



Inclusiveness of Pioneer Youth Organizations Around Kayuapu Kulon (POPSIKA) in the Multiversity of the Gondangmanis Bae Kudus Community

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: May, 08, 2026 Revised: June, 11, 2026 Accepted: July, 07, 2026 Keywords: Bounded Inclusivity; Interfaith Interaction; Religious Pluralism; Sectarianism; Social Cohesion.	This study analyzes how the Pioneer Youth Organization Around Kayuapu Kulon (POPSIKA) constructs and sustains inclusivity in the plural Muslim-Christian community of Gondangmanis Village, Bae District, Kudus, Indonesia. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed thematically. The findings show that POPSIKA develops inclusivity not through formal interfaith dialogue alone, but through everyday civic practices embedded in local community life. Five mechanisms were identified: youth-based social participation, reciprocal interfaith cooperation, negotiated theological boundaries, humanitarian solidarity, and informal conflict management. Muslim and Christian youth support one another during religious celebrations in civic roles, participate in collective work, provide social assistance across religious identities, and manage sensitive issues through deliberation and trusted local communication. The study introduces the concept of bounded inclusivity to explain how religious communities can expand cooperation while preserving theological commitments. This concept challenges the assumption that inclusivity requires the dissolution of religious boundaries. Instead, the findings demonstrate that respected boundaries can become enabling conditions for sustainable coexistence when supported by trust, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. Theoretically, this study contributes to discussions on religious pluralism, youth participation, and social cohesion by offering a grounded explanation of how interfaith harmony is produced in everyday life. Practically, it highlights the strategic role of grassroots youth organizations in preventing sectarian tension and strengthening community resilience. The study suggests that bounded inclusivity may serve as a contextual model for plural communities facing intolerance, polarization, and fragile interreligious relations.
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INTRODUCTION

Across plural societies, religious diversity increasingly generates two simultaneous possibilities: the expansion of interfaith cooperation and the intensification of social polarization. Religious difference does not automatically produce conflict, yet it can become a basis for exclusion when communities lack shared spaces for interaction, trust, and reciprocal responsibility. Classical and contemporary studies of intergroup relations show that prejudice is rarely sustained by doctrinal difference alone; it is shaped by social distance, unequal contact, inherited stereotypes, and the absence of cooperative norms (Rothwell, 2022; Shulman et al., 2025; Van Assche et al., 2023). Recent debates on interfaith coexistence further suggest that peaceful pluralism cannot rely solely

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on formal dialogue, legal recognition, or symbolic declarations of tolerance. It must be cultivated through everyday practices in which people work, negotiate, and solve practical problems together across religious boundaries (Larson, 2022). Therefore, the study of inclusivity needs to move beyond abstract normative claims and examine the social mechanisms through which religiously diverse communities sustain cooperation in ordinary life.

Indonesia offers a significant setting for examining this issue because religious plurality is constitutionally recognized but socially contested in various local contexts. The national principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* affirms unity in diversity, yet empirical realities show that the recognition of difference does not always translate into inclusive social relations. Reports on freedom of religion or belief continue to document cases of intolerance, discrimination, and disruption of religious activities, indicating that formal pluralism remains vulnerable when not supported by strong grassroots practices. SETARA Institute recorded 260 incidents and 402 acts of violation of freedom of religion or belief in 2024, showing that intolerance remains a persistent challenge in Indonesia's plural society (Perceka et al., 2025). This condition reveals a gap between institutional recognition of diversity and lived experiences of religious coexistence. It also confirms the need to investigate local communities where pluralism is not merely stated as an ideal, but practiced through everyday cooperation, negotiation, and mutual adjustment.

The urgency of this topic becomes more visible when youth are placed at the center of analysis. Young people are often discussed as a group vulnerable to radicalization, identity conflict, digital polarization, or collective violence, but this framing risks overlooking their capacity as civic actors. Youth can also function as bridge-builders who transform social energy into solidarity, voluntary work, interfaith cooperation, and community resilience. Studies on youth participation increasingly show that young people do not simply inherit religious attitudes from older generations; they actively reshape communal relations through peer networks, local organizations, civic engagement, and everyday participation (Kazira & Pasura, 2026; Saud & Ashfaq, 2025). In Indonesia, youth religiosity is shaped by the interaction of local communal life, religious education, digital media, and public religious discourse (Chakim, 2022; Hefner, 2022). For this reason, youth-based inclusivity should not be examined only in schools, campuses, formal interfaith forums, or digital spaces, but also in ordinary village organizations where repeated social cooperation occurs across religious lines.

This study focuses on the Pioneer Youth Organization Around Kayuapu Kulon, locally known as POPSIKA, in Gondangmanis Village, Bae District, Kudus Regency, Central Java. POPSIKA provides an analytically important case because it operates in a plural Muslim-Christian environment where religious difference is neither denied nor dissolved, but managed through routine cooperation and mutual respect. The organization is involved in community service, social assistance, collective work, support for religious celebrations, and informal mechanisms of conflict resolution. Muslim youth, for example, help manage parking and security during Christian celebrations, while Christian youth provide similar support during Eid prayers and other Muslim community events. At the same time, community members preserve clear theological boundaries by attending interreligious events as social guests without participating in ritual worship, and by ensuring halal food arrangements for Muslim participants. This case shows that inclusivity does not emerge because theological differences disappear; rather, it emerges because communities learn to expand social cooperation without requiring theological conformity. The original manuscript also confirms that POPSIKA's practices are built through observation-based daily interaction, interviews with community actors, and documentation of local activities.

Recent scholarship on interfaith relations can be broadly grouped into three dominant streams. The first stream emphasizes institutional interfaith dialogue and formal mechanisms of conflict prevention, arguing that organized communication among religious actors can reduce tension and promote mutual recognition (Corpuz, 2025; Driessen, 2025). The second stream focuses on religious education, intercultural learning, and civic literacy as pathways for reducing prejudice and strengthening tolerance among young people (Abdullah, 2024; Khan, 2024). The third stream highlights local wisdom, community participation, and social capital as everyday foundations for trust-building across religious boundaries (Wafa et al., 2026). These studies have advanced the literature by showing that coexistence is shaped not only by doctrine, but also by institutions, education, local culture, and civic interaction. However, they still tend to explain where inclusivity is

promoted rather than how it is sustained through repeated social practices in ordinary youth organizations. As a result, the micro-level mechanisms through which young people convert religious diversity into social cooperation remain insufficiently theorized.

A further conceptual limitation concerns the relationship between inclusivity and religious boundaries. Much of the existing literature treats inclusivity as openness, acceptance, or harmony, but gives less attention to cases where inclusive social relations coexist with firm theological commitments. In many plural communities, interfaith cooperation does not mean that religious boundaries are erased; rather, boundaries are negotiated so that social participation remains possible without ritual or doctrinal assimilation. This study addresses that gap by proposing bounded inclusivity as a form of social openness in which religious communities expand cooperation, solidarity, and mutual recognition while preserving mutually respected theological limits. This concept extends Contact Theory by arguing that repeated interaction alone is insufficient unless it is supported by reciprocal civic participation, locally embedded trust, and shared norms for managing sensitive boundaries. It also complements Social Identity Theory and Social Capital Theory by showing that group identity can be maintained without necessarily producing exclusion, and that youth organizations can transform religious difference into bridging social capital. Thus, the novelty of this study lies not merely in presenting POPSIKA as a local example of tolerance, but in conceptualizing the mechanism through which youth-based cooperation sustains inclusivity without theological assimilation.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze how POPSIKA constructs and sustains bounded inclusivity in the everyday life of a plural religious community in Gondangmanis, Kudus. Specifically, it examines the forms of inclusive practice developed by the organization, the ways Muslim and Christian youth interact in shared social spaces, and the mechanisms through which potential religious tensions are negotiated. Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on interfaith relations by offering bounded inclusivity as an analytical lens for understanding social cooperation that does not require the dissolution of religious identity. It further proposes that community-based youth organizations generate bounded inclusivity through four mutually reinforcing mechanisms: repeated interfaith encounters, reciprocal civic participation, negotiated theological boundaries, and locally embedded social trust. Practically, this study offers a grassroots model for strengthening social cohesion, reducing sectarian tendencies, and transforming youth participation into constructive civic engagement. By situating interfaith inclusivity within everyday cooperation rather than formal dialogue alone, this article provides a grounded explanation of how religious pluralism is lived, negotiated, and sustained at the local level.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine how bounded inclusivity is constructed and sustained within the Pioneer Youth Organization Around Kayuapu Kulon, locally known as POPSIKA. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study focused on meanings, lived experiences, social practices, and boundary negotiations in a natural community setting. The case study design was considered appropriate because POPSIKA represents a specific youth-based organization embedded in a plural Muslim-Christian community, allowing an in-depth and contextual analysis of everyday interfaith relations (Taufik et al., 2025). Rather than measuring tolerance through statistical indicators, this study explored how inclusivity is practiced, interpreted, and maintained through repeated social cooperation, mutual assistance, and negotiated theological boundaries.

Research Site and Time

The research was conducted in Kayuapu Kulon, Gondangmanis Village, Bae District, Kudus Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The site was selected purposively because it represents a local plural community where Muslim and Christian residents live side by side and participate in shared social activities through POPSIKA. Fieldwork was carried out during April–May 2026, focusing on organizational activities, interfaith cooperation, social solidarity, and informal mechanisms of conflict negotiation. POPSIKA was selected as the case because it actively participates in social assistance, collective work, religious celebration support, and community problem-solving. This

context enabled the study to examine inclusivity not as an abstract concept, but as a lived and negotiated social practice.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The population of interest consisted of individuals who had direct knowledge of POPSIKA's organizational activities and Muslim-Christian social relations in Kayuapu Kulon. The participants included POPSIKA leaders, active youth members, community figures, religious/community actors, and residents who were involved in or familiar with interfaith cooperation in the village. The inclusion criteria were: direct involvement in POPSIKA or community activities, knowledge of interfaith interaction in Kayuapu Kulon, willingness to participate, and ability to provide reflective information about the organization's social role. Individuals who had no direct experience with POPSIKA or were unable to provide relevant information were excluded. Purposive sampling was used because qualitative case study research requires information-rich participants who can explain the social processes under investigation (Al Qur'an, 2025; Ballering et al., 2026).

Research Instruments

The research instruments consisted of a semi-structured interview guide, an observation protocol, and a documentation checklist. The interview guide was developed based on the research questions and the conceptual framework of bounded inclusivity, intergroup contact, social identity, social capital, and lived religion. The interview guide covered five main domains: the organizational background of POPSIKA, forms of interfaith cooperation, participation in social and religious events, management of theological boundaries, and mechanisms for resolving sensitive issues. The observation protocol focused on interaction patterns, role distribution, reciprocal support, religious sensitivity, and expressions of mutual respect in community activities. The documentation checklist was used to identify organizational records, activity documentation, community notes, and supporting materials related to POPSIKA's programs and social practices.

Instrument Validity

Instrument validity was ensured through content alignment with the research objectives, research questions, and conceptual framework. Each interview question was reviewed to ensure that it was open-ended, non-leading, contextually relevant, and capable of eliciting detailed narratives from participants. The observation protocol and documentation checklist were also aligned with the main analytical categories of the study, namely interfaith cooperation, social solidarity, theological boundary-making, conflict negotiation, and youth-based social capital. In qualitative inquiry, instrument quality is not assessed through statistical reliability, but through clarity, conceptual relevance, contextual sensitivity, and the ability to generate credible and meaningful data (Bekmezci & Sürücü, 2025; Gasser et al., 2012). Therefore, refinement of the instruments focused on ensuring that each tool could capture the lived practices of inclusivity within the POPSIKA community.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The procedure consisted of three stages. First, the researcher conducted preliminary field orientation to understand the social context of Kayuapu Kulon, identify relevant community actors, and map POPSIKA's organizational role. Second, interviews and observations were conducted with selected participants who had direct involvement in POPSIKA's social and interfaith activities. During this stage, the researcher recorded field notes on patterns of interaction, examples of cooperation, community responses, and forms of boundary negotiation. Third, documentation was collected to complement the interview and observation data, including organizational records, activity documentation, and community-related materials. The use of multiple sources of evidence strengthened the depth and credibility of the case study (Alshami et al., 2023; Cole, 2024; Munarsih et al., 2026).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis followed six stages: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, identification of recurring categories, development of themes, review of themes, and interpretation of findings in relation to the research questions (Mishra & Dey, 2022; Zairul, 2025). Interview data, field notes, and documents were read repeatedly to

identify meaningful units related to interfaith cooperation, social solidarity, theological boundary-making, conflict negotiation, and youth-based social capital. Initial codes were then grouped into broader categories and developed into analytical themes that reflected the main mechanisms of bounded inclusivity within POPSIKA. The final themes were interpreted through the lenses of intergroup contact theory, social identity theory, social capital theory, and lived religion. The analysis was conducted manually to maintain close engagement with the data and preserve the contextual nuance of the local community.

Trustworthiness and Researcher Reflexivity

Trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, analytical consistency, and researcher reflexivity. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from POPSIKA leaders, youth members, community figures, religious/community actors, and residents. Method triangulation was carried out by comparing interview findings with observation notes and documentary evidence. Analytical consistency was maintained by checking whether the emerging themes were supported by multiple data sources and aligned with the research questions. Researcher reflexivity was applied by critically considering how the researcher's assumptions, background, and position could influence the interpretation of interfaith relations. This reflexive awareness was important because the study dealt with sensitive issues of religion, theological boundaries, and community harmony. These strategies strengthened the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the findings (Janis, 2022).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw from the research. Consent was obtained before interviews and observations were conducted. Participant confidentiality was protected by using role-based identification where necessary and by avoiding the disclosure of sensitive personal information. The data were used only for academic purposes and interpreted carefully to avoid misrepresentation of religious groups, community actors, or local social dynamics. These ethical procedures were essential because the study examined interfaith relations, religious boundaries, and sensitive issues related to social coexistence.

Table 1 presents the alignment between the research questions, data sources, instruments, and analytical focus used in this study.

Table 1. Alignment of Research Questions, Data Sources, Instruments, and Analytical Focus

Research Question	Main Data Sources	Instrument	Analytical Focus
How does POPSIKA practice inclusivity in everyday community life?	POPSIKA leaders, youth members, residents, activity documentation	Interview guide, observation protocol, documentation checklist	Forms of cooperation, social participation, mutual assistance
How do Muslim and Christian youth interact in shared social spaces?	Youth members, community figures, field observations	Interview guide and observation protocol	Interfaith encounter, reciprocal support, social trust
How are religious boundaries and potential tensions negotiated?	POPSIKA leaders, religious/community actors, residents	Interview guide and documentation checklist	Theological boundary-making, conflict negotiation, local norms
How does POPSIKA contribute to social cohesion?	POPSIKA leaders, youth members, community figures, residents, organizational documentation	Interview guide, observation notes, documentation	Youth-based social capital, solidarity, community resilience

The table shows that each research question was connected to specific data sources, instruments, and analytical focuses. This alignment helped ensure that the data collection and analysis remained consistent with the objectives of the study. Through this methodological design, the study was able to move beyond general claims about tolerance and examine the concrete mechanisms through which POPSIKA constructs bounded inclusivity in everyday interfaith life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings show that POPSIKA constructs inclusivity through everyday social practices rather than formal interfaith dialogue alone. Inclusivity in this community is not expressed as unrestricted religious participation, but as a negotiated form of social openness in which Muslim and Christian youth cooperate while maintaining their respective theological boundaries. Five main themes emerged from the data: POPSIKA as a youth-based social space, reciprocal interfaith cooperation, theological boundary-making, social solidarity beyond religious identity, and negotiated conflict management. Together, these themes explain how bounded inclusivity is produced and sustained in the daily life of Kayuapu Kulon.

POPSIKA as a Youth-Based Social Space

POPSIKA, the Pioneer Youth Organization Around Kayuapu Kulon, is located in Kayuapu Kulon, Gondangmanis Village, Bae District, Kudus Regency, Central Java. The organization functions as a youth-based social space that brings together young people in community activities, social assistance, collective work, and interreligious cooperation. Although the organization had existed informally before, it later obtained formal legal recognition and developed a clearer organizational structure. Its core management includes a supervisor, chairperson, secretary, and treasurer, indicating that POPSIKA is not merely an informal gathering but a structured community organization.

The organization's orientation is centered on social service, youth development, tolerance, and non-partisanship in practical politics. Its activities are directed toward strengthening social relations among residents and providing constructive spaces for young people to participate in community life. One community actor explained that POPSIKA was established not only to gather youth, but also to direct them toward positive social activities and to strengthen relations among residents. This organizational orientation gives youth a legitimate role in maintaining harmony within a religiously plural environment.

In everyday practice, POPSIKA serves as a bridge between Muslim and Christian residents. It enables young people from different religious backgrounds to meet regularly, work together, and build interpersonal trust through repeated interaction. The organization also normalizes interfaith cooperation by making it part of ordinary community routines. Inclusivity, therefore, is not treated as an occasional program, but as a social habit embedded in local life.

Reciprocal Interfaith Cooperation in Religious and Social Events

One of the clearest findings is the existence of reciprocal cooperation during religious celebrations. Muslim youth help Christian residents during Christmas celebrations and the commemoration of the Ascension of Jesus Christ by assisting with parking, security, and public order. Conversely, Christian youth help Muslim residents during Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayers by supporting parking management and ensuring that community activities run smoothly. This reciprocity shows that interfaith cooperation is not one-sided, but mutually practiced by both religious groups.

A POPSIKA leader described this routine practice as follows:

"During Christmas events, Muslim members of POPSIKA help with parking and security. Likewise, when Muslims hold Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayers, Christian friends also help. This has long been a normal practice here." —P1, POPSIKA leader, April 2026

This pattern indicates that religious celebrations become not only moments of worship for each community, but also opportunities for social cooperation across religious boundaries. The youth do not participate in each other's ritual worship, but they contribute to the social and technical needs surrounding the event. In this sense, their participation is civic rather than theological. The repeated nature of this cooperation gradually strengthens familiarity, reduces social distance, and reinforces mutual trust between Muslim and Christian youth.

POPSIKA also demonstrates inclusive gestures through public expressions of respect during religious holidays. Banners and greetings from Muslim youth to Christian residents, and from Christian youth to Muslim residents, are used as symbolic expressions of mutual recognition. These gestures are not understood as theological agreement, but as social respect. Although such practices

may be debated in wider society, within POPSIKA they function as local expressions of harmony and shared belonging.

Theological Boundary-Making in Social Participation

The findings show that inclusivity in POPSIKA does not erase theological boundaries. Muslim and Christian residents participate in each other's social events while clearly distinguishing between social presence and ritual participation. For instance, when Muslim residents hold thanksgiving events, gatherings, or religious commemorations, Christian neighbors may attend as guests and listen respectfully without joining Islamic rituals. The same pattern occurs when Christian residents hold weddings, thanksgiving events, or Christmas-related gatherings. Muslim residents may attend to honor the invitation, but they do not take part in church rituals or prayers led by Christian religious leaders.

One participant emphasized that attendance in interfaith events is understood as social respect rather than ritual involvement:

"When we attend an invitation from neighbors of another religion, we come to respect them as neighbors. We listen and maintain good relations, but we do not join the worship rituals." —P2, community participant, April 2026

This pattern demonstrates that interfaith participation is carefully negotiated. The community does not define inclusivity as full participation in all religious practices. Instead, it creates a shared understanding that one may be socially present without crossing theological boundaries. This distinction allows residents to maintain their religious commitments while still participating in social life together. It also prevents interfaith relations from being interpreted as doctrinal compromise.

A similar pattern appears in the handling of food during joint activities. When Christian residents host events involving Muslim participants, they generally provide halal food or arrange food preparation in ways that make Muslim guests feel comfortable. One case involved chicken served at a shared event. Some Muslim residents hesitated to consume it because the chicken had been slaughtered by a Christian resident. Since then, the community has tended to use Muslim slaughtering services for shared meals involving Muslim participants. This adjustment was not treated as rejection, but as a practical response to religious sensitivity.

A participant described the experience as follows:

"There was once a problem with chicken slaughtering. It was prepared by a Christian resident, and when Muslim guests knew about it, some of them chose not to eat. Since then, for shared events, we usually use Muslim slaughtering services so that everyone feels comfortable." —P1, POPSIKA leader, April 2026

This finding shows that bounded inclusivity is sustained through sensitivity, adaptation, and mutual accommodation. The community does not force uniformity, nor does it ignore religious rules. Instead, it develops practical arrangements that allow cooperation to continue without creating discomfort among participants.

Social Solidarity Beyond Religious Identity

POPSIKA's inclusivity is also visible in social solidarity beyond religious identity. One example is the organization's routine charitable activity for orphans, usually held during certain organizational moments such as its anniversary. The assistance is not limited to Muslim orphans but is also given to children from Christian families. Participants reported that approximately ten Christian children had been included in such assistance. This practice indicates that POPSIKA frames social care through humanitarian need rather than religious affiliation.

Solidarity is also evident in collective work and neighborhood activities. Muslim and Christian youth participate together in cleaning roads, repairing public facilities, preparing community events, and supporting other forms of local cooperation. In these activities, religion is not used as a basis for dividing tasks. A participant explained:

"When the activity is for the common interest, we do not look at religion first. Everyone helps because it is for the village and for the community." —P3, POPSIKA member, April 2026

Another important expression of solidarity appears in moments of grief. When a Christian resident passes away, Muslim residents attend to express condolences and provide social support. Their presence is not part of Christian ritual practice, but an expression of neighborhood empathy

and communal responsibility. Conversely, Christian residents also attend when Muslim residents pass away. They provide assistance in technical and social matters, such as arranging chairs, preparing tents, helping with community coordination, and supporting the grieving family.

This form of solidarity is particularly significant because death-related events often carry strong religious meanings. Yet in Kayuapu Kulon, such events also become moments for affirming shared humanity. The community distinguishes between ritual participation and social support, allowing residents to express empathy without violating religious boundaries. Through these practices, POPSIKA helps maintain a social environment in which religious difference does not prevent mutual care.

Negotiated Conflict Management and Everyday Peace

Although the community is generally harmonious, the findings show that tensions have occurred and required negotiation. One issue involved the use of mosque loudspeakers during Ramadan. Christian religious figures expressed concern because the loudspeaker was used until around 10 p.m., causing discomfort for some residents. The issue was resolved through polite communication and deliberation. After discussion, the community agreed to limit the use of the loudspeaker until 9 p.m. and to use lower-volume speakers afterward.

Another issue involved recorded religious sermons played during Ramadan. A sermon topic related to the Mahdi and the cross was perceived as sensitive by nearby Christian residents. The concern was communicated through Christian community figures to POPSIKA leadership. The issue was then handled through dialogue, and the sermon themes were adjusted toward more harmonious and less sensitive content. The matter did not develop into open conflict because the complaint was communicated respectfully and responded to constructively.

A community actor described the importance of careful communication in such situations:

"If there is something uncomfortable, it is better to talk about it properly. Usually, after communication, we can find a solution that does not hurt either side." —P4, community figure, May 2026

These cases show that POPSIKA's inclusivity is not based on the absence of tension. Rather, it is sustained by the community's capacity to manage tension before it escalates. Deliberation, respectful communication, and sensitivity to the feelings of other religious groups become important mechanisms for maintaining everyday peace. The organization also holds regular meetings every three months and conducts monthly contributions, which help maintain internal communication and strengthen emotional bonds among members.

Inclusivity is also practiced in organizational rituals. During POPSIKA meetings, opening prayers are usually conducted according to each participant's respective belief rather than being dominated by one religious tradition. This practice creates a shared organizational space that remains religiously respectful without privileging one group's ritual form. It reflects a collective awareness that a common social space must be managed carefully in order to remain inclusive for all members.

Summary of Main Findings

The findings indicate that POPSIKA produces bounded inclusivity through repeated interaction, reciprocal participation, theological sensitivity, humanitarian solidarity, and conflict negotiation. The organization does not remove religious boundaries, but manages them in ways that make social cooperation possible. Inclusivity is therefore not understood as theological assimilation, but as a practical arrangement that allows different religious groups to work together, support one another, and maintain social cohesion.

Table 2 summarizes the main themes, empirical indicators, and analytical meanings of the findings.

Table 2. Main Themes and Empirical Indicators of Bounded Inclusivity in POPSIKA

Theme	Empirical Indicators	Analytical Meaning
Youth-based social space	Organizational structure, legal recognition, social service orientation, regular youth activities	POPSIKA provides an institutional space for constructive youth participation

Reciprocal interfaith cooperation	Muslim youth help during Christian events; Christian youth help during Eid prayers; public holiday greetings	Interfaith cooperation is normalized through repeated civic participation
Theological boundary-making	Attendance without ritual participation; separate prayer practices; halal food arrangements	Social openness is maintained without theological assimilation
Social solidarity beyond religious identity	Orphan assistance across religions; gotong royong; mourning support; technical help during funerals	Humanitarian solidarity becomes a bridge across religious boundaries
Negotiated conflict management	Loudspeaker adjustment; sensitive sermon themes revised; deliberation through community figures	Everyday peace is sustained through communication, accommodation, and local norms

Table 2 shows that bounded inclusivity in POPSIKA is not formed through a single practice, but through multiple interconnected mechanisms. Social cooperation, religious sensitivity, and conflict management work together to sustain interfaith harmony in everyday community life.

Figure 1 illustrates the process through which bounded inclusivity is constructed in POPSIKA.



Figure 1. Mechanism of Bounded Inclusivity in POPSIKA

Figure 1 explains that bounded inclusivity emerges through repeated encounters between Muslim and Christian youth, which strengthen reciprocal participation, trust, and familiarity. This process enables the community to negotiate theological boundaries, manage tensions through deliberation, and contribute to broader social cohesion in Kayuapu Kulon.

Discussion

The first major finding shows that POPSIKA constructs inclusivity through everyday youth participation rather than through formal interfaith dialogue alone. This finding is important because it shifts the understanding of inclusivity from a normative ideal into a lived social practice embedded in village routines. POPSIKA becomes a shared civic space where Muslim and Christian youth meet, work together, and develop familiarity through repeated interaction. This pattern is consistent with recent studies showing that youth participation can shape communal relations through local organizations, peer networks, and civic engagement (Saud & Ashfaq, 2025; Kazira & Pasura, 2026). It also strengthens the argument that interfaith coexistence cannot depend only on formal recognition or symbolic tolerance, but must be sustained through practical cooperation in everyday life (Larson, 2022; Taufik et al., 2025). The contribution of this finding lies in showing that youth organizations can become local institutions of bounded inclusivity, where religious difference is not erased but managed through shared social responsibility. Therefore, POPSIKA should be understood not merely as a youth association, but as a community mechanism that transforms religious plurality into sustained civic interaction.

The second finding reveals that reciprocal interfaith cooperation during religious and social events functions as a key mechanism for reducing social distance between Muslim and Christian residents. Muslim youth assist Christian celebrations through parking, security, and public order, while Christian youth provide similar support during Eid activities. This reciprocity is analytically significant because it prevents interfaith relations from becoming one-sided tolerance and instead turns them into mutual civic participation. Recent literature confirms that intergroup contact is more likely to reduce prejudice when it is repeated, meaningful, and connected to cooperative social situations (Van Assche et al., 2023; Shulman et al., 2025). POPSIKA's experience supports this view,

but also extends it by showing that contact becomes more socially durable when it is organized around concrete local needs rather than abstract dialogue. This finding is also in line with studies on grassroots interfaith engagement, which emphasize practical cooperation as a stronger foundation for peacebuilding than ceremonial dialogue alone (Corpuz, 2025; Driessen, 2025). Thus, reciprocal participation in POPSIKA demonstrates that religious celebrations can become civic contact zones without becoming spaces of theological assimilation.

The third finding indicates that POPSIKA's inclusivity is sustained through negotiated theological boundaries. Muslim and Christian residents may attend each other's social events, express respect, and provide practical support, but they do not participate in rituals outside their own religious commitments. This finding is central to the novelty of the study because it shows that inclusivity does not require the dissolution of religious identity. Instead, religious boundaries become manageable when they are mutually recognized and translated into practical arrangements, such as attendance without ritual involvement, separate prayer practices, and halal food accommodation. This interpretation is consistent with Larson's (2022) argument that interreligious relationships require ethical navigation of boundaries in everyday life. It also complements studies on religious literacy and multicultural education by showing that tolerance is not only produced through formal learning, but also through boundary-sensitive practices in local communities (Abdullah, 2024; Khan, 2024). Therefore, bounded inclusivity offers a more contextual explanation of plural coexistence: communities can remain theologically distinct while becoming socially connected.

The fourth finding demonstrates that POPSIKA expands solidarity beyond religious identity through charity, gotong royong, mourning support, and assistance in community events. This finding shows that social cohesion becomes stronger when humanitarian responsibility is placed above religious categorization. In POPSIKA, assistance for orphans, collective work, and support during funerals are not restricted by religious affiliation, but organized around shared vulnerability and communal obligation. This pattern is consistent with recent studies emphasizing local wisdom, community participation, and multicultural social practices as important foundations for resilience in plural societies (Wafa et al., 2026; Perceka et al., 2025). However, this study adds a more specific contribution by showing that solidarity is most meaningful when it appears in religiously sensitive situations, such as mourning rituals and interfaith social gatherings. In such moments, the community carefully separates ritual participation from social empathy, allowing residents to support one another without crossing theological boundaries. This finding confirms that bounded inclusivity is not passive coexistence, but an active form of communal care that sustains social cohesion across religious difference.

The fifth finding shows that everyday peace in POPSIKA is maintained through negotiation, communication, and local sensitivity rather than through the absence of tension. Issues such as mosque loudspeaker use and sensitive sermon themes prove that plural communities remain exposed to discomfort, misunderstanding, and symbolic friction. However, these tensions did not develop into open conflict because community actors responded through dialogue, deliberation, and practical adjustment. This supports recent scholarship arguing that pluralism must be continuously negotiated in everyday life, especially in contexts where religious identity, public space, and community interaction overlap (Hefner, 2022; Chakim, 2022; Driessen, 2025). POPSIKA's experience extends this discussion by showing that informal mediation and trusted local actors can be as important as formal institutions in preventing sectarian escalation. Theoretically, this strengthens the concept of bounded inclusivity by identifying conflict negotiation as one of its core mechanisms, alongside repeated contact, reciprocal cooperation, theological sensitivity, and social solidarity. Overall, this study positions POPSIKA as a grassroots model of youth-based bounded inclusivity that contributes to the global literature on interfaith coexistence by showing how religious plurality can be sustained through practical, negotiated, and locally embedded social relations.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that POPSIKA sustains interfaith inclusivity through everyday civic practices rather than through formal dialogue alone. In Kayuapu Kulon, Muslim and Christian youth build social cohesion through repeated interaction, reciprocal assistance in religious and social

events, humanitarian solidarity, and locally negotiated conflict management. The findings show that religious difference does not automatically produce social distance when communities have shared spaces for cooperation and trusted mechanisms for managing sensitive issues. Inclusivity in this case is therefore not a condition of theological uniformity, but a practical achievement developed through mutual respect, social responsibility, and continuous participation in village life.

The central contribution of this study is the concept of bounded inclusivity. This concept explains how plural communities can expand cooperation while preserving theological boundaries. POPSIKA demonstrates that residents may support each other's social events, assist religious celebrations in civic roles, provide halal food arrangements, and express condolences across religious lines without crossing ritual limits. This finding refines the understanding of interfaith coexistence by showing that boundaries are not always barriers to harmony; when negotiated respectfully, they can become conditions that make sustainable cooperation possible. In this sense, the study offers a grounded contribution to global discussions on religious pluralism, youth participation, and community-based social cohesion.

Practically, the findings suggest that youth organizations can become important grassroots actors in preventing sectarian tension and strengthening communal resilience. POPSIKA shows that peacebuilding can grow from ordinary practices such as gotong royong, mutual assistance, informal mediation, and respectful communication. Nevertheless, the findings are context-specific and should be interpreted within the social setting of Kayuapu Kulon, where long-term neighborly relations support interfaith trust. Future research should compare similar youth organizations in other plural communities to examine how bounded inclusivity operates across different religious, cultural, and socio-political contexts. Such comparative inquiry would help strengthen the conceptual reach of bounded inclusivity and clarify its relevance for broader studies of interfaith relations.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Rif'an Maulana contributed to the conceptualization of the study, field data collection, interview coordination, data organization, thematic analysis, and preparation of the original manuscript draft. Mas'udi contributed to the refinement of the research design, theoretical framing, validation of the analytical interpretation, critical review of the manuscript, and supervision of the overall research process. Both authors discussed the findings, revised the manuscript for intellectual content, approved the final version of the article, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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