



Segregation and the Legality of Religious Diversity; Case Studies of Religiously Labeled Schools

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ABSTRACT

For the people of Indonesia, religious plurality and a pluralistic society have become the most pressing concerns. The language and thought of religion and multiculturalism are constantly complex, as is the management of diversity, because religious diversity can create either conflict or discord, depending on how we view the meaning of religious pluralism and diversity. If the multiplicity of religions is regarded as a threat and it is conceivable for tension and conflict between religions to arise, then pluralism will be the most crucial factor for the Indonesian people to invest in. In contrast, the reality of social inferiority would contribute to the spread of tolerance and concord, as well as the orthodoxy practiced by the populace. The relationship between religions in Indonesia today exhibits a positive effect on harmony. It is vital to bolster the concept of pluralism in the education of religious principles. From the standpoint of religion, the author examines the concept of pluralistic education. This is qualitative research. Observation, in-depth interviews, document studies, source evaluation, and information validation were employed as data-gathering instruments. While the obtained data were analyzed using a descriptive approach, which consisted of observing the phenomena that occur, displaying and reducing data, and then mapping the problem and drawing broad conclusions, the data were obtained by observing the phenomena that occur, displaying and reducing data, and then mapping the problem and drawing broad conclusions. As demonstrated by this study's findings for schools with religious names, Islamic, Catholic, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist institutions, among others, were founded with the intention of serving as a platform for the construction and advancement of culture. Human education includes So aggregation arises as a characteristic of religious schools as patrons to protect the nation's morality in accordance with the methods of these many schools and become the representatives of religion diversity. Religion also forms a branding on schools to give the appearance that a nation's morals are refined and submissive to its religious standards. In addition, it was discovered that religious schools in South Sulawesi are highly costly, with elite school settings, and that the average student hails from upper-middle-class families, particularly in large cities like Makassar. such as the Cendrawasih Catholic Schools, Brothers, Hindu Darma, and the Athirah Islamic School and Al-Azhar, but there are also other inexpensive Islamic schools, like Muhammadiyah and NU Schools.



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1. Introduction

The Indonesian people are still searching for the most appropriate cultural style ([Parlindungan et al., 2018](#)) to be implemented "given a very diverse nation, both in ethnicity, religion, race, and the other distinct interests" ([Darling-Hammond et al., 2020](#)); ([Slamet et al., 2017](#)).

Numerous confrontations, acts of violence, extremism, and even terrorism, as well as different social clashes or collisions, continue to be the result of cultural incompatibility. All of these difficulties are rooted in an intolerant attitude toward the variations that have always existed throughout society, including religion, beliefs, culture, and customs.

In recent decades, Indonesia has entered a new age that is often known as a reformation era ([Rahim & Arifuddin, 2022](#)). As has become the norm, changing the age of power, altering the era of politics, society, and cultural, it also changes the challenges the people and state of Indonesia faced ([Mulyono, 2017](#)). Due to the legacy of the New Order, the Indonesian government, which will soon be re-elected, will have to rebuild a damaged and bad country in the eyes of its population. Reform must be capable of constructing a new and superior Indonesia.

Respecting Indonesia's diversity, the crucial question in this era of change is what components of the nation, particularly Indonesia, must be developed first ([Suparlan, 2014](#)). The only answer is the community. Community forms determine the pattern of national and state life for this reason. Society is the state's primary component. In Indonesia, recognizing and comprehending religion is one of the efforts undertaken to establish a relationship with principles and to create a reformed society ([Umbara, 2016](#)).

The diversity of religions and cultures in Indonesia was constructed from the ruins of the legacy destruction during the colonial period ([Yapp, 2020](#)). This was followed by the New Order era, in which religion, culture, and communism clashed, and by the New Order era's attempt to build a new state order based on religious diversity and understanding of the beliefs.

The politics of diversity, or whatever you want to call it, is perfectly capable of preserving the unity and integrity of the Indonesian country, despite the fact that it has been rocked by revolts, which threaten the political stability of the Indonesian state ([Pratama et al., 2021](#)). Pluralism is a binding relationship and a bridge that can tolerate diversity and diversities, including ethnic distinctions and a heterogeneous society ([Beckford, 2014](#)).

The disparities included public spaces, workplaces, and markets, as well as national institutions, the degree of political, legal, economic, and social equality, and the degree of equality in political terms ([Dalingwater, 2018](#)). While ethnicity and tribal culture with the nation's ethnicity can continue to live within the scope or atmosphere of their ethnicity Until now, the difference has been fricated, whether on a small or huge scale. The friction is generated by intolerance between a community of religion, culture, and beliefs that is rooted in fear. These concerns appear to be ticking time bombs that can detonate at any moment, so it is natural that many people are concerned ([Halidin, 2019](#)).

If prejudice takes the shape of mutual suspicion amongst religious communities in Indonesia, these issues will intensify ([Yeager, 2005](#)). In social intrigues, this suspicion was already manifest ([Fussey et al., 2021](#)). As evidence of the labeling of schools and education

from elementary to postsecondary levels, such as Islamic, Christian, Catholic, Brother, Buddhist, Hindu, etc.

At first impression, religious labeling in schools is beneficial, but a closer analysis reveals that the pattern of school labeling facilitates educational aggregation between one religious group and another ([Broer et al., 2015](#)). It appears that students are isolated or restricted from studying at the institution.

The Mutual suspicion is gradually formed and strengthened, between one of religious community, plus in some schools that have many students with different religious backgrounds, but when one religious learned is carried out by their religious teacher, then other students of different religions and beliefs, welcome to get out of the room, for instance, when studying Islam, then students who are Christians may not be in the room or out of the room, otherwise resulted in stifling religious freedom ([Fajarini, 2022](#))

This pattern of education labeling and aggregation will more rapidly develop to religious intolerance that originates in education or schools ([Hariningsih, 2021](#)). In this instance, describing schools as an attempt to legitimate religion through education would only generate worry among the religious community. While variations in religious understanding in Indonesia have led to problems, they have not yet been effectively resolved, and are exacerbated by religious communities' mistrust of one another due to the labeling of schools in the name of religion.

The issue of intolerance that gives rise to radicalism. Terrorist activities can be easily perpetrated if a person's mindset and thinking permit it. Even if the times have changed, this issue continues to exist ([Rohman & Huriyah, 2022](#)). The government and politics dilemma, as well as the state-nation relationship, were not yet resolved. Education or the learning process in schools has become the most significant component in remembering religious prejudice in general ([Herbstrith et al., 2020](#)).

Due to the fact that omission and apathy towards the problem will create new spaces for that attitude and understanding to develop, which, over time, can become the source of social and religious conflict, the importance of a detailed and in-depth study as well as the research that has been conducted on the issue becomes crucial.

Some objectives must be stated in a realistic and conclusive manner so that this study may not only raise the problem observed in the field, but also dissect it so that its causes, supporting factors, and means of resolution can be identified. Here are some of the research design's goals in relation to its three primary components:

a. Educational Aspects

The establishment of the benefit-is based on education at all levels of society; there are no disparities in education that can lead to mutual mistrust in any community ([Yuliani & Hartanto, 2017](#)). There are no constraints on education that fragment schools and educational institutions based on religious differences, views, and orientations.

b. Social and Community Aspects

Making education a place where people from all communities, regardless of religion, race, or culture, can come together. Science-based learning, which does not discriminate based on religion or race, is intrinsically linked to education.

Knowledge and science were as representative of a person's intellect level if they had been acquired through education. This intelligence stance does not consider the community's humanity, but rather its conduct and attitudes. Because it includes fundamental truths, science should ideally be positioned as inclusive and accessible to everyone ([Masduqi, 2013](#)).

Including the religious knowledge that was believed by all religious communities in Indonesia, it can be studied by anyone who wants to know the components and elements of religious knowledge, and each person can explore deeper and free scientific knowledge without mutual suspicion from each religious community in Indonesia, so the results can be more objective and credible ([Abdullah, 2020](#)).

c. Aspects of the Government Policy

As stipulated by the Constitution, the highest aspiration of the government permeates all children of the nation. This education-based objective must be supported by high-quality education and a variety of other factors, including facilities and infrastructure, proper funding, and government policies that promote educational growth.

The results of this study are anticipated to be considered by the government or policymakers in their efforts to reform higher education. The necessity to construct educational institutions that are representative of the Nusantara archipelago in terms of being secular, populist, expanding, and educating ([Wisarja & Sudarsana, 2017](#)).

It is not in accordance with the Pancasila and the state idea of Unity in Diversity for the government to restrict the meaning of science and education, to disregard the bourgeoisie of education, or to decrease mutual distrust between religious communities (Bhineka Tunggal Ika). Against the consolidation of education that aims to restrict educational space. The state has designed a program that ensures and provides opportunity for every youngster in the country to learn science if that is their area of interest.

2. Literature Review

The issue of religious equality and the flow and beliefs in the construction of religious communities in Indonesia, which leads to religious conflicts based on religion groups and communities, is of the utmost importance and must be resolved without delay, no matter how large or how many victims are involved ([Hefner, 2021](#)).

This dilemma will spawn cells and seeds of deep animosity and feud inside the community, so impeding the growth of the momentarily pushed government program to establish a civil society, peace, and security under multicultural conditions. Some cases have led to confrontations in the name of sects and beliefs, religion, and places of worship, such as tension between Salafi, HTI, and Shiite groups, as well as multiple cases of burning houses of worship ([Junaedi, 2018](#)).

These cases are not only the responsibility of the government in resolving and finding solutions, but also the responsibility of all elements of the nation. All components of society, especially religious leaders, the community, and academics, educators, and other youth leaders must be able to act as facilitators and mediators in the event that problems emerge in the society.

Some studies of the societal accumulation of education theories, schools, theological issues, and religious comprehension, as well as intolerance, are as follows:

Community-Based Education; The Relationship of the State and Society in Education, by Toto Suharto, M. Ag., is the first study ([Suharto, 2016](#)). Some movements outside the mainstream of Indonesian Islam are referred to as transnational movements in this study, i.e. religious groups with international networks that bring a new religious understanding (ideology) from a foreign country (the Middle East) that is considered distinct from the local religious understanding that existed first. Some transnational Islamic religious groups or movements include al-Ikhwan al-Muslimûn (Tarbiyah Movement) from Egypt and Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) from Lebanon (Middle East).

The Islamic movement or religious group, which already existed, established its understanding through Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Indonesia ([Karim & Purnomo, 2020](#)) under one institution or foundation, universities or campuses, ta'lim assemblies, educational institutions, amil zakat institutions, infaq, and alms. Due to the fact that they brought with them a new theological worldview (ideology), they frequently produced friction with preexisting Islamic religious groups and cultural Muslims. Whether we are aware of it or not, the activists of that movement have successfully dominated the operations of a number of mosques, particularly in urban areas. However, in a number of locations, people's reactions to their existence erupted due to the many ways in which da'wah is understood.

The second is an investigation by Irwan Masduq ([Masduqi, 2013](#)). "The preceding analysis demonstrates that religious extremism poses a threat to the future of Islamic education and the nation's youth. For the preservation of variety in Indonesia, an Islamic education that teaches intolerance of differing viewpoints and beliefs is not desirable. The infiltration of radicalism into Islamic education necessitates a reorientation in a path consistent with the Islamic spirit, namely the teaching of mutual respect and brotherhood. Future education must be tolerant, inclusive, humanist, and multiculturalist, teaching compassion, courtesy, full respect for others, and harmony, in order to promote the fulfillment of national harmony.

Third, Research by Toto Suharto, titled, "The Concept of Muhammadiyah and NU Education as Representatives of Moderate Islamic Education in Indonesia ([Suharto, 2014](#)). This study examines the roles of Muhammadiyah and NU, the two major Islamic groups in Indonesia, which are frequently considered the mainstream of Indonesian Islam. Despite having differing Islamic beliefs, both of these Islamic groups share the same objective: to actualize moderate Islam in Indonesia through education. Consequently, their effort to construct moderate Islam is more focused on the theological-cultural level than on the political one.

Muhammadiyah has a multitude of educational institutions, with al-Islam and Muhammadiyah as its defining qualities. With the concept of "Muhammadiyah's educational objective identity," this subject is intended to serve as a tool for Muhammadiyah to help its students create a moderate Islamic identity. While NU has the NU Ma'arif Education Institute, which focuses on Aswaja and NU courses, Aswaja has the Aswaja Education Institute. Through the "SNP-Plus" idea, the NU Ma'arif Educational Institute is a NU instrument for cultivating the moderate Islam character of its pupils.

In addition, Toto Suharto noted that Muhammadiyah and NU envisioned launching a moderate Islamic education as a result of their theological and cultural disputes.

Nonetheless, it is essential to consider if these two groups are able to continue their efforts to promote a moderate Islam through the concept of moderate Islamic education.

In light of the fact that there are numerous radical ideologies within contemporary Indonesian Islam, and that each of these radical ideologies utilizes an educational institution as a vehicle for the development of its radical ideology, it is evident that Indonesian Islam has become increasingly radicalized. Therefore, moderate Islam and radical Islam are currently engaged in a form of ideological conflict inside the Islam of Indonesia. This tragic ideological conflict transpired in the realm of Islamic educational establishments. How this conflict transpired is outside the scope of this study.

Fourth, a 2007 research titled Educational ideology and the school curriculum by Robert Fiala ([Fiala, 2007](#)). Published by School knowledge in historical and comparative context. Springer, Dordrecht. In his study, Fiala asserted that it is essential to comprehend the major ideas of diversity, which do not contradict with any world religion. Nonetheless, the theoretical foundation remains difficult.

Since Muslim theologians view the values of multiculturalism as nonreligious and so reject them, it will be difficult to study this topic. A number of Arab scholars, like Mohammed Abed al-Jabiri, Hassan Hanafi, Nasr Hamid Abu-Said, and others, have recently taken steps to reconcile tradition and religion. However, conservative scholars responded strongly to these ideas.

The development of a synergy between multiculturalism and religion involves at least two elements ([Yuliani & Hartanto, 2017](#)). First, the temporary use of a reinterpretation of conventional religious principles as a justification to be exclusionary and progressive. The reinterpretation was carried out with the utmost care, so that not only was the religion responsive to the knowledge of local traditions, but it also supplied and paved the way for the preeminent position of embedded democracy in religious societies.

Second, to engage religion with contemporary concepts. Presently, religious groups are entering a new phase of history in which they must be able to adapt to nonreligious civilizations such as contemporary Western culture. Because it is impossible to avoid encountering secular notions and concepts. Thus, coming to terms with nonreligious concepts is the most difficult issue facing Muslims in the current era.

Dr. Abdulkarim Soroush, an Iranian thinker ([Rahmat, 2021](#)), said that religious people face two difficulties: local problems and universal problems, namely the dilemma of mankind as a whole. According to him, concerns like as peace, human rights, and women's rights have become global issues that must be addressed on a worldwide scale.

Religion will only be able to construct a creative synthesis of the diversity that has become the spirit of the times if it undergoes an internal metamorphosis and interacts with modern concepts. And this is a significant step forward in the realization of a peaceful and harmonious human culture. Isn't religion suffering a retrograde phase when it ceases to learn and converse with other civilizations? Now is the time to revive religious compounds with the varied surrounding realities.

3. Research Method

The research approach utilized in this study is qualitative description, which aims to explain the events that occurred by describing them chronologically and sequentially, as

well as examining the repercussions or consequences that result from these events. Parents are sending their children to religious-based schools, such as Fraters, Christian, and Catholic schools, Harapan Schools, Athirah Schools, Muhammadiyah Schools, and Islamic Schools, as well as schools labeled as belonging to other religions.

In this research approach, analysis is conducted by describing and employing the opinions of specialists as a corridor of points of view. Through a qualitative methodology, it is anticipated that this study will provide comprehensive information regarding the historical context of the emergence of religiously labeled school institutions, as well as the most recent phenomena or trends regarding the attitudes and motivations of parents who send their children to religion-based schools. The neighborhood surrounding the school and the parents or guardians of kids whose children were assigned to religiously branded schools comprised the study's sample participants or respondents.

The research instrument seeks to ascertain the community's understanding of the meaning of religiously labeled schools, as well as the religious values and community's perception of the schools, or the reasons why their children attend those schools, such as the quality of learning, its outputs and outcomes, as well as discipline and safety. Then, the data that will be noticed by the researcher are the data on planning, implementing, collecting, and analyzing the data that will be gathered up until the research's conclusion. The data gathering method utilized is an online reference and source criticism through recognized journal websites and offline, in the form of literature studies and debates in the form of a Group Discussion Forum with experts and stakeholders in the South Sulawesi region. In this research, it is also crucial to conduct in-depth and detailed interviews as research instruments in order to gather the necessary data required. This study drew its data from relevant references for researchers to examine, such as the historical context of the emergence of religiously labeled school institutions and the most recent phenomena or trends pertaining to the attitudes and motivations of parents in sending their children to religiously affiliated schools.

4. Results and Discussion

This research is anticipated to yield substantial contributions to the field of science, particularly for the advancement of education in Indonesia. Redesigning Education when it is being supported by the government demands, of course, serious consideration and actual action in the form of outputs, and a portion of this effort can improve the quality of Education in this nation. Obviously, the benefits of this study have an impact on both theoretical and practical aspects of application, namely:

4.1. The Contribution of Islamic Discourse

The policy orientation for undertaking educational research is a redefinition of education studies for a larger community ([Filho et al., 2018](#)). Given that education is one of the community's social components, it plays a significant part in the formation of the community's mentality. The growth and setbacks of the community depend on the quality of education and the learning process that was established at an early age, so that, in the future, the learning process would serve as a balancer or stabilizer for the religiously diverse community.

Pluralism, diversity, and multiculturalism are frequently used to define a pluralistic society in Indonesia, which consists of many religions, races, languages, and cultures ([Wasino, 2013](#)). Although it all allude to the existence of diversity and distinctions, it does not reflect the same thing. The concept of plurality requires the existence of "things that are more than one" (many), whereas diversity shows that the existence of "more than one" is distinct, heterogeneous, and even incomparable. Multiculturalism demonstrates that differences will always be in contact with and blended with one another.

In the twenty-first century, pluralism became a prerequisite for democracy. State coercion include, among other things, an ideology, a political party, a candidate for leadership, and a simple majority ([Escobar, 2017](#)). In comparison to the two preceding concepts, multiculturalism is very young. According to Bhikhu Parekh, multicultural movements initially developed in Canada and Australia in the 1970s, followed by the United States, Britain, Germany, and others.

Conceptually, is this multicultural notion appropriate for use in Indonesia, or should another concept be proposed that is in harmony with the personality and mentality of the Indonesian people? It is crucial to learn because the Indonesian population is extremely diverse, surpassing the multiculturalism in Europe.

Cak Nun's introduction of the concept of pluralism or plurality has been recognized in Indonesia since the 1990s ([Soekarba, 2018](#)). The concept of plurality has a greater reach than multiculturalism and is ideally suited for use in Indonesia. There are substantial variations between plurality, diversity, and multiculturalism as academic subjects. The essence of multiculturalism is the acceptance of different groups without regard to their cultural, ethnic, linguistic, or religious distinctions. Not only accepting differences, but also valuing them.

The phrase multiculturalism or plurality only denotes the existence of pluralism (which is more than one), and it affirms that despite their differences, they share the same public sphere. Plurality has essentially become a new policy response to diversity. In other words, it is not sufficient to just have diverse groups; what is most important is that the state treats them equally.

In this part, the concept of plurality greatly contributes to the democratization and anti-discrimination agenda. Pluralism and democracy have been linked by an emphasis on equality and nondiscrimination of minorities. Isn't the requirement to respect various groups or persons without discrimination the most significant aspect of the democratic value? Throughout history, democratization had been achieved via the struggle of numerous societal groups against the causes of social injustice.

Human beings are born free and with equal rights. In the public realm, there is no discrimination based on class, gender, race, or religious minority. Each individual must be recognized as a citizen with equal rights and responsibilities. As an alternative to the rejection of discrimination, multiculturalism provides cultural diversity a positive value. The willingness to give constructive appreciation to all forms of cultural heritage, including religion, is a further result ([Ridhwan et al., 2018](#)).

The findings of this study will contribute significantly to the advancement of education, culture, and civilization, as varied societies with religious and philosophical differences have shown mutual respect. The role of education and learning as the driving force is anticipated to produce a pluralistic understanding and a form of global tolerance that gives

comfort and security for all Indonesians, which is predicted. This mindset reduces the rationale and absolute to the truth that existed in the past.

This pluralism mentality has an implicit dimension in Islam with the declaration that Islam is the propagator of love for all nature (*rahmatan lil alamin*) and that all religions have taught this to their adherents. The proposition is implemented not only in a religious framework, but also in a sociocultural one. Islam, as exemplified by the Prophet's approach, likewise strongly cherishes the diversity of cultures and religions (Byrne & Devine, 2018).

Theoretically, the development of tolerance requires an internal consciousness that is inclusive and reveals itself in social behavior. Ritual fasting or other forms of worship, for instance, can perhaps encourage perpetrators to develop a universal conscience so they can have an egalitarian view of others (Watson, 2013). An awareness ties the emotional intelligence of a servant to his Lord and serves as the foundation for the development of intelligence-rational relationships between humans, despite their living apart. Allah swt stated in verse 13 Hujurat of the Qur'an an indication. Humans were created in a tribal and national state in order for them to know one another.

"O people, we did indeed create you from a man and a woman, and We gave you a nation and a tribe so that you might know one another. Allah's highest honor is bestowed upon the most devout among you. Allah is really All-Knowing, All-Knowing.

In this context, esotericism and exoteric awareness must grow as a manifestation of the process of internalizing the values of God and religion, so they can continue to view religion as a gift from God to his servants with all the differences, and to accept the differences as God's will (*sunnatullah*), which we must accept as a form of obedience to him.

4.2. The Intolerance Occur in the Learning Process to the Religious Label

Intolerance is a perception that develops from the monolithic teachings of religion, despite the fact that pluralistic education, a relatively recent phenomenon in the country, has been intensively debated by numerous forces, including academics, NGOs, and social groups. This demonstrates that in its evolution, the Indonesian nation, which possessed a variety of religions, cultures, races, and languages, no longer required a monocultural-exclusive and discriminatory education model (Short, 2003).

As a nation with a rich cultural heritage, Indonesia need peace, justice, equality, etc., which can be fostered through education. However, it should be highlighted that recent events have fallen far short of the values of social justice, harmony, security, peace, and brotherhood that humanity holds dear.

In the form of bigotry and violence in the name of religion, pluralistic education can be used to the major problems facing our country (radicalism and terrorism). This movement and development is a result of the pan of Islamism that arose in the late 1980s, which was subsequently followed by the Arab Spring and the formation of revolt factions from the Middle East to the Asian Continent. beginning with politics, the economy, culture, and education

A crucial issue that must be asked is how the proposed solution will minimize the concerns. Using a social anthropology perspective, Achmad Fedyani Saifuddin asserts that anarchic acts committed in the name of religion by a group or certain individuals against others are in direct opposition to the fair and civilized human values that are one of the five

fundamental pillars of the Indonesian state (Pancasila). Anarchism exists not only in its physical form, but also in its abstract form, such as thought and idea, negative body language, which implies harassment, humiliation, and counting in the education sector (discrimination), or racism.

In addition to being against the Pancasila, it is also against religious and cultural diversity. In-depth examination of Islamic doctrine reveals that it is extremely tolerant and values variety as a reality (natural law). In this instance, the notion of pluralism serves as the cultural basis of Islamic beliefs. To carry out its humanitarian goal, Islam employs an instrument that places education at the forefront, because only education directly relates to humanity (Jackson, 2003). Education becomes the fundamental criterion for the growth of a rich and progressive plural society (civilized society) or civilization people.

5. Conclusion

This study suggests that diversity in society is unquestionably a widespread occurrence, with its origins in ethnic and cultural distinctions. As for religiously labeled schools and educational institutions, many are administered by religious and puritanical community groups with the goal of preserving their practice ideology and the hue of their religiosity. As the conclusion of this study about religiously branded schools, religious schools, whether Islamic, Catholic, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and others, were founded with the intention of serving as a forum for the formation and advancement of culture and human education. The hallmark of a school designated as religious, however, is the creation of a shared living environment suffused with the spirit of their scriptures and the ideology in which they believe, a concern for freedom and love, and a worldly purpose. Religion-designated schools were founded in an effort to materialize the form of ideology or claim of cultural and religious morals that they represent. The notion that religion has the authority to build and regulate all types and levels of schools. In addition, it was discovered that schools labelled as religious are currently losing their pattern, from the pattern to maintain and shape religious and cultural morality, and have turned to business ventures for profit, so that the color of religion in schools tends to experience a hazy and dismal point.

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