



## Boundary Works as a Mechanism For Forming Collective Identity in The Indonesian Middle Class Muslim Social Piety Movement

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**ABSTRACT:** Indonesia's title as the most generous country in the world is supported by the strengthening spirit of social piety movements among the Muslim middle class. Social piety movements are of course also supported by the power of the social movement's collective identity in forming the basis that provides the "structure," foundation for engagement, and guidance for individual participation in its expansion. Unfortunately, the strong link between the development of collective identity in social movement groups has not been explained by previous studies. The aim of this research is to describe how the boundary work mechanism contributes to the development of collective identity in the Muslim middle class social piety movement in the Tengan di Atas (TDA) community. Using qualitative descriptive research, the research was conducted over a period of one year (December 2022-December 2023) and describes the actors and boundary work mechanisms in forming collective identity. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with several subjects who were administrators as well as members of the TDA community to explore variations in their experiences related to the social piety movement they engage in. Meanwhile, with a phenomenological approach, researchers explore the role of individual knowledge, thoughts and feelings or internal aspects or individual subjectivity. The results of this research show that there are several aspects that can be used to view boundary works as a mechanism for forming the collective identity of social piety movements in the TDA community; shared values and principles, joint activities, mutual recognition and appreciation, and establishing relationships with external parties.

**Keywords:** Social Movements, Social Piety, Boundary Work, Collective Identity, Muslim Middle Class



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## INTRODUCTION

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) charity survey in the 2018 and 2021 World Giving Index report has named Indonesia as the most generous country in the world ([Charities Aid Foundation](https://www.cafonline.org/),

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[2021](#)). This award means that Indonesian people are very generous and caring. With its unique Indonesian spirit of mutual cooperation, supported by a spirit of solidarity, in various forms and terms that thrive in almost all regions in Indonesia, this is clearly something to be proud of. Social piety activities in Indonesia in the last five years have grown rapidly and found momentum when successive economic crises and natural disasters hit this country ([Kasdi, 2019](#); [Muslikhah & Kurniawan, 2023](#)), plus, currently the world is facing the Covid-19 pandemic disaster. Crisis situations do not seem to prevent people from giving charity and caring about the suffering of others. This condition has actually increased public sensitivity and concern ([Rassanjani & Dahlawi, 2022](#)). In fact, in the context of overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic, Indonesian society is classified as a strong civil society ([Hidayah & Bastomi, 2020](#)).

A strong civil society is a situation where citizens are active and have the capacity to organize and mobilize themselves in the struggle to defend their interests ([Puspa & Astanujati, 2021](#)). In this case, Indonesian civil society is mobilizing itself in the interest of surviving in the midst of the pandemic, both in terms of health and the economy, as well as helping each other ([Nurhabibi et al., 2022](#)). While the government was still thinking about social assistance policies for those affected by this pandemic, Indonesian civil society had already moved to raise and distribute social assistance ([Kartika, 2021](#)).

Several factors that influence this development include: *first*, public awareness of contributing to helping others is increasing, especially in the midst of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Many people are willing to help and donate to help those affected by the pandemic ([Mellyan & Inayatillah, 2021](#)). *Second*, the government also provides support and facilities for social institutions engaged in social piety activities. The government also encourages people to be actively involved in social activities aimed at improving community welfare ([Kurniawan, 2022](#)). *Third*, the existence of trusted social institutions such as BAZNAS, LAZIZMU, or the Dompot Dhuafa Foundation and several other institutions that are active in social piety activities, makes people more confident in donating and helping others ([Maftuhin, 2022](#)). *Fourth*, increasingly developing technology makes social piety activities easier and faster to carry out. The existence of applications or digital platforms such as kitabisa.com, beamal.id, and the like, makes it easier for people to donate and get involved in social activities ([Warapsari, 2020](#)). *Fifth*, the existence of social movements on social media such as #dirumahaja and #banggabuatanindonesia also influences the development of the social piety movement in Indonesia. These movements can motivate people to get involved in social activities that benefit the wider community ([Saputra et al., 2020](#)).

This phenomenon certainly reflects a new social movement in philanthropic activities in Indonesia, or in this context what is known as the social piety movement. This movement refers to the collective efforts of individuals or groups to promote and increase social piety in society ([Muna, 2020](#)). This movement aims to create a better social environment by involving attitudes and actions that are responsible, ethical and caring for each other. Social piety is an important concept to be implemented in everyday life in order to create a more harmonious, just and prosperous society ([Silastia et al., 2023](#)).

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The social piety movement in Indonesia is now enlivened by many groups that also cut across social layers of society, including the Muslim middle class who also dominate this movement in Indonesia. The contribution of the Muslim middle class in social piety activities is carried out in various ways, including giving donations and contributions, participating in self-development and skills programs to help underprivileged people become independent and have life skills, volunteering in social institutions, and building a business that they run. with social goals, namely helping underprivileged people or overcoming certain social problems. The Muslim middle class group in Indonesia can build a social business by utilizing the skills and resources they have ([Aeni & Nuriyanto, 2020](#)).

In this context, middle-class Muslim piety can be understood as an attempt to adapt religious practices to the social and cultural changes occurring in society, while maintaining fundamental Islamic values and principles. The Muslim middle class group often shows an active role in the development of religious practices that are more inclusive, more moderate, and more adaptive to the developing social and cultural context ([Aeni & Nuriyanto, 2020](#)). However, on the other hand, middle class Muslim piety may also be faced with challenges such as materialism and individualism which may undermine more traditional religious practices and may affect the pious values existing in Muslim society as a whole ([Mardani, 2022](#)). Therefore, the piety of the Muslim middle class needs to be understood as a dynamic process that is constantly changing in accordance with social and cultural changes, and must be maintained so that it is not eroded by values that are not in accordance with fundamental religious principles.

The piety of the Muslim middle class and the dynamics of their way of religion are interesting discussions to study. The religious spirit of the Muslim middle class seems to be increasing, the desire to be pious, improve oneself, diligently worship and understand religion, is considered an extraordinary thing and is actually considered cool ([Faisal, 2017](#)). The religiosity of the Muslim middle class can make a major contribution to social development and religious development in society ([Pribadi & Ghufro, 2019](#)). They can be agents of change who bring positive changes in society, while still maintaining basic religious values. Therefore, it is important to continue to strengthen the spirituality or religiosity of the Muslim middle class and provide the support needed so that it can continue to grow and develop.

Meanwhile, the strength of collective identity within a social movement forms the basis that provides the "structure," the foundation for engagement, and the guide for individual participation in its expansion. Additionally, it encourages a range of essential, secondary, and peripheral behaviors, in which individuals do not necessarily assert their identity but demonstrate behavior that reflects greater commitment ([Haenfler, 2004](#)). Other research explains the process of collective identity formation as influenced by empathy, shared emotional responses, and emotional experiences of authority. Additionally, the contribution of repressive experiences and feelings of powerlessness to collective identity results in violations of emotional norms and shared feelings that strengthen the sense of "we" ([Gravante & Poma, 2016](#)).

Several previous studies still separate discussions about social movements and the role of collective identity. Unfortunately, the strong link between the development of collective identity in social

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movement groups has not been explained by many of these studies. However, a deeper understanding of this relationship is important and needs to be explored to fill this knowledge gap. The success of collective identity plays a role in encouraging active community participation in social piety movements. ([Melucci, 1988](#)) states that in the context of the concept of collective identity, identity can be defined interactively and shared, produced through contributions from various individuals (or groups at a more complex level). In addition, he explained that collective identity is a process of constructing an action system related to the direction of action, scope of opportunities, and obstacles that influence taking action. Collective identity, according to Melluci, is a process that involves dynamic interactions.

Collective identity includes cognitive, emotional, moral and socio-cultural aspects in planning, driving, implementing and evaluating individual participation and collective action ([Hunt & Benford, 2004](#)). The contribution of collective identity is manifested in a) cognitive formation regarding results, tools, and scope of action, and b) activating relationships between actors involved in interaction, communication, mutual influence, negotiation, and decision making, by involving emotional investments that encourage individuals to identify themselves ([Melucci, 1988](#)). Collective identity formation involves construction and negotiation involving the iterative activity of individual relationships within the movement ([Melucci, 1988, 1995](#)). The mechanisms involved in forming collective identities involve framing, creating boundary works, and changing everyday symbolic meanings. This identity is the subject of research because of its significant role in collective solidarity and cohesion, which is an important contributor to sustainable social movements. Collective identity is also considered an incentive for participation, and as a source of mobilization ([Susilo, 2022](#)).

The Muslim middle class who are the subjects of this research are those who are actively involved in the social piety movement in the Tangan di Atas (TDA) community. The aim of this research is to describe how the boundary work mechanism contributes to the development of collective identity in the Muslim middle class social piety movement in the Upper Hand community. The benefit of the research is that it describes the dynamics of the process of forming collective identity through boundary work mechanisms in group participation which can then find a model for community-based social piety movements.

## METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study with a phenomenological approach, which focuses on the general meaning of a number of individuals regarding life experiences related to a concept or phenomenon ([Creswell, 2017](#)). Phenomenology explores the role of an individual's knowledge, thoughts, and feelings, as well as their internal aspects or subjectivity. Descriptive phenomenological research is used by researchers to describe how each actor gives meaning to their experiences ([Afandi, 2007; Gahril, 2010; Main, 2018](#)). In conclusion, this phenomenological research focuses on studying the meaning experienced and lived between actors, as well as describing and interpreting the way these meanings emerge and are shaped by consciousness,

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language, cognitive and non-cognitive sensitivities, as well as actors' initial understanding (Given, 2008). The collective identity development model is structured by (a) describing the emergence, development, and fluctuation of collective identity, and (b) evaluating the role of collective identity in the TDA community.

This research was conducted over a year from December 2022-December 2023 using data collection methods through interviews and observations. The interview approach used was participatory, where the researcher was involved in various activities and programs carried out by the TDA community. Researchers used an interview guide. Researchers obtain data related to the personal background of actors and how they identify themselves as a community through this interview technique.

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with several subjects who were administrators as well as members of the TDA community to explore variations in their experiences related to the social piety movement they engage in. Those who are the subjects in this research are:

**Table 1.** Research subjects

No	Name	Age	Position
1	Barra	39 years old	TDA senior president
2	Bafaqih	39 years old	TDA senior president
3	Firman	41 years old	Regional coordinator
4	Juarsa	37 years old	Regional coordinator
5	Kinantan	38 years old	Regional coordinator
6	Masyitah	45 years old	head of Division

In this regard, several important aspects to note are:

- The researcher used open-ended questions that allowed the subjects to freely express their experiences while avoiding guiding or influencing their responses.
- In the selection of interview locations and times, the researcher also ensured that the interview environment was comfortable and secure. This can help the subjects feel more open in sharing their experiences.
- To ensure that the questions posed by the researcher are focused on the research objectives, a structured interview guide was employed, although interview questions could evolve over time based on the subjects' response. In this regard, the researcher would elaborate on questions further or explore specific aspects of their experiences.
- To aid in a thorough data analysis, the researcher recorded interviews with participants' permission and then transcribed the interview data carefully.

Meanwhile, observations were made before and during the research field. The objects observed by researchers are:

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- a. Pesta Wirausaha program. In this activity the author observed the program content initiated by movement actors. Apart from that, observations were made on the activities of the actors and participants involved in the event.
- b. Business mentoring class. This activity is a superior program initiated by actors to strengthen their understanding and quality of the movements they perform. Discussions and reflections are carried out by the management in activities with a relaxed atmosphere, such as drinking coffee and chili discussions.

Meanwhile, the author obtained secondary data from the following sources, such as :

- a. Chat results in WA group. Researchers got this data from the community WhatsApp group. Researchers analyzed the results of the conversations and discussions that took place.
- b. Photos of activities and documentation of community activities published on the community's social media accounts.

The research subjects are actors who are active administrators and active members who are directly involved in every TDA community activity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Boundary works is a concept in the theory of collective identity formation according to Alberto Melucci ([Melucci, 1988, 1995](#)). This concept refers to the way in which social groups or communities define and maintain boundaries or boundaries that differentiate them from other groups or communities. This involves the process of understanding oneself and understanding other groups in the context of collective identity. In the context of the social piety movement carried out by the TDA community, there are several aspects that can be used to see boundary works as a mechanism for forming collective identity in this community; shared values and principles, joint activities, mutual recognition and appreciation, and relationships with external parties.

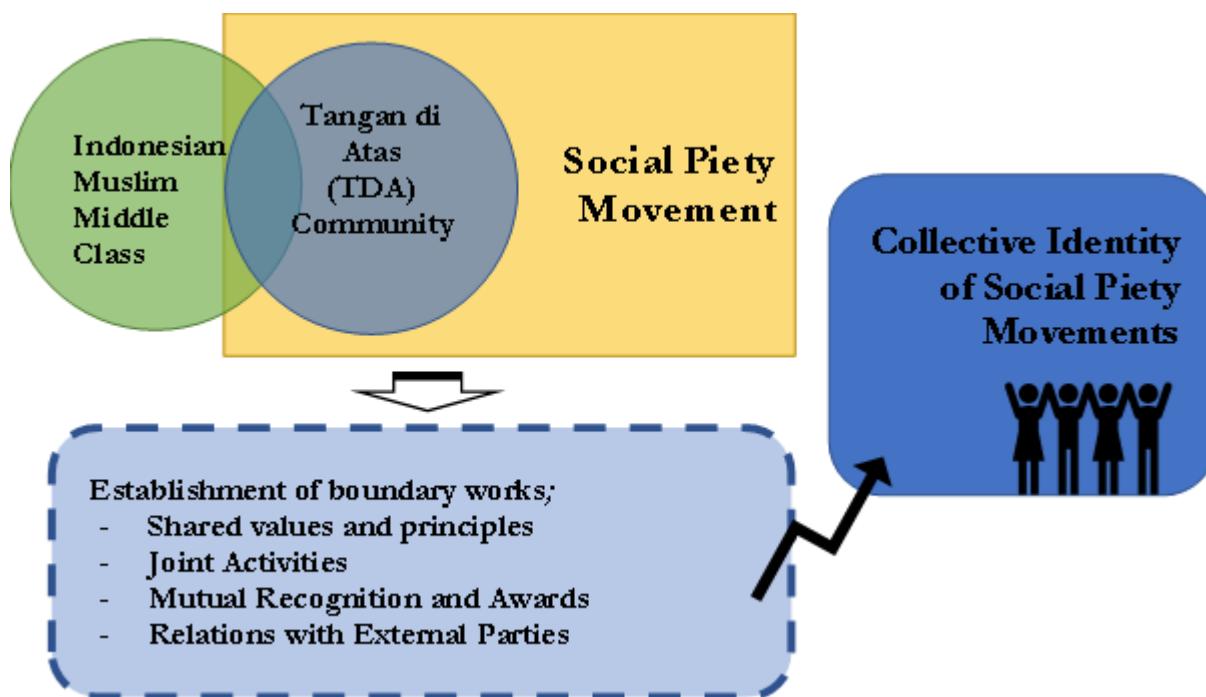


Figure 1. Research conceptual framework

### Shared values and principles

This aspect includes shared values, principles, or beliefs that form the basis of collective identity within the TDA community. Values such as friendship, integrity, open-mindedness, action orientation, and balance in life are considered shared values that define and differentiate them from other groups.

Regarding the importance of implementing these values, Barra (39 years old, as TDA senior president) explained;

*“At TDA we learn so that our presence can provide positive value to the environment around us. These values are maintaining relationships, integrity, open thinking, action orientation, and balance in life”*

(Interview data, 07/08/2023)

Juarsa (37 years old, as regional coordinator) added;

*“To be able to empower each other, we must unite with the main strength, namely the TDA values, namely friendship, integrity, open-mindedness, action orientation, and balance in life, which are extraordinary strengths for us in empowering”*

(Interview data, 07/08/2023)

This reflects how shared values are perceived as a boundary that differentiates them from other groups, which points to the depiction of these values as core elements of TDA identity. It can also be seen how the process of internalizing these values is a strength in realizing the empowerment narrative. TDA members are expected to adopt and apply these values in their actions.

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In order to form a collective identity, TDA seems to focus on affirming and defining the shared values that form the basis of their identity, as well as emphasizing unity in implementing these values in the context of empowerment. This is an example of how the concept of boundary work operates in forming collective identities in social movements.

In TDA communities, the process of collective identity formation involves clarifying and affirming the values that are at the core of their identity. TDA uses this principle to filter members and build a strong collective identity. Masyitah (45 years old) revealed that TDA carries out natural selection of its members, where members who adhere to the values upheld by this community will feel comfortable and have a strong role in the process of forming a collective identity. This reflects how these values are perceived as boundaries that differentiate TDA members from others. People who align with these values will feel accepted and play an active role in strengthening their collective identity.

In the course of implementing TDA's vision and mission, there are natural dynamics. However, according to Barra (39 years old), the most important thing is how TDA administrators can instill key values in the members who join this community. TDA follows strong egalitarian principles, and each administrator plays a major role in maintaining and strengthening these values.

In practice, each administrator highlights the importance of upholding equality as a core value that must be maintained in the TDA community. This principle of equality not only appears as a demand, but is also implemented practically in the structure and attitudes of the founders of the community. This reflects the way in which boundary work operates, with upholding egalitarian principles as part of the community's collective identity. These egalitarian principles are not just slogans, but are translated into action and become important elements in a strong identity within the community.

Apart from the basic values adhered to in the TDA community, the next important thing to look at is balancing these values with religious values. Masyitah (45 years, as head of division) explained;

*“At TDA, religious values are maintained, and this is also the reason I am interested in joining and being active at TDA, because I can learn about religious understanding here. The environment supports that. God willing, we will gain knowledge of the world and the afterlife. So the rewards of almsgiving which is a philosophical value in TDA are truly felt, what we give to the TDA movement comes back many times in unexpected ways. I gained a lot of business knowledge, and with that I can grow and share it with those closest to me, family and friends”*

(Interview data, 06/07/2023)

Kinantan (38 years, as regional coordinator) also said the same thing;

*“So this is actually what it is, if you pay attention, the values that are brought are strong, namely Islamic values. only at the level of conveying and preaching TDA in a simple way, that's what ultimately felt like we, especially the members, didn't feel like we were being patronized like that, unlike some communities that mention Islam directly, it's like creating exclusivity”*

(Interview data, 31/05/2023)



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In TDA, religious values, especially Islam, are maintained and become an integral part of the community's collective identity. The uniqueness of TDA lies in its approach in conveying religious values which is simple and implementable in the context of its members' lives so that they are easy to understand. This allows members to understand and absorb religious values without feeling patronized or burdened. In this case, it helps to create clear boundaries between TDA and other communities that may take a more complicated or exclusive approach to conveying religious values. As a result, TDA was able to maintain religious values as a key element in its collective identity without creating an impression of exclusivity or alienation.

Furthermore, it can also be seen how the concept of alms is a philosophical value emphasized in TDA. Almsgiving is a way to build a collective identity that focuses on providing benefits to others. Through almsgiving, TDA members feel that what they give to the TDA movement comes back to them in the form of knowledge, personal growth, and blessings that flow to their family and friends. This creates a collective identity centered on religious values and empowerment, as well as creating clear boundaries between TDA and other communities.

The social piety movement of the TDA community shows that values such as friendship, integrity, open-mindedness, action orientation, and balance in life are the foundation of collective identity. The process of internalizing these values strengthens the empowerment narrative at TDA. In forming a collective identity, TDA focuses on affirming and defining shared values, emphasizing unity in the application of these values. Boundary work appears to work by explaining and strengthening core values, as well as carrying out natural selection of members to build a strong collective identity.

The importance of equality (egalitarianism) is upheld in TDA, not only as a slogan but is manifested in the actions of the management and members. Apart from basic values, religious values, especially Islam, are also maintained and integrated into collective identity, with a simple and implementable approach. The concept of alms becomes a prominent philosophical value, creating a collective identity focused on empowerment and providing benefits to others. Shared recognition and appreciation motivate members to contribute actively, creating a collective identity based on mutual recognition, support, and mutual growth. Simplicity and egalitarian values are the driving force for togetherness and a strong collective identity within the TDA.

### Joint Activities

This aspect includes activities, projects or initiatives that they carry out together as a community. How they collaborate and work together in this context is an important element of collective identity formation. Barra (39 years old, as TDA senior president) explained;

*“At TDA I felt a business ecosystem that was in synergy with each other, a forum, or a house that had a vision and mission to be able to produce strong and successful entrepreneurs so that they could contribute to human civilization.”*

(Interview data, 07/08/2023)

In the TDA community, it can be seen that there is a business ecosystem that is in synergy with each other. TDA members feel that they are in a place or "home" that has a clear vision and

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mission, namely producing strong and successful entrepreneurs. This ecosystem creates a clear boundary between the TDA and the external environment. It is the identity that differentiates, and these boundaries keep TDA members focused on shared goals.

This ecosystem also creates a sense of solidarity among members. They feel that they are part of something bigger, something that has a contribution to human civilization. This gives them a strong sense of belonging and purpose in their community. Members feel motivated to contribute to achieving these goals, and clear boundaries between the TDA and the outside environment help maintain focus and solidarity within the community. This is one important aspect in forming a strong collective identity in a social movement like TDA.

Bafaqih (39 years old, as TDA senior president) added;

*“Because at TDA we don't just provide material things, but we also provide what we can to help you so that your business can improve or maybe your skills or other things can increase, which in the end, when I was helped, those who helped me were selfless and I was the opposite. helping so that others can also grow and improve together, and it goes round and round”*

(Interview data, 07/07/2023)

At TDA, the concept of boundary work manifests itself in the form of deeper and more sustainable involvement. TDA members understand that their contribution is not only in material terms, but also in the form of improving skills, assistance in business development, and support provided to fellow members. This creates an environment based on the principle of community, where members feel that they are helping each other to grow and succeed.

This boundary work process involves a sincere, selfless attitude in helping others. TDA members feel that they are part of a collective identity that has a common goal, namely making a positive and empowering contribution to Indonesia. The concepts of collaboration and empowerment take center stage, and members share their knowledge and experiences actively. This creates a perpetual cycle of mutual aid and support.

In this case, boundary work helps create boundaries that separate TDA from purely materialistic goals. They emphasize the importance of making positive and empowering contributions to society. This is an important aspect in forming a collective identity based on the principles of sharing, collaboration and support among members in the TDA community.

In this way, boundary work in TDA helps form a strong collective identity based on the principles of collaboration, empowerment and positive contribution to society. This creates a sense of togetherness and common goals among TDA members, which differentiates and strengthens the collective identity in their social movement. The TDA community illustrates that joint activities, projects and community initiatives are key elements in the formation of collective identity. There is a synergistic business ecosystem in TDA, creating clear boundaries between the community and the external environment. This identity maintains members' focus on shared goals, creates a sense of solidarity, and provides a sense of ownership of contributions to human civilization.

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The importance of deep and sustained involvement is seen in 'TDA members' contributions which are not only material in nature, but also involve skills enhancement, business development support, and selfless assistance to fellow members. The boundary work process encourages a cycle of mutual help and support, creating a togetherness-based environment at TDA. Additionally, boundary work helps separate TDA from purely materialistic goals, emphasizing the importance of positive and empowering contributions to society. Collective identity in TDA is based on the principles of sharing, collaboration and support between members. Thus, boundary work becomes a crucial mechanism in forming a strong collective identity within social movements, providing a foundation for togetherness and shared goals that transcend personal interests.

### Mutual Recognition and Rewards

This aspect includes the way the TDA community provides recognition and rewards to members who contribute significantly to achieving their collective identity goals. Kinantan (38 years old, as regional coordinator) explained how TDA provides appreciation and recognition for the development of each of its members;

*“We, the administrators, are the servants who spread out the mats, who make it easier for anyone to sit, and for anyone we can give them a stage. That's why friends who, for example, are good at finance, HR and so on, we give them a stage to share knowledge. So it has a direct effect on increasing the capacity and abilities of TDA members. So for members who are still laymen, they feel happy”*

(Interview data, 31/05/2023)

Firman (41 years, as regional coordinator) added;

*“TDA has the same goal, namely wanting to grow its business with the help of a TDA member mentor as well. So, the person who becomes a mentor is a businessman who has already experienced the acid and salt of the business world and the way the mentor handles it is what is taught to his mentees”*

(Interview data, 07/06/2023)

In the TDA community, administrators fulfill a role similar to a servant who is a facilitator for all members. They open opportunities for anyone who wants to participate and contribute. This creates a platform for members with specialized skills, such as finance or human resource management, to share their knowledge and experience. Providing opportunities for members with these special skills to share knowledge positively influences the development and abilities of other members, especially those who are still beginners.

This concept of mutual recognition and appreciation creates an atmosphere where members feel recognized and appreciated for their contributions. They feel that their knowledge and experience is valued by other members, which in turn strengthens the sense of community and support among members. So, for members who are still beginners or feel new to business, they feel happy and motivated to be actively involved in various activities. In addition, TDA members who already have experience in business play the role of mentors. They share strategies and knowledge they have gained from their personal experiences. Providing mentoring to other members enriches the learning environment and helps TDA members achieve their common goal of expanding their business.

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Shared recognition and appreciation within the TDA community is a way to motivate members to actively participate, support each other, and contribute to achieving common goals. This creates a sense of collective identity based on mutual recognition, support and mutual growth. Interestingly, those who were given the platform to become mentors actually felt that being a mentor was not about personal excellence or superiority, but rather about the spirit of learning together and collective contribution. No matter how much experience and knowledge a mentor has, the spirit of being a mentor is a means to continue learning. This is reflected in the approach taken by the mentors at TDA.

Mentors at TDA do not see themselves as superior or smarter individuals than their mentees. On the other hand, being a mentor is a means for free learning. They view each mentoring session as an opportunity to deepen the business case discussed, understand new perspectives, and find solutions together. This shows that recognition and appreciation in the TDA community does not only go one way (from mentor to mentee), but also goes the other way around.

TDA successfully creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and support where each individual's contribution is valued, and the exchange of knowledge and experience provides the basis for mutual growth. In this case, the mentors feel greater benefits from this mentoring relationship, not only the mentees who benefit. The principle is that those who provide assistance also need help from other members of the community. This creates a positive cycle where all members feel recognized, valued, and contributing to achieving common goals.

Shared recognition and appreciation become a driving force for the formation of a collective identity within the TDA community, where each individual feels as part of a whole who has a valuable contribution. This strengthens the sense of togetherness and enthusiasm to grow and empower together.

Another interesting thing that must also be underlined is the sense of camaraderie that grows from the egalitarian spirit in TDA's organizational culture. Kinantan (38 years old, as regional coordinator) explained again;

*“Even though in other communities the unity is also good, right, it's only in TDA that what's interesting is that we don't find it in other places because of the egalitarian values that we hold, we are all equal, so in other places there might still be a cult of the chairman, the chairman. That's a high level, whereas in TDA our president says things are okay. The president goes to Medan at his own expense so there is no exclusivity, everything is his own hote”*

(Interview data, 31/05/2023)

Within TDA, egalitarian values are the basis that differentiates it from many other communities. Egalitarianism is a core value embraced by all members, implying that every individual is considered equal in the community. This creates an atmosphere where there is no overt hierarchy or exclusivity that results in inequality.

Kinantan also explained that community members feel comfortable and well connected at TDA because there is no complicated bureaucracy. Communication with leaders, including the president, becomes very easy and friendly. The President of the TDA is not a figure who has been

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elevated to a high level that distances him from other members. On the other hand, the president is a figure who approaches members with a simple attitude.

Mutual recognition and appreciation in TDA is also reflected in an attitude of togetherness. TDA members feel that they are getting something unique, that they don't always find elsewhere. They appreciate the freedom and simplicity in this community, where interacting with a leader or president is something that is easily accessible, without the need to go through complicated processes. This strengthens a collective identity within the TDA community, where members feel treated fairly, recognized, and have equal access in their interactions and contributions. Egalitarianism and simplicity are the driving force for a strong sense of togetherness and collective identity in an effort to achieve common goals in this community. Simplicity and egalitarian values are important elements in the concept of boundary work which forms a collective identity in TDA.

In the social piety movement of the TDA community, recognition and rewards are given to members who contribute significantly, both through the role of administrators who facilitate knowledge exchange and through mentorship which enriches members' experiences. Providing a platform for sharing knowledge by members with special expertise creates an atmosphere where every contribution is recognized and appreciated. The mentoring process also proves that recognition and appreciation are not just one way, but flow mutually between mentor and mentee. This creates a positive cycle in which all members feel they have a valuable role in achieving shared goals.

The egalitarianism and simplicity in TDA become a strong foundation for collective identity. Members feel comfortable and connected because there is no overt hierarchy, and the TDA president approaches members in a low-key manner. This egalitarianism creates a stronger sense of community and involvement among members. Thus, recognition, mutual respect, and egalitarian values are the driving force for the formation of a strong collective identity in TDA. The concept of boundary work has emerged as a vital mechanism that helps maintain a sense of community, values individual contributions, and creates an inclusive environment for mutual growth. This collective identity is not only about individual success but also about the spirit of shared learning and collective contribution towards the shared goals of the community.

### Relations with External Parties

This aspect includes the way the TDA community interacts with external groups and how they view themselves in these relationships. This includes relationships with governments, businesses, other organizations, or the general public. Kinantan (38 years, as regional coordinator) explained;

*“TDA has the value of Open Mind, open thinking, as one of the values adhered to in its movement. Actually, we are open, so if there is something that is in line with TDA's vision and mission of bringing in strong entrepreneurs, then if the government can help, that's fine. We also collaborate with the City Government, we collaborate with HIPMI, and other communities. In fact, President Oke Oke was the first TDA president. That's why when Sandi was called to do an event at TDA, he came. TDA This is his brother, “this is my brother” he said. Yesterday we held an Entrepreneurial Party, Sandi provided half an hour to be online with us”*

(Interview data, 31/05/2023)

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TDA has the value "Open Mind" or open thinking as one of the values that is firmly held in this community movement. This reflects a positive attitude towards relationships with external parties. The TDA community is very open to cooperation and collaboration with various parties who are in line with their vision and mission to create strong entrepreneurs.

The TDA community has close relationships with external parties, including the local government, the Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association (HIPMI), and other communities. This relationship is built through mutually beneficial cooperation to achieve common goals. They do not close themselves off to help or support that can be provided by external parties. In fact, the involvement of figures such as President Oke Oce in the TDA community shows the high level of openness and close relations between the community and external parties. Oke Oce itself is actually a program initiated by the first TDA president, Iim Rusyamsi, which was later adopted as a program for the DKI Jakarta government.

The Entrepreneurial Party event which was attended by figures such as Sandiaga Uno is a concrete example of how relationships with external parties are highly valued. The commitment of these figures in supporting TDA community events, even when they sacrifice their time, illustrates that this community has strong relationships with external parties.

Another form of external partnership carried out by the TDA community can also be seen in the "Rise Together with TDA" movement. This movement is TDA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this crisis situation, TDA implemented collaborative initiatives that were very important in shaping their collective identity. They realize that the challenges they face cannot be overcome alone, so TDA chooses to work together with the government and society.

In the context of boundary work, positive and open relationships with external parties can strengthen the collective identity of the TDA community. This allows communities to utilize external resources and support to achieve shared goals, as well as form an identity that is inclusive and connected to their external environment.

To strengthen relationships with external parties. The TDA community also places several of its members in strategic positions in government. Staff at the Deputy for Human Resources Development at the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, Dr. Wisnu Sakti Dewobroto is a member of the TDA community, and even served as general secretary of TDA. When working in the ministry, the values and principles of TDA remain the same. This indicates that TDA's collective identity is not limited to activities within the community, but is also carried over to the government sector. This also shows how relationships with external parties, in this case, the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, can be an important factor in maintaining and strengthening TDA values in various sectors. The partnership between TDA and the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs is a concrete example of how this community has close relationships with external parties and can act as a strategic partner in various events and projects in Medan.

Relations with external parties also occur in several of TDA's flagship programs, such as the Entrepreneurial Festival event, for example. Juarsa (37 years, as regional coordinator)) explained:

*"At the entrepreneurship party, apart from implementing the principle of friendship, we actually gathered together senior TDA entrepreneurs who have been involved in the business world for a long time while*

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*they shared their business tips. While we are also connecting stakeholders, the government, then campuses, then academics, there are other entrepreneur associations, other communities to join in an event called the Entrepreneurial Party”*

(Interview data, 07/08/2023)

Apart from being a gathering event and sharing business knowledge, the Entrepreneurial Festival is also a forum where these stakeholders can join. This is one concrete form of how relationships with external parties are an integral part of TDA's efforts to build a collective identity and strengthen their vision and mission in empowering local entrepreneurs.

In building relationships with external parties, TDA remains committed to the basic values they adhere to. They draw a firm line on those who conflict with the values and ideology of their community. In this case, Kinantan (38 years old, as regional coordinator) explained;

*“Sometimes we also have sponsors, but we choose those that are in line with the basic values that TDA adheres to. If the sponsor is cigarettes, we obviously reject it. Even for banks, we will try Sharia Banks first, then we will go to Bank Sumut. We chose Bank Sumut because it is a regional bank which we also have an interest in collaborating with the regional government, so this is a form of our support to the regional government”*

(Interview data, 31/05/2023)

In the context of relationships with external parties, TDA takes a careful approach in selecting sponsors for its various activities. They are very careful to choose sponsors that match their basic values. This reflects TDA's commitment to integrity and the moral principles they hold dear. An example mentioned was how TDA rejected sponsors associated with products deemed inconsistent with their values, such as cigarettes. Apart from that, the choice of sponsors such as Bank Syariah and Bank Sumut also reflects TDA's efforts to build stronger relationships with external parties who have compatible values. Choosing a Sharia Bank emphasizes financial principles that are in line with religious values, while collaboration with Bank Sumut reflects a strategic relationship with local government. In this context, it shows that TDA not only prioritizes financial aspects in cooperation with external parties, but also the values and moral principles they uphold. This is a clear example of how boundary work is used to maintain compatibility between the collective identity of TDA and its external partners.

Regarding external relations with certain political parties, TDA also states its position in institutional terms. Masyitah (45 years old, as head of division) explained;

*“so there is a disconnect between TDA and Politics. Because TDA has absolutely no interest in political parties, let alone getting programs and so on. If TDA had an interest, of course we would have been close to the ruling party like PDIP for a long time, but no, we don't have an interest there. Although personally speaking, each individual in the TDA, from central to regional administrators, can be said to have a political orientation towards PKS, but this is personal, not institutional”*

(Interview data, 07/06/2023)

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The relationship between TDA and politics is very interesting. TDA explicitly emphasized that they had no interest in political parties or in obtaining political programs. They show that the existence and individual political orientation of TDA members does not reflect the official or institutional orientation of the organization. TDA tries to maintain its neutrality in political matters and is not explicitly tied to any particular political party.

Although personally many TDA members have a political orientation that leans more towards a certain direction, such as PKS, this is due to the similarity of their ideology and views with that political party. However, it is important to emphasize that these are personal views and do not reflect the official orientation or policies of TDA as an organization. In other words, although the majority of members may personally hold views that align with PKS, TDA as an organization does not have strong political ties. Here, boundary work becomes important in separating personal political views from TDA's collective identity. In this context, TDA shows that their collective identity and goals focus more on empowerment, entrepreneurship, and the values they hold, rather than on political affairs. They try to maintain a balance between members' personal political orientation and the organization's neutrality and independence in the political context. In addition, there is a professional relationship between TDA and politics. The skills and abilities of personnel in TDA are often sought by political parties when they need work teams. This shows that the professionalism and competence of TDA members is valued and needed, regardless of their personal political orientation. This is an example of how relationships with external parties, in this case politics, can reflect boundary work that creates a strong collective identity in TDA.

The TDA community adheres to the value of "open mind" as a basis for establishing close relationships with various external parties such as government, business and other organizations. TDA's openness to cooperation and collaboration with external parties is in line with their vision and mission to create strong entrepreneurs. Close relationships with figures such as Sandiaga Uno and president Oke Oce reflect a significant level of involvement from external parties in community activities. In fact, their participation in events such as the Entrepreneurial Festival emphasizes the importance of these relationships in strengthening TDA's collective identity.

In building external relationships, TDA shows rigor in selecting partners that align with their values. Refusal of sponsors that do not conform to moral principles, such as cigarettes, signals their commitment to integrity. The choice of collaboration with Bank Syariah and Bank Sumut reflects the compatibility of values and efforts to build strategic relationships. In addition, the involvement of TDA members in strategic positions in government shows the positive impact of external relations. TDA's neutral attitude towards political parties, even though the majority of its members have a certain orientation, confirms that TDA's collective identity is not explicitly linked to politics. This reflects effective boundary work in separating personal political views from the collective identity of the organization.

Thus, relationships with external parties built through boundary work mechanisms play a crucial role in forming TDA's collective identity. This allows communities to utilize external resources and support to achieve shared goals, while maintaining their shared values and identity. TDA's collective identity which is formed through relationships with external parties reflects the success of the boundary work mechanism in creating a strong and inclusive network for mutual growth.



## CONCLUSION

Through boundary work, the mechanism of the collective identity formation process in the TDA context can be seen in several ways; *First*, building shared values and principles: TDA builds collective identity by defining and maintaining shared values such as friendship, integrity, open-mindedness, action orientation, and life balance. This creates boundaries that differentiate them from other groups. *Second*, carrying out joint activities: TDA members engage in joint activities, projects and initiatives that create a sense of solidarity and mutual support among them. This also creates boundaries that separate them from purely materialistic goals. *Third*, mutual recognition and appreciation: TDA provides recognition and rewards to members who contribute significantly, creating an atmosphere where each individual feels recognized and has a valuable contribution. This strengthens the sense of community and the spirit to grow together. *Fourth*, establishing relationships with external parties: TDA establishes positive and open relationships with external parties, including government, business, other organizations and the general public. This allows them to leverage external resources and support to achieve common goals and strengthen their collective identity. All of these elements refer to how TDA uses boundary work to create boundaries that differentiate them from other groups, strengthen their collective identity, and form unity in their efforts to achieve their common goals. These findings imply a reflection on Melucci's thoughts on boundary work as the second mechanism in the process of shaping collective identity within social movements.

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