

# Mediation as a Peaceful Path: Managing Social Conflicts through Differentiation and Moderation

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**Abstract.** This study aims to portray the heterogeneous society of Medan City in the context of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. This will strengthen the values of Pancasila by developing principles related to tolerance and harmony. Diversity becomes a necessity in local, national, and global interactions. Social differentiation in diversity is a pattern used by the people of Medan to accept, assist, and acknowledge diversity as the differences that exist. Because the feelings and concerns that are mutually involved with one another lead to trust and mutual care, moderate mutualism can be used as a pathway towards harmony, coherence, and balance in social, national, and state life within the context of pluralism. Indicators of balanced diversity can be identified through tolerance, harmony, national commitment, perspective, and concrete actions towards awareness of differences in ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations. To achieve social harmony, every part of society can be connected with this indicator. This research collaborates with social movements such as the National Integration Forum and Kontras North Sumatra, which prioritize mediation in every conflict caused by differences and diversity through humanistic and inclusive methods to create peace and harmony. The aim of this research is to translate the values of Pancasila as a unifying force for the nation into real roles and functions through diverse social differentiation in mutual moderation towards potential. The results and discussion indicate that the people of Medan are aware of social differentiation by forming communities based on ethnicity, religion, and social groups to uphold the noble values that serve as the foundation for living together. However, potential conflicts, such as agrarian conflicts, can lead to disputes within or outside the community. Mutual moderation has evolved into a global and international awareness to bridge the differences between separated communities. In the city of Medan, issues have been resolved through both formal and informal mediation. Formal mediation involves the government participating in policy-making and facilitating community forums, while non-formal mediation is organized by NGOs, religious leaders, and traditional figures. This mediation addresses conflicts with a humanistic approach that is not biased towards one group but aims for consensus..

**Keywords:** mediation, differentiation, national education

## 1 Introduction

Ethnic, cultural, religious, and economic diversity is a hallmark of modern society. On one hand, this diversity can generate social and cultural wealth that enriches community life. On the other hand, social disagreements can also arise from existing differences. Imbalances in social relationships, stereotypes, prejudices, and social and economic injustices are factors that often lead to conflict.

Social differentiation, which is the grouping of individuals or groups in society based on certain characteristics, can play a dual role in this context. On one hand, if left unmoderated, social differentiation can exacerbate segregation and intensify conflict.

In response to this issue, mediation has emerged as one of the effective peaceful methods for managing and resolving social conflicts. Mediation not only serves as a means to resolve disputes but also helps the conflicting parties come closer to each other, enhances social cohesion, and encourages constructive discussions. Social differentiation can be used as a tool to understand the positions and needs of each party during the mediation process. Meanwhile, moderation serves to balance interests and reduce extremism.

Medan, as one of the largest cities in Indonesia, is known for its ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity that shapes its social structure. The city is inhabited by various ethnic groups, such as the Malay, Batak, Javanese, Chinese, and others, each with their own distinct traditions, languages, and beliefs. This diversity makes Medan a miniature of Indonesia's pluralism, but it also brings its own challenges in maintaining social harmony.[1]

In recent decades, the city of Medan has faced various social dynamics triggered by those differences. Social conflicts that occur are often caused by economic injustice, social inequality, and competition between groups. Social differentiation-where groups in society are identified based on ethnicity, religion, or economic status-often reinforces these differences and has the potential to trigger conflict.

However, Medan is also an example of how diversity can be managed wisely. In many cases, mediation has been used to resolve social conflicts, whether they are small or large. Mediation as a conflict resolution method focuses on dialogue and understanding between the conflicting parties, with the aim of reaching a mutually beneficial agreement. In the context of Medan City, mediation becomes very important considering the complexity of the existing social relationships.

Social differentiation in Medan, if managed well, can become a source of strength in mediation. By understanding the differences in identity and the needs of existing groups, mediation can be designed to be more responsive to social sensitivities. Here, moderation plays a crucial role in balancing the interests of various groups, avoiding extremism, and promoting social cohesion. A moderate approach in mediation allows for the creation of fair and sustainable solutions for all parties involved.[2]

Therefore, the study on "Mediation as a Peaceful Path: Managing Social Conflict through Differentiation and Moderation" in the city of Medan becomes very relevant. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how mediation can be an effective tool in

managing social conflicts in this multicultural city. With the right approach, Medan can serve as an example of how diversity can be a source of strength rather than a source of conflict.

## **2 Method**

This research focuses on the city of Medan, which is known for its diversity and culture. The purpose of this case study is to identify the factors that contribute to the management of conflict in diversity and how social differentiation and moderation strategies are applied in the context of the city. Group discussion forums and interviews were conducted with various stakeholders, such as government officials through the National Integration Forum (FPK), practitioners (NGO Kontras SU), diversity experts (academics), community leaders, religious leaders, educators, and individuals from various ethnic and religious groups in Medan City. A semi-structured interview will be used to gather in-depth information about experiences, views, and practices related to moderation and diversity.

Researchers will observe social interactions, discussions, and practices related to moderation and diversity through participation in the daily activities of the community.[3] The thematic analysis approach will be used to analyze data from discussions, focus groups, and interviews. [4]This will be done to identify patterns and key themes related to conflict management, moderation strategies, and social differentiation. The triangulation analysis method combines data from interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis.[5]

## **3 Result and Discussion**

The findings of this research indicate that the implementation of textbooks can cultivate national character values such as citizenship, justice, responsibility, trust, care, and honor in campus life, reflecting the character development of the university. The strengthening of sensory experience, will, and sports is influenced by the demands of coursework that focus on knowledge aspects, as well as the enhancement of emotional and cognitive development through understanding knowledge and changing attitudes towards the values of national character. However, the improvement in understanding and the contribution of attitudes tends to be less than optimal.

A study conducted by NGOs, FPK, and the government found the main issues causing diversity conflicts. This includes issues related to economic resources, such as land problems, election issues, the relocation of places of worship, and social status problems. There are two ways to handle conflicts: formal and informal mediation. The government has established policies for formal mediation, which allows for non-legal procedural mediation through a national integration forum consisting of traditional leaders, religious figures, academics, and practitioners. Mediation is the result of efforts to resolve conflicts through discussion and collaboration between the parties involved. Mediation is the primary method for addressing conflicts based on humanistic values, so the values of justice offered by each party shape the solution.[6] A mediator is a judge or another party who has a mediator certification as a neutral party that assists the parties in reaching an agreement. This activity will address citizen issues related to social differentiation as mutual moderation by using a mediation pattern as an effort to manage conflicts arising from diversity in national life.[7]

The existence of a nation grows and develops as an integrative, expansive, and futuristic legacy relationship. The transition and continuation of values, policies, and culture from generation to generation ensure the existence of a nation, which includes its stability, development, and survival.

Students as representatives of the next generation who carry on principles and habits. Cultural heirs must have a broad and progressive understanding of the important values for the sustainability of the nation and state throughout its existence. They must also have the ability to pass on cultural heritage to the next generation through "regeneration." Knowledge and experience are used as measures of cultural heritage for the growth of society from generation to generation. This is necessary due to the influence of change and the need for the ability to adapt to it. The role of the state is to preserve important cultural values so that they are not significantly influenced. In accordance with the mandate of the Pancasila constitution and the 1945 Constitution, the strategic task of the state is to undertake efforts to solve problems in a solution-oriented and innovative manner. The country must continuously change its policies and strategies to adapt to the changing world so that local wisdom is not degraded and its citizens remain competitive and capable.

Indonesia needs to have citizen cadres who have a solid value foundation that aligns with the philosophical and practical principles of the state. This country has officially recorded its name in the world since 1945 to the present day. The Indonesian society, with its motto of Unity in Diversity, possesses an extraordinary diversity of culture, ethnicity, religion, and social groups. If a country is to endure and survive, a pattern is needed to address these differences.

To produce citizens who possess complete knowledge, attitudes, and actions, national education is very important. [8]Social differentiation is necessary to help students understand diversity because it can assist them in recognizing that different social groups have varying needs and challenges. This gives students a better understanding of the social and political issues affecting various groups. Students' social skills and empathy can help them build healthy relationships in a diverse and complex society. Students participating in inclusive citizenship skills have the ability to foster a sense of mutual respect and acknowledge differences, especially regarding human rights such as equality and social justice. Students are trained to become leaders of the future, although the challenges and consequences will vary over time. With an increasingly complex world, understanding social differentiation allows them to become better leaders and to embrace and manage diversity within their teams or communities.[9]

In the case of social differentiation, mediation is chosen because there is a strong awareness of moderating diversity simultaneously. The values of Pancasila serve as a foundation for the mutual moderation of diversity. To be a citizen who embodies humanity, divinity, unity, democracy, and social justice. The challenge of mutual moderation offers a strong and inclusive alternative in modern society. This is more than just a process; it is a paradigm shift towards collective power and active engagement in shaping a safe, positive, and sustainable environment. There is no need to use strong legal mechanisms, but values serve as a continuous foundation.[10]

The results of this research indicate that mediation combining differentiation and moderation approaches can manage social conflicts more effectively. Differentiation allows for the recognition and acceptance of existing differences, while moderation helps to find balanced and fair solutions for all parties involved. Both approaches complement each other and play an important role in creating a peaceful resolution in social conflicts.

## 4 Conclusion

To manage diversity in Medan City, social differentiation and a mutual moderation approach are very important. If managed well, social differentiation can enhance social efficiency but can also lead to conflict. In addressing issues of diversity, inclusive education and open discussions are key to enhancing tolerance and understanding among groups. This mediation method is known as mediation. To reduce the potential for conflict, it is very important to engage in joint moderation in political policies and to actively participate in decision-making. Effective conflict management requires a humane approach and fair civility. The challenges include injustice in participation and unmoderated education, both of which require special attention to create a peaceful environment. Emphasizing awareness of diversity together can shape the mechanisms for handling cases through mediation; mediation is a peaceful path that involves consensus-building among community elements that have strong emotional ties and live together.

To enhance educational programs that teach the values of moderation in schools. To prepare students to face a diverse society, education must teach them about tolerance, cultural diversity, and effective communication skills. Increasing the participation of all community groups in the decision-making and political processes. This can be achieved by encouraging people to actively participate in public forums and policy processes to ensure that different interests are fairly accommodated. More intercultural dialogue forums and activities that allow people to exchange views and experiences are needed. This will contribute to the reduction of stereotypes and the enhancement of public understanding. Creating and implementing inclusive public policies based on moderation that take into account various groups. Policies should be made in a way that encourages tolerance and reduces social tensions, using conflict resolution methods that involve identifying the causes of conflict and finding fair solutions. In handling conflicts in the city of Medan, the use of mediation can assist in creating better policies. To address radicalism and extremism, use an approach that focuses on education and increasing social participation. This will help prevent conflicts caused by extreme views.

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