

The Role of the Church in Maintaining Religious Pluralism and Its Implementation Through PAK in the Kaliabang Officers HKBP Church in Mangseng 3, Central Kaliabang

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Abstract

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This study aims to determine the role of the church in maintaining religious pluralism and its implementation through PAK in the Kaliabang Perwira HKBP church in Mangseng 3, Kaliabang Tengah. Researchers used descriptive qualitative methods, namely by conducting interview and documentation data collection techniques. The congregation must be able to understand what is the main role of the church in its vocation, especially in the midst of religious pluralism in the Mangseng neighborhood. 3. Understanding of Christian Religious Education is very helpful for the church in maintaining religious pluralism and implementing it in the midst of the Mangseng 3 Kaliabang Tengah environment.

Keywords: Role of the Church, Religious Pluralism, PAK in the Church.

Introduction

"Neighbors are the closest family, a phrase that emphasizes that life is always shared with others. In light of this, an understanding emerges of how Christians should maintain good relationships with others. The history of humanity is filled with stories of conflicts within families, tribes, groups, and even religious communities. However, we still need neighbors, as experience teaches us that life is full of threats, dangers, illnesses, natural disasters, and unexpected events. All of these cannot be faced alone; we need others.

To maintain and manage a diverse society, Christian Religious Education (CRE) must also be activated, and CRE must be socialized to the congregation so that they feel called to become witnesses of Christ and active doers of God's word. The Indonesian Church Fellowship (PGI) has previously set the objectives of CRE, including teaching, caring, and bringing many people to know Christ through love and guidance from the Holy Spirit."¹

¹ Sitompul Einar, *Perjalanan Sarat Muatan*, (Jakarta: UPI STT Jakarta, 2014), 60.

Research Methodology

The type of research used by the researcher in this study is descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research methodology is based on postpositivist philosophy and is used to study natural conditions of the object. The researcher acts as the key instrument, data collection is combined, data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization.²

Discussion

The Church is a fellowship/assembly of believers whose lives are solely dependent on the salvation given by God, and that salvation is found in Jesus Christ Himself. This salvation is received through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and belief in the salvation provided by God through Jesus Christ. The word "Church" comes from the Portuguese word *igreja*, which is derived from the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning a general assembly or public meeting. The term *ekklesia* was used by early Christians, particularly Greek-speaking ones, to refer to their gatherings, both local and universal. In full, the early Christian assembly was called *ekklesia tou theou* (the assembly of God). In everyday usage today, it is often simply referred to as "church."³

Indonesian society is a plural society when viewed from various aspects, including ethnicity, culture, and religion. This indicates that pluralism is a reality for Indonesian society. According to Clifford Geertz, there are more than three hundred ethnic groups in Indonesia. Each ethnic group has its own culture and speaks more than two hundred and fifty languages. In addition to being enriched by the indigenous religions of its people, almost all of the world's religions are present in Indonesia.⁴

Conclusion

The development of communication in the digital era must be closely observed by the church. Communication technology should be used as an effective means of Christian Religious Education (CRE). The church must, as much as possible, maximize openness and understanding in utilizing technology. The development of communication in the digital era must be carefully considered by the church. Communication technology must become an effective tool for CRE. The church must make every effort to maximize openness and understanding in using technology. The church should build proactively, following the example of Christ, who traveled around cities and villages, and walked along the shore to teach and deliver the good news (Matt. 9:35). It is necessary to establish dialogue as a medium of pluralistic communication. Viktor Tanya states that dialogue is not just a conversation between two or more people. More than that, dialogue refers to the diverse aspects of religion, culture, ethnicity, political interests, and nations. CRE plays a role in building communication that is not bound by the parent organization of the church, so it can be accepted by all denominations. CRE is also effective as a tool for the church to connect with the surrounding community, without being suspected or feared by certain religions.⁵

REFERENCES

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² John W. Creswell, *Penelitian Kualitatif dan Desain Riset*, (Yogyakarta:Pustaka Pelajar, 2018), 30.

³ Nur Kholis Setiawan dan Djaka Soetapa, *Meniti Kelam Kerukunan*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2010), 454.

⁴ Zainuddin, *Pluralisme Agama dalam Analisis Kontruksi Sosial*", (Malang: UIN-MALIKI PRESS, 2013), 1-2.

⁵ Jhon M. Nainggolan, *PAK dalam Masyarakat Majemuk* (Bandung: BMI, 2009), 57.

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