

PARADOX OF MUSLIM RELIGIOSITY: Between Islamic Identity and Socio-Religious Practices

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Abstract: Muslim identity is not always consistently manifested in everyday socio-religious practices. This study aims to analyze the meaning and expression of Muslim identity, socio-religious practices, and the factors explaining tensions between identity and practice among the community of Bandar Baru Village, Sibolangit, Deli Serdang. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed through coding, categorization, and theme development. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. The findings indicate that Muslim identity remains strong through religious affiliation, mosques, worship, traditions, and communal activities, although its expressions vary. Socio-religious practices show variations in mosque participation, interpersonal concern, solidarity, and social engagement. Tensions between identity and practice are influenced by differences in religious interpretation, changing religious authority, religious understanding, and patterns of social interaction. The paradox of religiosity reflects the uneven actualization of Islamic social values. These findings emphasize the importance of religious literacy, dialogue, respect for differences, strengthening the mosque's social function, and inclusive communal interaction within the local Muslim community.

Keywords: Muslim Identity, Religiosity, Socio-Religious Practices

Abstrak: Identitas Muslim tidak selalu termanifestasi secara konsisten dalam praktik sosial-keagamaan sehari-hari. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pemaknaan dan ekspresi identitas Muslim, praktik sosial-keagamaan, serta faktor yang menjelaskan ketegangan antara identitas dan praktik masyarakat Desa Bandar Baru, Sibolangit, Deli Serdang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui pengodean, kategorisasi, dan pengembangan tema. Keabsahan data diperkuat melalui triangulasi sumber dan teknik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa identitas Muslim tetap kuat melalui afiliasi keagamaan, masjid, ibadah, tradisi, dan aktivitas komunal, tetapi ekspresinya beragam. Praktik sosial-keagamaan menunjukkan variasi dalam partisipasi di masjid, kepedulian interpersonal, solidaritas, dan keterlibatan sosial. Ketegangan antara identitas dan praktik dipengaruhi oleh perbedaan interpretasi keagamaan, perubahan otoritas keagamaan, pemahaman agama, dan pola interaksi sosial. Paradoks keberagaman menunjukkan ketidakmerataan aktualisasi nilai sosial Islam. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya literasi keagamaan, dialog, penghargaan terhadap perbedaan, penguatan fungsi sosial masjid, dan interaksi komunal yang inklusif dalam kehidupan masyarakat Muslim setempat.

Kata Kunci: Identitas Muslim, Religiositas, Praktik Sosial-Keagamaan

INTRODUCTION

Islam in Indonesia is not merely a religious affiliation but also an important source of identity, values, social norms, and community relations. Its long historical development has enabled Islam to become deeply embedded in various dimensions of Indonesian social life (Hasyimi, 1993). Consequently, being Muslim may involve more than formal recognition of religious affiliation; it can also be expressed through beliefs, worship, moral conduct, social responsibility, and relationships with others. Religion, in this sense, is expected to influence both the inner life of believers and their observable behavior. Daradjat (1996) emphasizes the psychological influence of religion on human attitudes and actions, while Asir (2014) explains that religion performs important functions in directing individual and social life. Islamic teachings similarly connect faith with morality, compassion, mutual assistance, and responsibility toward other members of society (Al-Adawy, 2007).

However, Muslim identity and the social manifestation of religiosity do not necessarily develop in a linear relationship. A person or community may maintain a strong Muslim identity while displaying different degrees and forms of religious practice in everyday social life. Religiosity therefore cannot be understood solely through formal religious affiliation or ritual observance. Amir (2021) demonstrates that Muslim religiosity is multidimensional, while Amalia et al. (2023) show that Muslim identity expression includes personal and interpersonal dimensions as well as

broader forms of collective expression. These perspectives suggest that identifying oneself as Muslim and expressing Islamic values through social behavior constitute interconnected but analytically distinguishable dimensions. This distinction is particularly important for examining situations in which religious identity appears socially visible while values associated with that identity are not consistently manifested in interpersonal and communal practices.

Studies of Indonesian Muslims have demonstrated the complexity of the relationship between religion, identity, and social context. Qomar (2015) identifies diverse forms of Islamic identity across Indonesian regions, indicating that Muslim identity is not socially homogeneous. Miharja et al. (2019) similarly demonstrate that religiosity interacts with ethnicity and cultural identity, while Hudayana (2022) reveals that Islamic identity can shift in response to changing social and religious orientations. In contemporary contexts, Prasojo et al. (2020) show that religious identity is also negotiated through social media, and Wardi (2026) describes the hybrid character of Islamic identity among Indonesian millennial Muslims. These findings indicate that Muslim identity is continuously constructed through interactions among religious teachings, cultural traditions, social environments, and changing forms of community life.

Other studies have highlighted the importance of social interaction in sustaining religiosity. Fakhruroji (2019) demonstrates that Islamic study groups

contribute to maintaining Muslim identity, whereas Latif (2026) connects religious identity formation with Islamic sociability and social cohesion in majelis taklim. Shen et al. (2023) further show that social relationships can influence Muslim religiosity and religious coping. At a broader level, Zainuddin et al. (2025) emphasize the relationship between religious identity, spirituality, and social tolerance. Meanwhile, Wardana (2025) indicates that religiosity in Indonesia may undergo changes even within a social environment where religion remains institutionally prominent. Collectively, these studies confirm that religious identity cannot automatically be equated with the quality of socio-religious practice.

This conceptual issue becomes particularly relevant in the Muslim community of Bandar Baru Village, Sibolangit District, Deli Serdang Regency. Preliminary field observations indicate an interesting tension between Muslim identity and certain forms of socio-religious practice. The community is socially recognized as having a Muslim population and religious life remains visible, yet initial interactions with residents suggest that Islamic identity does not always translate consistently into solidarity, interpersonal concern, participation in communal religious activities, and mutual support. One preliminary account, for example, described disappointment arising from the perceived lack of communal religious concern during a family bereavement. Such an account cannot be generalized to represent the entire community, but it provides an

important empirical indication that deserves deeper investigation. The issue is therefore not whether the residents are “good” or “bad” Muslims, but how Muslim identity is understood, expressed, negotiated, and translated into everyday socio-religious practices.

Previous research has extensively examined Muslim identity expression (Amalia et al., 2023), identity transformation (Hudayana, 2022), religious identity in digital environments (Prasojo et al., 2020), religiosity and social relationships (Shen et al., 2023), Islamic sociability and social cohesion (Latif, 2026), and changes in Indonesian religiosity (Wardana, 2025). Nevertheless, limited attention has been devoted to the apparent discrepancy between collectively recognized Muslim identity and everyday socio-religious practices within a specific rural community. Existing studies tend to examine how Islamic identity is formed, maintained, transformed, or expressed, rather than investigating situations in which religious identification remains present while its expected social manifestations appear inconsistent. This constitutes the research gap addressed by the present study.

The concept of paradox in this study therefore does not presume that Muslim identity in Bandar Baru is false, nor does it position the researchers as judges of the residents’ level of faith. Rather, paradox refers analytically to a possible tension between identification with Islam and the manifestation of religiosity in social relations. This approach is important

because Islamic religiosity encompasses not only relationships between individuals and God but also ethical relationships among human beings. Classical Islamic ethical thought emphasizes compassion, responsibility, respect, and appropriate conduct toward others as integral manifestations of religious life (Al-Ghazali, 1985; Al-Adawy, 2007). Thus, examining religiosity at the level of everyday social practice can reveal dimensions that may remain invisible when religious life is assessed only through affiliation, symbols, or ritual activities.

Investigating this phenomenon is urgent for both theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically, the study can contribute to discussions of Muslim religiosity by connecting Islamic identity with lived socio-religious practices at the community level. Empirically, it can provide a contextual understanding of how residents themselves interpret their Muslim identity, religious obligations, solidarity, social relationships, and communal participation without prematurely imposing normative judgments upon them. Such an approach also makes it possible to identify the social, cultural, and religious factors that may explain congruence or tension between identity and practice. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the paradox of Muslim religiosity in Bandar Baru Village by examining how Muslim identity is understood and expressed, how socio-religious practices are manifested in everyday community life, and why possible discrepancies emerge between Islamic identity and those practices. Through this

focus, the study seeks to explain religiosity not merely as a declared identity, but as a lived and negotiated social reality.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the paradox of Muslim religiosity between Islamic identity and socio-religious practices in Bandar Baru Village, Sibolangit District, Deli Serdang Regency. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the phenomenon involves meanings, experiences, social interactions, and religious practices occurring naturally within the community (Harahap, 2020; Sugiyono, 2013). The case study design enabled an in-depth and contextual examination of how Muslim identity is understood, expressed, and translated into everyday socio-religious practices within a particular community.

The research site was selected based on preliminary observations indicating a possible tension between visible Islamic identity and certain socio-religious practices, particularly those related to social concern, solidarity, interpersonal relationships, participation in religious activities, and mutual support. Informants were selected purposively according to their knowledge, experiences, and involvement in community religious life. They included Muslim residents, community leaders, religious leaders or mosque administrators, and other relevant individuals capable of providing

information concerning the phenomenon under investigation.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations focused on social interactions, participation in religious activities, mosque-related activities, social solidarity, responses to illness or bereavement, and other forms of communal religious practice. Interviews explored participants' interpretations of Muslim identity, socio-religious obligations, interpersonal experiences, religious participation, solidarity, and factors influencing the relationship between Islamic identity and social practice. Documentation was used to complement and contextualize observational and interview data.

Data analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process. Interview, observation, and documentary data were organized, coded, categorized, and developed into major themes. The analysis focused on three dimensions: the meaning and expression of Muslim identity, manifestations of socio-religious practices, and factors explaining congruence or tension between identity and practice. Findings were interpreted through *thick description* to capture both observable practices and their contextual meanings. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation by comparing information across different informants and data collection methods. Rather than judging the community's level

of faith, the analysis sought to understand empirically how Islamic identity and socio-religious practices are constructed, experienced, and negotiated in everyday community life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Meaning and Expression of Muslim Identity in Community Life

The findings indicate that Muslim identity in Bandar Baru Village remains visible and socially recognizable through religious affiliation, the presence of mosques, congregational prayers, religious activities, and various Islamic symbols and practices embedded in everyday life. In its basic sense, identity refers to distinctive characteristics attached to an individual or group. In this study, Muslim identity is understood not merely as a formal declaration of religious affiliation but as a sense of belonging to Islamic values, rituals, traditions, and religious communities. This position cannot be separated from the long historical development of Islam in Indonesia, through which Islamic identity has interacted extensively with local social and cultural structures (Hasyimi, 1993; Qomar, 2015).

Field data demonstrate that being Muslim continues to carry significant social meaning among the community members studied. Nevertheless, the expression of this identity is not uniform. For some residents, Muslim identity is manifested through ritual participation and attachment to the mosque, while for

others it is also articulated through particular understandings of what constitutes appropriate Islamic practice. This finding corresponds with Amalia et al. (2023), who conceptualize Muslim identity expression as multidimensional, encompassing personal, interpersonal, and broader collective dimensions. Amalia et al. (2026) further demonstrate that Muslim identity expression may develop through different pathways of consolidation and mobilization. Consequently, strong identification with Islam does not necessarily generate a homogeneous pattern of religious expression.

This diversity was particularly apparent in differences surrounding religious practices in local mosques. Field observations and information obtained from community figures revealed differing attitudes toward collective *dhikr* and supplication after prayer, *qunut* during the dawn prayer, and the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. Some community members regarded these practices as established components of their religious tradition, whereas others adopted different religious orientations. These findings suggest that a shared Muslim identity can accommodate substantial internal diversity. Hidayana (2022) demonstrates that Islamic identity may shift in response to changing social and religious orientations, while Miharja et al. (2019) show that Muslim religiosity interacts dynamically with ethnicity, tradition, and cultural identity. Similarly,

Taufani et al. (2024) reveal that Islamic community identity develops through interaction between religion and the social context in which a community lives.

Muslim identity, therefore, cannot be reduced to administrative religious affiliation or conformity to a single ritual tradition. Religiosity involves dimensions more complex than simply declaring adherence to a religion (Amir, 2021). Daradjat (1996) positions religion as a force influencing psychological experience and human behavior, while Asir (2014) emphasizes its function in directing both individual and social life. Religious education is similarly expected to transform religious knowledge into lived orientations and practices (Nasution & Muchtar, 2016). This distinction makes it analytically important to differentiate between *being Muslim as an identity* and *living Islam as a socio-religious practice*.

The findings must also be understood within broader transformations occurring among Indonesian Muslims. Prasojo et al. (2020) demonstrate that digital spaces have become important arenas for constructing and expressing religious identity. Wardi (2026) identifies hybridity between tradition and digitality in contemporary Indonesian Muslim identity, while Nofandrilla et al. (2025) highlight the relationship between Islamic religiosity and internet consumption. Religious orientations within a village, therefore, cannot necessarily be understood as products of local interaction alone; they may also intersect with religious

discourses, networks, and sources of authority extending beyond the geographical boundaries of the community.

These findings ultimately demonstrate that the central issue in Bandar Baru is not the absence of Muslim identity. Muslim identity remains visible and meaningful, but its manifestations are diverse and sometimes produce internal boundaries concerning practices considered religiously legitimate. Menchik (2019) demonstrates the complexity of Muslim identity in relation to moderation and broader social life, while Toyibah et al. (2025) show that religiosity and Islamic identification do not automatically generate uniform social attitudes. Muslim identity in Bandar Baru should therefore be understood as a living identity that is continuously interpreted, negotiated, and expressed in different ways. The relevant analytical question is consequently not which group represents the most authentic form of Islam, but how a shared Islamic identity is translated into socio-religious relationships and practices in everyday community life.

Manifestations of Socio-Religious Practices in Everyday Community Life

The second finding reveals variations between the visibility of Islamic identity and its manifestation in certain forms of socio-religious practice. During an observation at a local mosque on March 15, 2024, the researcher found that most congregants left immediately after the Friday prayer while the *dhikr* and

supplication continued, leaving only a few individuals inside the mosque. A similar situation was observed during a charitable event for orphans on June 23, 2024. When the noon prayer was performed, congregational participation gradually decreased after the formal prayer ended. On another occasion before the Maghrib prayer, only approximately four to five individuals were present in the mosque when the call to prayer was made. These observations cannot be generalized as evidence of low religiosity throughout the community. Rather, they demonstrate variation in participation in communal religious activities.

More significant findings emerged from the social dimension of religious life. Interviews with residents revealed experiences of disappointment concerning communal support, including perceived insufficient social concern when a family experienced bereavement. Other field information indicated perceptions of social distance, indifference, and hierarchical interpersonal behavior associated with differences in social status. From a qualitative perspective, such individual experiences cannot automatically represent the entire community; they must be interpreted contextually and compared with other sources of evidence (Harahap, 2020; Sugiyono, 2013). Therefore, these accounts are treated as indications of tension between expectations of Islamic solidarity and lived social experiences rather than as

evidence for judging the religious commitment of the entire population.

This social dimension is significant because Islamic religiosity cannot be confined to individual ritual performance. Hamzah et al. (2026) demonstrate that Muslim religiosity is shaped by multiple factors, including religious education and social environments. Shen et al. (2023) likewise show that interpersonal relationships influence religiosity and religious coping, while Latif (2026) connects religious identity formation with Islamic sociability and social cohesion. Social interaction thus becomes an important domain through which religious identity acquires practical meaning.

This principle is strongly reflected in the Qur'anic conception of Muslim social relationships. Allah states:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy. (Q.S. Al-hujurat verse 10)

This verse places brotherhood and reconciliation within the ethical structure of faith itself. In this sense, socio-religious solidarity is not external to religiosity but represents one of its social manifestations. Islamic ethical literature similarly emphasizes that moral relationships with others constitute an integral dimension of Muslim life. Al-Adawy (2007) associates Islamic morality with appropriate conduct toward other people, while Al-Ghazali

(1985) highlights compassion, exemplary behavior, and humane interaction through the life of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet's establishment of the mosque as an important center of community life also demonstrates the interconnection between ritual and social dimensions of Islam (Al-Mubarakfuri, 2012).

Nevertheless, the observations concerning mosque participation should not be interpreted simplistically as evidence of religious decline. A mosque represents an important socio-religious space, but religiosity can also be manifested through other activities. Fakhruroji (2019), for instance, demonstrates how Islamic study groups maintain Muslim identity through community interaction, while Nilan (2009) shows that religious environments shape moral orientations through continuous social experiences and practices. The quality of religiosity should therefore be examined through the relationship among ritual practice, religious learning, interpersonal relationships, and social action.

Importantly, the field data also contain evidence of positive socio-religious practices. The charitable activity providing financial and material assistance to orphans demonstrates that social solidarity continues to exist within the community. Consequently, Bandar Baru cannot appropriately be characterized through a binary distinction between a "religious" and "non-religious" community. Amirrachman (2015) conceptualizes progressive Islam as a religious orientation toward enlightenment and social benefit, while

Omar (2004) emphasizes the transformative function of Islamic *da'wah*. Al-Zuhaili (2013) and Al-Tabari (2009) similarly emphasize that Islamic guidance encompasses moral and social responsibility, not merely ritual observance.

The paradox identified in this study therefore emerges from coexistence rather than absolute contradiction. Islamic identity remains visible, mosques and religious activities continue to function, and charitable practices demonstrate social concern; simultaneously, some residents report experiences of weak solidarity, social distance, and limited participation in particular communal religious activities. These contrasting realities indicate that Muslim religiosity is unevenly manifested across different domains of community life. The paradox lies precisely in this coexistence between strong religious identification and variable socio-religious actualization.

Factors Explaining the Tension between Islamic Identity and Socio-Religious Practices

The third finding indicates that the tension between Muslim identity and socio-religious practices in Bandar Baru cannot adequately be explained solely by what the original manuscript described as religious "ignorance." Field evidence suggests a more complex configuration involving differences in religious interpretation, changing religious authority, local traditions, patterns of social interaction, communal participation, and competing

understandings of legitimate religious practice. The paradox of religiosity should therefore be interpreted as the outcome of interacting social and religious factors rather than as a single consequence of insufficient religious knowledge.

One prominent factor concerns differences in religious orientation. Community accounts revealed disagreements regarding collective *dhikr* and supplication, *qunut* during the dawn prayer, and the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday. Such differences essentially concern religious practice, but they can acquire a social dimension when particular interpretations become boundaries separating groups within the same Muslim community. Qomar (2015) demonstrates the diversity of Islamic identities across Indonesian contexts, while Miharja et al. (2019) show that religious identity interacts continuously with cultural traditions. Hidayana (2022) further illustrates how changes toward more Shari'ah-centered religious orientations may transform identity and social relationships within kinship communities. Differences observed in Bandar Baru should consequently be understood not merely as ritual disagreements but as processes involving religious authority, identity, tradition, and social belonging.

Another relevant factor is the changing source of religious knowledge. Contemporary Muslims acquire religious information not exclusively from local religious scholars or face-to-face study groups. Prasojo et al. (2020) demonstrate the role of social media in religious identity

formation, while Nofandrilla et al. (2025) identify connections between Islamic religiosity and patterns of internet consumption. Wardi (2026) further describes contemporary Muslim identity as increasingly hybrid through encounters between inherited traditions and digital religious environments. Although the present study did not specifically measure media consumption among Bandar Baru residents, these studies provide a broader context for understanding how new religious orientations may enter local communities. This relationship should therefore be regarded as a contextual explanation requiring further empirical examination rather than a causal relationship established by the present data.

Religious education and habituation constitute another important dimension. Nasution and Muchtar (2016) emphasize that religious education should shape both understanding and orientation toward life, while Hamzah et al. (2026) identify Islamic religious education as one factor associated with Indonesian Muslim religiosity. Nilan (2009) similarly demonstrates that Islamic education operates not only through the transmission of knowledge but also through experience, discipline, socialization, and the formation of moral environments. Knowledge of religious law or ritual differences, therefore, does not necessarily guarantee the social capacity to negotiate those differences constructively. Al-Ghazali (1999) reminds readers that religious conviction requires foundations extending beyond intellectual dispute, while Al-Adawy

(2007) connects religious understanding with moral character in interpersonal relationships.

The Qur'anic concept of moderation provides an important analytical perspective for interpreting these findings:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى
النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you (al-Baqarah verse 143)

Al-Tabari (2009) interprets *ummatan wasatan* in relation to balance and justice, while Al-Zuhaili (2013) associates Qur'anic guidance with balanced religious and social conduct. The relevance of this principle to Bandar Baru lies not in determining which ritual orientation is correct, but in examining whether religious differences are negotiated in ways that maintain social balance, respect, and cohesion. Al-Ghazali (1985) and Al-Mubarakfuri (2012) similarly portray the Prophet's religious mission as closely connected with exemplary conduct, wisdom, and humane social interaction.

The findings further demonstrate the importance of distinguishing religious identity, religious knowledge, and religiosity. Amir (2021) emphasizes the multidimensional character of religiosity, while Amalia et al. (2023) demonstrate that Muslim identity expression encompasses multiple domains. Amalia et al. (2026) further distinguish different pathways through which identity can be consolidated and mobilized. Consequently, individuals

may possess strong Islamic identification and commitment to particular religious practices without necessarily expressing their religiosity through identical patterns of social relationships. In Bandar Baru, the paradox becomes visible when strengthening boundaries around religious identity or practice does not consistently coincide with stronger social cohesion.

This interpretation corresponds with Zainuddin et al. (2025), who emphasize the importance of balancing spirituality, religious identity, and social tolerance. Toyibah et al. (2025) similarly demonstrate the complexity of relationships among religiosity, Islamism, and attitudes toward other groups. Wardana (2025) indicates that Indonesian religiosity may change gradually despite the continuing institutional prominence of religion, while Menchik (2019) demonstrates that the label of Muslim moderation cannot by itself explain the complexity of social attitudes.

The paradox of Muslim religiosity in Bandar Baru should therefore not be understood as a simplistic contradiction between “being Muslim” and “being un-Islamic.” Rather, it represents a tension among a strong religious identity, diverse internal interpretations, changing sources of religious authority, and uneven actualization of Islamic values in social relationships. Asir (2014) emphasizes the social function of religion, while Omar (2004) stresses the importance of constructive *da’wah*. The findings consequently suggest that strengthening community religiosity does not necessarily

require homogenizing religious practices. More importantly, it requires religious literacy, dialogue, respect for legitimate differences, revitalization of the mosque’s social function, and spaces for interaction that allow Islamic identity to coexist with social solidarity. The substantive meaning of the paradox found in this study therefore lies in the fact that Islamic identity may remain strong symbolically and communally while its social manifestations remain diverse, situational, sometimes inconsistent, and continuously negotiated in everyday community life.

Synthesis of Factors Explaining the Tension between Islamic Identity and Socio-Religious Practices

The findings indicate that the tension between Islamic identity and socio-religious practices in Bandar Baru cannot be attributed to a single factor, particularly religious ignorance. Instead, the tension emerges from the interaction of several religious and social dimensions within everyday community life. Differences in religious interpretation, changing religious authority, varying levels of religious understanding, patterns of social interaction, and communal participation collectively shape how Islamic identity is expressed and negotiated. These factors demonstrate that strong identification with Islam does not necessarily produce uniform religious practices or social relationships. The following table synthesizes the principal factors identified from the findings and their manifestations within the community.

Table1. Synthesis of Factors Explaining the Tension between Islamic Identity and Socio-Religious Practices

No.	Main Factor	Synthesis of Findings
1	Religious Interpretation	Differences in religious practices create boundaries and tensions within the Muslim community.
2	Religious Authority	Changing sources of religious authority contribute to diverse understandings of legitimate Islamic practices.
3	Religious Understanding	Religious knowledge does not always translate into constructive attitudes toward religious differences.
4	Social Interaction	Strong Islamic identity does not consistently correspond with solidarity, interpersonal concern, and social cohesion.
5	Communal Participation	Uneven participation in mosque and communal activities reflects variations in the social expression of religiosity.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Muslim religiosity in Bandar Baru Village reflects a complex relationship between Islamic identity and everyday socio-religious practices. Muslim identity remains visible through religious affiliation, mosques, worship, religious traditions, and communal activities. However, this shared identity does not necessarily produce uniform expressions of religiosity. Differences in religious orientation, interpretation, and ritual practice demonstrate that Islamic identity is continuously understood, expressed, and negotiated within the community. The findings also reveal variations in socio-religious practices, particularly regarding mosque participation, interpersonal concern, solidarity, and responses to communal needs. At the same time, charitable activities and other forms of social engagement indicate that religious solidarity remains present, although its manifestation varies across situations. The paradox identified in this study therefore does not signify the absence or

inauthenticity of Muslim identity, but rather a tension between strong religious identification and the uneven actualization of Islamic social values. This tension is associated with differences in religious interpretation, changing sources of religious authority, religious understanding, and patterns of social interaction. Strengthening religiosity should consequently emphasize religious literacy, constructive dialogue, respect for legitimate differences, revitalization of the mosque's social function, and stronger communal interaction so that Islamic identity is increasingly reflected in inclusive, compassionate, balanced, and socially responsible practices.

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