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Implementing Holistic Mission within The Frame of Religious Moderation

Timotius Sukarna^{1*}; Ibiang O. Okoi²

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Kadesi, Yogyakarta, Indonesia¹

Department of History and International Studies, University of Calabar, Nigeria²

*timotiussukarna@gmail.com**

Abstract

The Indonesian government issued a new concept of the religiosity called religious moderation. Religious conflicts that occur as a result of religious radicalism that arise due to economic, social, and political factors are the reason for the issuance of this discourse. Carrying out the mission holistically is one of the solutions to the problems mentioned above. This article was written with the aim of explaining how to carry out a holistic mission within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia. Through library studies, this research examines literature related to holistic mission, religious moderation, and related themes. The finding showed that efforts to carry out a holistic mission within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia can be carried out in a number of ways understanding General Revelation as a media of preaching the Gospel, prioritizing human values, and implementing multicultural education in Christian churches and schools.

Keywords: general revelation; holistic mission; kingdom of God; multicultural education; religious moderation

INTRODUCTION

Religious harmony expressed by tolerance is a philosophy that is expected to materialize in religious life in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) which is based on Pancasila. All religions recognized by the Indonesian government, both those with majority and minority adherent, have agreed to continue to uphold the noble values of religious life contained in Pancasila, especially of the first principle. Apart from that, the government has also provided relatively clear boundary: there is freedom, but there are still limitations and one must respect each other. Pancasila, UUD 1945, UU, PP, Presidential Decree, and all regulations that apply in this country, must be upheld by every adherent of religion.

However, post New Order radicalism has begun to emerge from radical Islamic groups in this country, who want to undermine Pancasila and destroy religious harmony in Indonesia, at least in the last decade. The group that calls itself Al-Qaeda and ISIS has become a global threat. Actually, the emergence of this group is as a

form of protest by radical Islamic groups against injustices that are happening globally, especially in the Moslem countries. The protests are related to issues regarding the policies of world leaders (especially the West) towards a Palestinian state, then socio-economic disparities in Muslim countries, as well as the development of a Western culture that is so massive and fast it is judged that it will destruct Islamic values. Meanwhile, leaders in Moslem countries are seen as powerless and subject to Western domination. After that, there were also young Arabians from Yemen who advocated Wahhabism and rejected religious tolerance.¹ In short, religious radicalism in Indonesia arises as a result of the international political constellation which has cornered the socio-political life of Moslems.² It is not surprising that a new religious concept emerged as a necessity which is widely known today as “religious moderation,” of which this concept is expected to be an antidote to religious radicalism³ and able to maintain interreligious harmony in Indonesia.⁴

¹ Wahyudin Hafid, “Geneologi Radikalisme Di Indonesia (Melacak Akar Sejarah Gerakan Radikal),” *Al-Tafaqquh: Journal of Islamic Law* 1, no. 1 (August 5, 2020): 31–48, <https://doi.org/10.33096/ALTAFAQQUH.V1I1.37>.

² Priyantoro Widodo and Karnawati Karnawati, “Moderasi Agama Dan Pemahaman Radikalisme Di Indonesia,” *PASCA: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan*

Agama Kristen 15, no. 2 (November 2019): 9–14, <https://doi.org/10.46494/psc.v15i2.61>.

³ Ahmad Iffan, Muhammad Ridho Nur, and Asrizal Saiin, “Konseptualisasi Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Langkah Preventif Terhadap Penanganan Radikalisme Di Indonesia,” *PERADA* 3, no. 2 (December 2020): 187, <https://doi.org/10.35961/perada.v3i2.220>.

⁴ Pribadyo Prakosa, “Moderasi Beragama: Praksis Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama,” *Jurnal Ilmiah*

Religious radicalism that emerged in Indonesia as mentioned above, the causal factor is more in the socio-doctrinal realm or field. For this reason, the church needs to seek a more holistic approach to evangelism, which includes not only the spiritual field (stopping on conveying the gospel message) but the social field as well. Theologians call it a “holistic mission,” which from the perspective of evangelicals, has its roots in the Lausanne movement pioneered by Billy Graham in 1974. This congress of evangelical leaders was held to discuss the social responsibility of Christians which so far has received little attention and also as an effort to narrow the gap between Evangelicals and Liberals. The Holistic Mission concept by itself becomes an integrative effort of the church in carrying out its mission both organizationally and organically (each individual Christian), namely bringing the Gospel of Christ which is able to answer human needs as a whole. This is a reminder that the kingdom of God demonstrated by the Lord Jesus is holistic, that is, it answers all human needs, both physical and spiritual. Thus a holistic mission is a mission that proclaims the Kingdom of God.⁵ Therefore, this article was written with the aim of answering the

question of how to carry out a holistic mission within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses the literature study method by examining literature related to holistic mission, religious moderation, and evangelization as well as other related themes, both in the form of books and online articles. An explanation of the results of the research findings will be described descriptively starting with a discussion of the implementation of holistic missions, the concept of religious moderation in Indonesia, and the implementation of holistic missions within the frame of religious moderation in Indonesia. Then, the description of this research article will be closed with a conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Holistic Mission Execution

The Lord Jesus Christ gave an example of how to carry out a holistic mission, which is not only giving spiritual teaching and healing to His listeners but also providing physical food to those who follow Him. The Synoptic Gospels record the

Religiosity Entity Humanity (JIREH) 4, no. 1 (June 2022): 45–55, <https://doi.org/10.37364/jireh.v4i1.69>.
⁵ Adi Putra and Tony Salurante, “Misi Holistik: Ku Utus Engkau Ke Dunia Untuk Memberitakan

Kerajaan Allah Berdasarkan Uraian Teks Lukas 9:1-6,” *Phronesis: Jurnal Teologi Dan Misi* 3, no. 2 (February 2021): 191–203, <https://doi.org/10.47457/phr.v3i2.115>.

event of how Jesus commanded His disciples to feed five thousand people with only five loaves of bread and two fish. This shows what the concern of the Lord Jesus was for the physical needs of the many people who came from various places to hear His teachings and receive help from Him. This is a holistic form of mission and ministry (see Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13). Likewise, He fed the four thousand with seven loaves of bread and a few small fish because He was afraid that the people would faint on the street because they had followed Him for three days straight (Matt. 15:32-39; Mark 8:1-10). Besides that, He also healed all those who were sick and possessed by demons. The Lord Jesus' ministry mission is holistic, covering all human needs both physical and spiritual.

The church needs to consistently implement a holistic ministry mission. This is because one of the tasks of the church is to carry out Christ's Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), namely witnessing the Gospel news (marturia's task), and presenting the kingdom of God on this earth. Hulu emphasized that missionary is not only understood in terms of bringing someone non-Christian to become a Christian or carrying out social

activities but must be understood holistically and integrally both in text and context. The point is that there is a close relationship between the Kingdom of God and the church, thus the mission of the church is the mission of God's kingdom which should be holistic.⁶

The Concept of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

It is not a coincidence that Christians in Indonesia live in the midst of a majority of non-Christians with a variety of ethnicities, languages, and beliefs spread across various islands in Indonesia. There is a beautiful and glorious plan from God, namely that Christians in Indonesia can carry out their duties as witnesses of Christ, namely to be light or salt that can illuminate or salt this nation as taught by Jesus Christ (Matt. 5:13-15). But the question is, how can a believer on the one hand carry out his duties as a follower of Christ, but on the other hand, he can still coexist with people of other religions by being light and salt in this very heterogeneous society? Not to mention the law not to mention the added threat of radical groups.⁷ Again, the struggle from time to time since this nation was founded, is how Christians in Indonesia can carry out their mission without having to clash and

⁶ Elisua Hulu, "Misi Kerajaan Allah Dan Implikasinya Bagi Gereja Masa Kini," *Jurnal Missio Cristo* 4, no. 2 (November 2022): 120–30, <https://doi.org/10.58456/jmc.v4i2.19>.

⁷ Tarpin Tarpin, "Misi Kristen Di Indonesia: Bahaya Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Umat Islam," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 17, no. 1 (June 2011): 38–53, <https://doi.org/10.24014/JUSH.V17I1.681>.

violate all the rules that already exist in this country, and how Christians can live side by side with adherents of other religions and be a blessing to this nation.

The discourse on religious moderation which has been widely discussed by various groups, including government officials, academics, and religious leaders, and community leaders, is a necessity as well as a joint effort by all elements of society to bring this nation out of division and create a more concrete and harmonious life, especially in terms of religion. The context of Indonesian society which is multiethnic and multicultural or multicultural often creates conflict and tension in many areas of life, including religious issues. Religion is the most accessible and conflict-prone social identity in Indonesia, despite the fact that many conflicts are motivated by diversity.⁸

To respond to and prevent prolonged conflicts and tensions between religious groups in this country, the Indonesian government has begun to roll out the discourse of religious moderation through the launch of a book entitled “Religious Moderation” written by the Research and Development Center for Religious Guidance and Religious Services, the Agency for Research

and Development and Education and Training. Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, to be precise, October 18 2019 which can be referred to as Religious Moderation Day. The launch of this book was also a moment to appreciate the efforts and work of the Minister of Religion at that time, namely Lukman Hakim Saefuddin (LHS), who widely promoted the discourse of Religious Moderation while in office, as well as a legacy at the end of his tenure. Without further ado, the presence of this book is actually an idea from LHS which incidentally is the son of the 10th Minister of Religion during the Old Order, namely KH. Saifuddin Zuhri (March 6 1962 – October 17 1967), where this book can be used as a reference regarding religious moderation. This was also acknowledged by the Head of the Research and Development and Training Agency who wrote the introductory part.⁹

Religious moderation is urgently needed by the children of this nation because the face of religion, which depends on the attitudes and actions of its adherents, has two sides, namely a side that provides unifying or unifying forces (centripetal power) and a side that divides (centrifugal forces)

⁸ Yusuf Siswantara et al., “Integrity and Transparency: Public Perceptions of Religious Values Education in a Plural Society,” *Jurnal Theologia* 33, no. 1 (June 2022): 121–50, <https://doi.org/10.21580/TEO.2022.33.1.11593>.

⁹ Edi Junaedi, “Inilah Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Kemenag,” *Harmoni* 18, no. 2 (December 2019): 182–86, <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v18i2.414>.

that can tear a nation apart.¹⁰ For this reason, an attitude of moderation in religion is urgently needed in this archipelago whose inhabitants consist of various cultures, ethnicities, beliefs, and religions. What are the main values that are carried out by the concept of moderation in religion or Religious Moderation are national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture.¹¹

Thus in carrying out the Christian mission the church is called to accommodate these values in its attitude towards adherents of other religions. This is important in the effort to spread the news of Christ's love that brings peace and harmony to all the children of this thousand-island country. Christianity has the potential to significantly contribute to lowering the overuse culture and fostering a moderation culture.¹²

Holistic Mission Within the Frame of Religious Moderation

Understanding General Revelation as a Media of Evangelization

An understanding of general revelation is a common thread that the church as an organization and organism must understand in an effort to build evangelistic me-

dia and bridges that support the creation of religious harmony in Indonesia. The dissemination of the Gospel message using inappropriate means can cause chaos and disharmony in society and ultimately hinder efforts to spread the Gospel. One way to build evangelistic tools or bridges is to understand general revelation. The existence of God as the Creator of the Universe and all in it is a divine revelation that is generally believed by all religions and beliefs, including tribal religions spread across various islands in Indonesia.

Belief in the one and only God, thus the first precept of Pancasila which is believed and adhered to by the Indonesian people, is a belief value that is also confirmed in the teachings of the Bible. In the Old Testament, Moses taught the Israelites to call the name of the God of Israel as the one and only God (Deut. 6:4). The existence of divinity, omnipotence, and God's work is expressed through the creation of the world and the universe, this is a supernatural inspiration shown to all of His creatures, referred to as General Revelation by the Apostle Paul in the New Testament, Romans 1:19-20. All ethnic groups and peoples on this earth have a kind of Census of Divinity (Di-

¹⁰ Junaedi.

¹¹ Daud Saleh Luji et al., "Gereja Dan Moderasi Beragama," *Moderatio: Jurnal Moderasi Beragama* 2, no. 2 (2022): 47–58, <https://e-journal.metrouniv.ac.id/index.php/moderatio/article/view/5649>.

¹² Ryszard F. Sadowski, "The Role of Catholicism in Shaping a Culture of Sustainable Consumption," *Religions* 12, no. 8 (August 2021): 598, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12080598>.

vine awareness), that is aware of the existence of God in the perspective of this general revelation because this attitude can be a bridge where the Bible relates to humans, as well as a means by which God reveals himself to humans through this divine awareness.¹³ Thus, the important thing that every follower of Christ must have is to appreciate all religions or beliefs that still acknowledge the existence of God, the Creator. Considering that all religions and beliefs have a census of divinity that can be used by God, the Creator to reveal Himself to humans or to relate to humans. Therefore an understanding of general revelation can be used as a medium or a bridge to convey the Good News in the form of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is capable of transforming human culture which is dominated by sin and dominated by the powers of darkness. Through him, the Gospel can be preached and presented to free humans from the power of sin and the shackles of Satan. Understanding general revelation as a means of preaching the Gospel in the context of the plurality of religions and culture of the society in Indonesia, can be an input for ef-

forts to build a mission doctrine which is hospitality as a form of religious moderation as proclaimed by Siahaan, et al.¹⁴

Prioritizing Human Values as a Rule of Evangelism

In an effort to carry out a holistic mission in the context of religious moderation in Indonesia, it is no less important to respect human values in the public space. Since the rollout of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, by the United Nations (UN), the recognition of human beings as individuals who have the same dignity and rights without exception has become crucial for development. Human civilization in modern times to create freedom, justice, and peace in the world. The recognized rights include the right to life, the right to express opinions, the right to equality before the law, the right to a decent living, etc.¹⁵ To uphold human rights and dignity as stated by the United Nations above, humans must not be judged based on differences in skin color, gender, language, race, religion, etc. In fact, all practices and inhuman treatment in the most

¹³ Jamin Tanhidy, "Teologi Misi Bagi Gerakan Misi Dan Komunikasi Kristen Pasca Pandemi Covid-19," *Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual Indonesia* 2, no. 1 (August 2021): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.46445/JTKI.V2I1.377>.

¹⁴ Harls Evan R. Siahaan, Handreas Hartono, and Yogi Tjiptosari, "Rekonstruksi Misi Hospitalitas Gereja Melalui Pembacaan Ulang Kisah Para Rasul 2:41-47 Dalam Bingkai Moderasi Beragama Di

Indonesia," *Jurnal EFATA: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pelayanan* 8, no. 2 (June 2022): 127–37, <https://doi.org/10.47543/efata.v8i2.62>.

¹⁵ Della Luysky Selian and Cairin Melina, "Kebebasan Berekspresi Di Era Demokrasi: Catatan Penegakan Hak Asasi Manusia," *Lex Scientia Law Review* 2, no. 2 (December 2018): 189–98, <https://doi.org/10.15294/lesrev.v2i2.27589>.

subtle form up to acts of violence that threaten human life physically, mentally, psychologically, and spiritually are considered to be harassing human dignity.

In an effort to carry out a holistic ministry mission within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia, the church should be called both organizationally and organismally to carry out a humanitarian mission that brings freedom, justice, and peace. The mission of Christian service does not stop at saving people from the shackles of the devil and the power of sin but rather participates in bringing peace and prosperity to individuals and communities where the kingdom of God is present when the Gospel is preached. This is also what the Lord Jesus exemplified when He did ministry to people by preaching the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, holistic missionary service within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia should be understood as part of a humanitarian mission that must be carried out by the church as an organization and organism based on conscience, the compassion of Christ, and a just and civilized sense of humanity. There are at least three way in doing holistic missionary.

First, to be an open letter of Christ, 2 Corinthians 3:1-3. In this country, including in communist countries and in Islamic countries in the Middle East, even in all

countries, it is almost certain that there are no laws or rules that prohibit its citizens from being good or doing good. In fact, what is true is that all laws and regulations are made in all countries with the aim that its citizens are good and do what is right. In this context, Christians can show the fruits of kindness to others, through caring to help people in need, and participating in community activities, based on mutual respect for adherents of different religions in this country. Christians become a light for humans in speech, an attitude of action that glorifies God the Father.

Second, love others with sincerity, Matthew 10:39. Christianity is synonymous with the religion of love, and the Gospel message echoed by Christians is also the message of God's love for humans (John 3:16). The word or sentence "Love your neighbor as yourself" in the Old and New Testaments is repeated 8 times (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14; and Jas. 2:8), and one time it says "Love your neighbor" (Matt. 5:43). So, the total sentence "love your neighbor" is repeated 9 times in the Bible. The emphasis is more in the New Testament, both initiated by the Lord Jesus and the Apostles. Related to respecting human values as a rule of building evangelistic bridges, it is very important for Christians in

Indonesia to have an attitude of hospitality in the midst of their struggle to forge a life together in a plural society, apart from tolerance. The church, as the recipient of God's hospitality, should be at the forefront of being a promoter and an example of how society should be able to live together. The hospitalist attitude can be a powerful tool to reduce acts of terrorism and religious radicalism which are motivated by political, economic, and religious injustice.¹⁶ Hospitality can be interpreted as the attitude of a host who gives a lift, and feeds and entertains strangers.¹⁷ This attitude of hospitality is actually a legacy of the early congregation or church which was forgotten by the church, even though it became a powerful means of Christian mission, where the early believers opened their homes to foreigners, and it was there that the Gospel was freely proclaimed. The term "hospitality" is known as "hospitality" (Heb. 13:2) in the early church community. The Lord Jesus alluded to this attitude of hospitality in the parable He taught, which reads: "When I was a stranger, you gave me a lift" (Matt. 25:35,

38, 43). The Apostles taught their congregation to always try to give a lift (Rom. 12:13; 16:23; 1 Tim. 1:22; 1 Pet. 4:9). This hospitality attitude is even one of the requirements that is required of someone who wants to be appointed as overseer of the church (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:10; Tit. 1:8). For conducting church missions in Indonesia while maintaining religious moderation, hospitality can serve as a model.¹⁸

Third, becoming an Indonesian Christian. KH Abdurahman Wahid, who was known as Gus Dur (Alm), when he became president of Indonesia, on one occasion he gave a message, citing Ir. Sukarno, so that Indonesians remain Indonesians, regardless of their religion; when you become a Muslim you don't have to be an Arab, or when you become a Christian you don't have to be a Jew. Whatever the religion, still be Indonesian. In the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, there is an order that regulates the life of the nation, state, and religion, so that the existing freedoms are not misused, it can cause disharmony in relations with one another, including relations

¹⁶ Mariani Febriana, "Hospitalitas : Suatu Kebajikan Yang Terlupakan Di Tengah Maraknya Aksi Hostilitas Atas Nama Agama," *SOLA GRATIA: Jurnal Teologi Biblika Dan Praktika* 6, no. 1 (February 2020): 57–96, <https://doi.org/10.47596/solagratiav6i1.68>.

¹⁷ Febriana.

¹⁸ Syani B. Rante Salu et al., "Early Church Hospitality-Based Pentecostal Mission in the

Religious Moderation Frame of Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, no. 3 (March 2023): 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8209>.

between religious communities because all Indonesian citizens are aware of the existence of cultural pluralism, language, race, and religion. In preaching and evangelizing, every cleric or religious figure or anyone else may preach, explain the strengths or advantages of their respective religions but without vilifying, insulting, comparing, then vilifying the teachings of other religions, and may not offend the hearts of the people, other religions. So the responsibility of the scholars and religious leaders is to explain as clearly as possible in accordance with their respective capabilities and expertise, while the people are given the freedom to accept, filter and absorb the truth that is conveyed. In this context, the preaching of the Gospel must be carried out in the space of religious freedom. There should be no intimidation or coercion, or “the lure of something.” Then the religious leaders must with a big heart accept any reality, including if there are people who convert to another religion, on the basis of their own volition. That evangelism is an art. So a high artistic ability is needed so that the goal is achieved or even if the thread, but the water remains clear.

Carrying out Multicultural Education in Christian Churches and Schools

Indonesian pluralism can be seen from the condition of Indonesian society as the most pluralistic multicultural country in the world. There are at least 250 ethnic groups, and more than 250 local languages, with a population of more than 250 million spread from the islands of Sabang to Merauke (West to East stretch), Miangas to Rote Island (North to South stretch), and at least 6 major religions are present and recognized by the Indonesian government, namely Islam, Catholicism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, plus beliefs in ethnic groups spread across the archipelago. This condition shows an urgency to carry out multicultural education for the community.¹⁹ For this reason, the teaching curriculum on multiculturalism must be implemented in teaching in pulpits, fellowships, and other church activities, especially in formal educational institutions such as Christian schools, both from elementary to university levels. This does not mean that Christians are taught to compromise with the teachings of other religions. The purpose of multicultural teaching and education referred here is

¹⁹ Sunarso, “Merajut Tali Persatuan Dalam Keberagaman,” in *Inovasi Dalam Semangat Keindonesiaan*, ed. Pandhu Yuanjaya and Danu Eko

Agustinova (Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 2018), 15-23.

so that Christians can appreciate the differences in religion, culture, and language that are owned by the people of Indonesia. Hutapea explained that efforts to implement the values of multicultural Christian education within the framework of religious moderation can be carried out by adopting an attitude of receiving with love, communication based on love, working together based on love.²⁰

Furthermore, Christian religion lessons in public and private schools must emphasize an understanding of Indonesia as a democratic country and not a religious country. The Indonesian government prioritizes freedom of religion for all its people without exception, and no single religion is allowed to dominate or monopolize its power in this country. The nation's founding fathers agreed to lay down the first principle of Pancasila, namely Belief in the One and Only God as the glue and unifier of all the children of this nation. The attitude of loving God and others in a balanced manner by imitating the behavior and teachings of the Lord Jesus is an important truth that needs to be taught as an effort to instill an attitude

of religious moderation through Christian education. The research of Islamy concludes that it turns out that the efforts made by school principals and teachers to improve students' understanding of the religious moderation concept, which is incorporated into learning curricula and teaching models both inside and outside of school classrooms, can make them more tolerant and moderate.²¹ This can make the nation as Soekarno, one of the nation's founding figures and the first president of the Republic of Indonesia called "Pancasila Village" as Indonesian efforts to moderate diversity through multicultural education.²²

CONCLUSION

Efforts to carry out a holistic mission within the framework of religious moderation in Indonesia have become a demand and necessity in order to create more stable and adequate religious harmony and harmony in the future. This is important to remember that on the one hand, the church as an organization and organism is called to carry out the Great Commission, but on the other hand, it is called to be light and salt for Indonesian society which is heteroge-

²⁰ Rinto Hasiholan Hutapea, "Nilai Pendidikan Kristiani 'Terimalah Satu Akan Yang Lain' Dalam Bingkai Moderasi Beragama," *KURIOS* 8, no. 1 (April 2022): 58–67, <https://doi.org/10.30995/kur.v8i1.540>.

²¹ Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy, "Islam And Religious Moderation: The Role Of School Laboratory In Negotiating Religious Moderation

Within Theological Plurality," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 18, no. 1 (June 2021): 91–110, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v18i1.3418>.

²² Khoirul Anwar, "Pancasila Village, Multicultural Education and Moderation of Diversity in Indonesia," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 (June 2021): 221–34, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i2.1238>.

neous in terms of race, language, religion, and culture. Therefore, the implementation of holistic missions in Indonesia within the framework of religious moderation needs to be carried out based on Jesus' teaching of the kingdom of God.

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