Mediation involved gathering perspectives from different groups, identifying key issues, organizing interfaith meetings, and developing recommendations for government. | Both cases relied on dialogue and multi-stakeholder mediation, although Bogor demonstrates prolonged mediation around a specific institutional dispute, while Aceh Singkil emphasizes continued dialogue and interfaith engagement alongside administrative issues. |
| 8. | **Multicultural Counseling-Related Practices** | Although stakeholders did not formally identify their activities as multicultural counseling, practices such as perspective-taking, neutrality, dialogue, culturally sensitive engagement, and attention to intra-group differences reflected selected | Similar elements were evident through the recognition of different religious perspectives, separate collection of community viewpoints, interfaith dialogue, and efforts to promote mutual understanding. | In both cases, multicultural counseling principles were implicitly reflected rather than formally implemented. The strongest points of correspondence were perspective-taking, cultural/religious sensitivity, equitable engagement, and |

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| | multicultural counseling principles. | | culturally responsive communication. |
| 9. **Intra-Religious Dynamics** | The conflict was not exclusively interreligious. Pastor TS reported disagreement within the Christian community concerning church relocation, with some supporting relocation and others rejecting it. | The available findings primarily emphasize Muslim–Christian tensions and administrative disputes; less evidence was identified concerning internal divisions within the respective religious communities. | Bogor demonstrates a more explicit intra-religious dimension, while the available Aceh Singkil data emphasize interreligious and administrative dimensions. |
| 10. **Conflict Escalation** | The conflict escalated from an administrative dispute into broader interreligious tensions, including church sealing, demonstrations, worship on public sidewalks, forced dispersal, polarization, and repeated clashes. | Tensions escalated through disputes over unlicensed worship buildings, continued use of sealed buildings, protests, and eventually violence, including the burning of a church. | Both cases show a process of conflict escalation from administrative disagreement to broader social and religious tension. The forms of escalation differed, with Bogor characterized by prolonged demonstrations and polarization, while Aceh Singkil involved more explicit physical violence. |
| 11. **Continuity of Conflict** | The dispute persisted for many years, with tensions and clashes repeatedly occurring after the initial dispute in 2006. | Conflict also persisted through repeated disputes over permits, enforcement, and the use of worship buildings. | Both cases demonstrate that unresolved administrative and religious disputes can become long-term conflicts when underlying grievances remain unresolved. |
| 12. **Social Harmony / Interreligious Relations** | The prolonged dispute contributed to polarization, although mediation and dialogue provided mechanisms for continued engagement among stakeholders. | Some communities demonstrated relatively strong interreligious social integration, including participation in social activities and interreligious family relationships. | The cases reveal different community-level contexts: Bogor was characterized more strongly by polarization surrounding the dispute, whereas the Aceh Singkil findings also provide evidence of existing everyday interreligious |

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| | | | integration alongside conflict. |
| 13. **Conflict Resolution Outcome** | Mediation did not initially produce consensus despite numerous meetings. The conflict continued after the permit was revoked, although subsequent FKUB engagement contributed to an agreement concerning relocation. | FKUB and government-supported dialogue generated recommendations and continued efforts toward religious harmony, but the findings indicate that disputes concerning permits and enforcement remained significant. | Neither case can be characterized simply as a fully resolved conflict. Both demonstrate partial and ongoing conflict-management processes, rather than a straightforward final resolution. |
| 14. **Overall Conflict Pattern** | Administrative dispute, religious polarization, prolonged mediation, social tensions, partial accommodation/relocation efforts. | Administrative/regulatory dispute, interreligious tension, enforcement disputes, escalation/violence, continued mediation and harmony-building efforts. | Both cases demonstrate the interaction between administrative regulation, religious identity, community relations, and conflict mediation, but their escalation patterns and local social contexts differ. |

## D. Discussion

### 1. Forms of Religious Conflict in Indonesia

The findings of this study indicate that religious conflicts in Indonesia, particularly in Bogor City and Aceh Singkil Regency, are predominantly rooted in disputes over the establishment of houses of worship. Empirical evidence from interviews reveals that administrative issues especially related to building permits serve as the initial trigger, which subsequently escalates into broader interreligious tensions. As expressed by one informant, "the conflict originated from a misunderstanding regarding the building permit for the GKI Yasmin church there was no agreement between the local community and the church"

This finding is consistent with the regulatory context governing the establishment of houses of worship in Indonesia, in which administrative requirements, community relations, and institutional procedures form important considerations.[18] However, the administrative circumstances differed between the two cases examined. In Bogor, the dispute involved a building permit that had been issued and was subsequently revoked, whereas in Aceh Singkil,

[18] Safira Mustaqilla et al., "The Existence of Non-Muslim Minorities in Aceh Indonesia: A Study of Civil and Police Institutions," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 8, no. 1 (2024), https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v8i1.17386.

the findings concerned houses of worship reported as lacking formal permits and disputes surrounding regulatory enforcement. These differences indicate that administrative issues should be understood within the specific context of each case rather than treated as a uniform condition across both sites.

Furthermore, the escalation of conflict from administrative disputes to interreligious tensions suggests that the dispute was not limited to regulatory procedures. Rather, it reflected differences in interests and perceptions that became expressed through disagreements between individuals and religious groups, illustrating how conflict may develop through interactions among the parties involved.[19] When such differences emerge between religious communities, they may intersect with religious beliefs, collective identities, and existing social relationships, potentially intensifying tensions between communities.[20] Similarly, Folger and Poole emphasize that conflict is manifested through communication behaviors.[21] Ineffective communication and misinterpretation among stakeholders contributed significantly to the persistence and escalation of the conflict.[22]

Additionally, the findings suggest that the conflicts examined involved competing interests, differences in decision-making, and contestation over the use and recognition of religious spaces.[23] These dynamics can be understood alongside broader discussions of how legal, institutional, and structural conditions shape the development and management of disputes.[24] In the two cases examined, religious conflict therefore appears not solely as a theological issue, but as a multidimensional process involving legal-administrative conditions, social relations, competing interests, and communication among stakeholders.[25]

## 2. The Role and Function of FKUB in Promoting Religious Harmony

The study demonstrates that the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) plays a crucial and strategic role in mitigating religious conflicts. The findings reveal that FKUB functions as

[19] Louis Kriesberg, "The Evolution of Conflict Resolution," in *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution, Ed. Jacob Bercovitch, Victor Kremenyuk, and I. William Zartman* (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2009), 1–23.

[20] Komang Ariyanto, "Social Conflict Among Religious Groups in the Perspective of Sociology of Religion" 3, no. 2 (2023): 210–23.

[21] R.K Folger, J.P., Poole, M.S., & Stutman, *Working Through Conflict: Strategies for Relationships, Groups, and Organizations (9th Ed.)* (Routledge, 2021), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003027232.

[22] Moh. Syaeful Bahar et al., "Managing Sunni-Shia Tensions: Socio-Political and Cultural Peacebuilding in Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah, Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 3 (2025), https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i3.1623.

[23] Amalia Calinescu, "Conflict Dynamics in Education," *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods* 3, no. 3 (October 2025): 144–66, https://doi.org/10.59652/jetm.v3i3.662.

[24] Didik Sukriono et al., "Local Wisdom as Legal Dispute Settlement : How Indonesia ' s Communities Acknowledge Alternative Dispute Resolution ?," *LEGALITY: Jurnall Ilmiah Hukum* 33, no. 1 (2025): 261–85.

[25] Firdaus M. Yunus et al., "Rejection of Rohingya in Aceh: The Role of Ulama and Tolerance in Acehnese Society," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 3 (13AD), https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i3.1589.

a mediator, facilitator, and communicator among diverse religious groups, government institutions, and local communities. As stated by an informant, "FKUB acts as a neutral party that brings together religious leaders, community figures, and government representatives to find common ground".

This empirical evidence is consistent with the mandate outlined in the Joint Ministerial Regulation No. 9 and 8 of 2006, which assigns FKUB the responsibility to facilitate dialogue, channel community aspirations, and provide recommendations regarding religious harmony and the establishment of houses of worship. The institutional role of FKUB reflects a formal mechanism for conflict resolution through participatory and dialogical approaches.[26]

From a theoretical perspective, the mediation role performed by FKUB aligns with the concept proposed, who defines mediation as a process involving a neutral third party that assists disputing parties in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement without possessing decision-making authority.[27] The neutrality and inclusivity of FKUB enable it to build trust among conflicting parties, which is essential for effective conflict resolution.[28]

Moreover, the mediation process implemented by FKUB corresponds with the stages of mediation described, including pre-mediation preparation, dialogue facilitation, negotiation, and agreement formulation.[29] The study findings indicate that FKUB's consistent engagement through repeated meetings, community outreach, and collaboration with religious leaders contributes significantly to reducing tensions and fostering mutual understanding.[30]

Therefore, FKUB serves not only as an institutional mediator but also as a social bridge that integrates diverse interests and promotes sustainable religious harmony in multicultural societies.

### 3. Multicultural Counseling Accommodation in Conflict Resolution

For the purpose of analysis, practices were considered to reflect multicultural counseling principles when they demonstrated: (1) recognition of cultural and religious differences, (2) consideration of clients' or groups' sociocultural contexts, (3) openness to multiple cultural perspectives, (4) non-judgmental and equitable engagement, and (5)

[26] Saleh, Rahmawati, and Muhammad bin Abubakar, "Theological Influenceson Religious Perceptionsin South Sulawesi: A Mashlahah-BasedStudy of the FKUB."

[27] Sofia Gussevi et al., "The Urgency of Mediation in Resolving Divorce Disputes at the Religious Court of Purwakarta : Efforts to Increase the Effectiveness of Case Resolution and Minimize Social Impact," *Muttaqien* 6, no. 2 (2025): 174–200.

[28] Sholehudin et al., "Marriage Annulment Due to Apostasy: An Empirical Exploration of the Socio-Religious Perspective of FKUB Malang City."

[29] Numfor Thaddeus Tanifum and Sundjo Fabien, "The Importance of Mediation as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Method," *IQ Research Journal* 003, no. 012 (2024).

[30] Amin et al., "Resolving Inheritance Conflicts and Their Legal Repercussions in Aceh: A Sociological and Anthropological Look at Peace Initiatives Using Customary Courts."

facilitation of culturally responsive communication and collaborative problem-solving. These criteria served as an interpretive framework for analyzing the informants' practices, without equating them with the formal application of a multicultural counseling model.

Sociocultural context of conflict, maintenance of non-judgmental and equitable interaction, and facilitation of communication and collaborative problem-solving across cultural groups. These criteria were used as an analytical lens to examine the practices described by the informants, rather than to suggest that the stakeholders were formally implementing a multicultural counseling model.

The data indicate that mediation practices involved efforts to understand the perspectives and experiences of different groups, maintain neutrality during conflict resolution, and facilitate communication between parties with different cultural and religious backgrounds. One informant explained, "the mediation process allows us to understand each group's perspective and work together to resolve the problem." Thus, while the stakeholders did not formally conceptualize their work as multicultural counseling, their mediation and dialogue practices demonstrate several characteristics that are conceptually consistent with multicultural counseling, particularly perspective-taking, cultural sensitivity, equitable engagement, and collaborative conflict resolution.

The findings further reveal that although stakeholders may not explicitly identify their approaches as "multicultural counseling," the practices implemented particularly mediation and dialogue reflect core principles of multicultural counseling. Informants emphasized that conflict resolution efforts involve understanding diverse perspectives, maintaining neutrality, and facilitating communication among different cultural and religious groups. One informant noted, "the mediation process allows us to understand each group's perspective and work together to resolve the problem".

This observation is consistent with the theoretical framework of multicultural counseling proposed, which highlights the importance of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competence in addressing issues involving diverse populations.[31] In the Indonesian, multiculturalism is inherent, conflict resolution strategies must accommodate differences in beliefs, values, and social norms.

Furthermore, the distinction between Western and Eastern cultural orientations, as described by Palmer and Laungani, is relevant in understanding the communal approach

[31] Sue, *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice (5th Ed.)*.

observed in this study.[32] The emphasis on collective harmony, social cohesion, and mutual respect reflects Eastern cultural values, which shape the mediation practices conducted by FKUB and related institutions.

In terms of counseling services, the mediation approach identified in this study corresponds with the classification of counseling services proposed, particularly mediation services aimed at resolving disputes between individuals or groups.[33] Beyond resolving immediate disagreements, mediation also provides opportunities for conflicting parties to develop mutual understanding, improve communication, and transform adversarial relationships into more constructive and cooperative interactions.[34]

Thus, multicultural counseling in this context is operationalized through mediation practices that prioritize dialogue, empathy, and cultural understanding. Although not formally labeled as counseling interventions, these practices effectively embody the principles of multicultural counseling and contribute to sustainable conflict resolution.

## E. Conclusion

This study examined religious-conflict dynamics, FKUB-mediated conflict resolution, and practices associated with multicultural counseling in two Indonesian cases: Bogor City and Aceh Singkil District. The findings indicate that disputes over houses of worship in both cases were closely connected to administrative and regulatory issues, but these issues became more complex when combined with miscommunication, competing interpretations, distrust, and broader interreligious tensions. The two cases therefore suggest that conflicts surrounding houses of worship are better understood as multidimensional processes involving legal-administrative, social, religious, and communicative factors rather than as purely theological disputes.

The findings also highlight the mediating role of FKUB in the two cases examined. FKUB facilitated dialogue, brought together religious and governmental stakeholders, communicated differing perspectives, and supported efforts to manage conflict. However, its role and mediation processes varied according to the local context. In Bogor, mediation was

[32] S Palmer, *Stephen Palmer. In R. Moodley, A. Rai, W. Alladin (Eds.)* (SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2010), https://doi.org/10.4135/9788132105534.n23.

[33] Syifa Rahma Isnaeni et al., "The Effectiveness of Mediation Services in Resolving Students ' Interpersonal Conflicts : A Systematic Literature Review," *Journal of Psychology and Education Counseling* 1, no. 2 (2025): 43–51, https://doi.org/10.64624/jpec.v1i2.70.

[34] Jessica Katz Jameson, Andrea M Bodtker, and Tim Linker, "Facilitating Conflict Transformation: Mediator Strategies for Eliciting Emotional Communication in a Workplace Conflict," *Negotiation Journal* 26, no. 1 (January 11, 2010): 25–48, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.2009.00252.x.

characterized by prolonged engagement surrounding a specific institutional dispute, whereas in Aceh Singkil, mediation was more closely connected to continuing dialogue, administrative enforcement, and broader interreligious relations. These differences indicate that FKUB mediation should be understood as context-dependent rather than as a uniform conflict-resolution mechanism.

The study further found that several practices described by participants including perspective-taking, neutrality, sensitivity to religious and cultural differences, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving reflect selected principles associated with multicultural counseling. These findings do not indicate that FKUB formally implements multicultural counseling as a professional counseling intervention. Rather, they suggest that multicultural counseling may provide a useful analytical lens for understanding culturally responsive dimensions of community-based religious mediation.

Taken together, the findings contribute to understanding how administrative regulation, institutional mediation, and culturally responsive communication interact in the management of religious conflict. The two cases suggest that regulatory mechanisms alone may be insufficient when disputes are accompanied by strained intergroup relations and competing interpretations of legitimacy. Continued dialogue, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and culturally sensitive mediation may therefore complement formal institutional processes in managing disputes over houses of worship.

Given the limited number of cases and participants, these findings should be interpreted within the specific contexts of Bogor City and Aceh Singkil District. Further research across a wider range of regional, religious, and institutional settings is needed to examine whether similar patterns of conflict mediation and multicultural sensitivity are found elsewhere.

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