

## Harmonization in A Multicultural Society in Padangpanjang City

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines "Harmonization in a multicultural society in Padangpanjang city". The purpose of this research is to see what values the community holds firmly in order to harmonize the harmonization. The writing method used by the presenter is a qualitative method. The theory of multiculturalism becomes a dissection of the problems used by the presenter. The findings of this study indicate that the harmonization of religious communities in the middle of the city of Padangpanjang is still maintained despite the pressure of the Islamic majority.

**Keywords :** *Harmonisation, Multicultural, Padangpanjang*

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### INTRODUCTION

Padangpanjang is a small city located in the center of West Sumatra Province. It is known as the city of education. Because many leading Islamic boarding schools known in Indonesia and other countries are located in this city. In addition, the city of Padangpanjang also has a nickname as "the city of Serambi Mekkah", where indeed in this city the majority of the population embraces Islam. This dominance factor is due to the history of the city of Padangpanjang which in the past was the center of the spread of Islam. However, this does not forget that there are also different communities of other religious beliefs in this city.

Padangpanjang is a city of diversity. "At the social level, this diversity is in the form of ethnicity, culture, religion, language and race. Pluralism means how these differences in diversity can coexist harmoniously while maintaining the uniqueness of each" (Endrizal, 2023). Or in other words, the people of Padangpanjang city are a multicultural society. Which means that humans coexist with mutual needs and interactions based on the differences in their society.

Multicultural society can be defined as a group of people who live and settle in a place that has its own characteristics and culture, so as to be able to distinguish between one community and another. This means that in a multicultural society there are various cultures that live together and coexist and interact with each other in a society.

There needs to be mutual respect, tolerance and mutual adjustment in order to continue to create harmonization between cultural elements in multicultural society in the city of Padangpanjang. Harmonization means harmony or efforts to find harmony, or cooperation between various factors that look the same so that these factors produce a noble unity (Sofi'I, in Tiara 2022).

Interacting with others by understanding and accepting all differences will create harmony between groups in society. Adhering to the values, norms and personality of the nation can make people's lives will remain harmonious with balance, peace and tranquility.

The diversity of cultures, ethnicities and religions is prone to cause disputes between groups of people. This is also the case in the city of Padangpanjang, where the city has a society with a plural culture, ethnicity and religion. The city of Padangpanjang, which was previously stated that this city is a majority Muslim city, and a minority population with a very small percentage of other religions, such as Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, does not rule out the possibility of disputes among its people. With the monoism of the community groups, friction disputes, and pressure from religious fanaticism groups, in worse conditions will cause religious conflicts.

Departing from the above background, the writing on "Harmonization in the Middle of Multicultural Society in Padangpanjang City" needs to be carried out.

## **METHOD**

The research material in this case is survey results or data from the application of direct observation techniques and interviews in the community. The research method used in this research is a qualitative method. The qualitative method is a research method that is oriented towards the direct role of the researcher to the field or to the location and then the literature study becomes supporting data in observing analyzing the community.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Multiculturalism Education**

The people of Padangpanjang city have a fairly good understanding of multiculturalism. People say they recognize, understand and appreciate all differences in equality both individually and culturally that exist in the city of Padangpanjang.

"Humans are created different, therefore we must remain united, the state alone gives freedom of religion, why should we scoff. Now, thank God, it is safe" (Interview with Linda, May 2024). From the results interview, it can be said that the community is able to understand the differences within the existing multicultural.

This is reflected in the attitude or behavior of the people of Padangpanjang city who are faced with all the differences or diversity in multicultural. The behavior of the community already reflects that the community has a view that humans on earth are equal in the form of culture, ethnicity and religion. There is no higher religion or lower religion. The same applies to differences in culture, ethnicity, race or language. The people of Padangpanjang city can interact and cooperate well between fellow communities.

Increased understanding of multiculturalism education in the community is also needed, be it for children at the elementary, junior high, high school, and university levels, or the surrounding community. This planting needs to be implemented in order to maintain integration, harmony and harmonization. This education can be instilled through theoretical learning and daily practice to groups of children to adults in this city.

Acep, et al, (2023) explained that, education that promotes multiculturalism can be in the form of internalization in the education system that includes multiculturalism education in the curriculum and teaching methods can help build understanding and respect for cultural differences. Education that promotes multiculturalism provides a strong foundation for the formation of an inclusive multicultural society. To achieve that inclusive integrity, multiculturalism education needs to be in the center of society.

Active participation of the community in building a multicultural society is also a determinant in the success of multiculturalism education. Acep, et al, (2023) continued that, through involvement in community activities, civil society organizations, and local initiatives, individuals can contribute to creating an environment that respects cultural differences and builds harmonious relationships between groups. Individual awareness of the importance of respecting cultural differences and multicultural values is an important supporting factor. When individuals have a strong understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity and a willingness to learn from other groups, they will become positive change agents in building a multicultural society. This explains that the willingness of the community is also required in multiculturalism education.

Multiculturalism education is very important. Because, this education will emphasize the understanding of the community in giving respect to diversity or differences outside the habits or dominant culture to create harmony earlier. And multiculturalism is useful for knowing how social structures create and maintain different cultures in a society.

## **B. Mutual Respect**

The people of the city of Padangpanjang admit that the community is very diverse. This can be seen from historical times, that the city of Padangpanjang is a city that is in the overseas area of the Minangkabau kingdom, and at this time the city of Padangpanjang is also a tourist city. This is due to the city's location on the Sumatra route. So that the influence of migration and tourists brings more or less the many differences or diversity.

With the diversity described above, they are aware and they are able to behave with respect for each other. Respecting differences does not mean ignoring or even eliminating self-identity, but rather giving everyone the freedom and opportunity to take actions according to the characteristics that the person brings. Respect means giving opportunities to others (Yulianti, 2021).

To avoid conflict, people say they are open to differences that exist. Whether it is ethnicity, race or physical form, religion, or a very diverse culture that is in the city of Padangpanjang. This diversity, the community lives side by side. Where people live their daily lives by mingling together.

The respectful behavior of the people in this city is reflected in carrying out economic activities. People who have different ethnicities respect each other, because they need each other.

Another example is the Chinese in the city of Padangpanjang who own shophouses, still respect the local residents who rent in the shophouses owned by the ethnic Chinese, so they can live in harmony.

“We maintain a good relationship without demeaning each other, we are even accustomed to sharing in anything. And when the call to prayer time comes, the shopkeeper usually turns off the music, as a form of respect for our religious interests, and when the nyepi celebration arrives I also appreciate the various performances held in front of the shop, even I get angpao from the celebration. There is no dispute between us” (Interview with Melinda, May 2024).

Respectful behavior in other matters is also reflected in many cultural processions. The people of Padangpanjang city do have diverse backgrounds. However, they are still enthusiastic to see cultural performances at various carnivals. By participating in these performances, the community has also respected the culture.

### C. Tolerance

Religious harmony is known as tolerance. Rusydi and zolehah (2018) say that, Tolerance means mutual understanding, mutual understanding, and mutual opening within the scope of brotherhood. If the meaning of tolerance is used as a guide, then “tolerance” and “harmony” are something ideal and coveted by human society.

This difference and tolerance has been said by God in His word, the Holy Quran. The following clearly explains the reality of differences and diversity in society. This is in Surah Al Hujarat, which reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ  
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَىٰ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

“O mankind, We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily, the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you. Verily, Allah knows best” (QS. Al Hujarat: 13).

The verse above explains that “God created mankind male and female, and made them nations and tribes so that you may know each other.” This statement must be accepted as God's decision. Those who cannot accept diversity are denying God's decision. On this basis, tolerance is an important principle expressed in all religious treatises, including the Islamic theological system. Of course, the existence of various differences is a social reality, unavoidable, and cannot be denied.

Then in terms of Islamic tolerance expressed by Rusydi and Zolehah (2018), there is no tolerance in terms of belief and worship. Because actually for Muslims the religion that is pleased with Allah is only Islam. Tolerance is only in matters of muamalah and social life. Islam is a religion that upholds tolerance towards other religions and certainly not tolerance

that is overstated. Tolerance is recognizing the diversity of beliefs and beliefs in society, without interfering with each other's faith, activities, procedures and rituals of worship of each religion.

This means that the concept of religious tolerance in Islam is not justifying and recognizing all religions and beliefs that exist today. However, it is a matter of faith and faith that must be properly maintained by every Muslim person. Tolerance means not recognizing all religions as the same, let alone justifying the worship procedures of other religious communities.

Recognition of the existence of this diversity of beliefs is the simplest acknowledgment of tolerance, but this does not mean that it implies recognition of the theological truth of other religions. This strict restriction in terms of creed or belief is Islam's attempt to protect the ummah. This is also exposed in His word:

قُلْ يَا كَافِرُونَ ﴿١﴾ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ

مَا عَبَدْتُمْ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

Say: "O disbelievers, I will not worship that which you worship. And you are not worshippers of the God that I worship. And I have never been a worshipper of what you worship, and you have never been a worshipper of the Lord that I worship. nor have you ever been a worshipper of the Lord I worship. For you your religion, and for me, my religion" (QS. Al-Kaafiruun: 1-6).

Tolerance among the people of Padangpanjang city also gives a positive image. This is evidenced by the existence of the value of multiculturalism among the community. The tolerance that we can see includes:

1. First, tolerance in education, although a public school with a majority of Muslim students faces a Franciscus school, where the Franciscus school is a Christian school, intentionally or not, the students of the two schools can mix and respect each other. They do not take any action that harms or disrupts educational activities in both schools.
2. Second, another thing in tolerance is in the practice of school learning, in the learning curriculum also internalizes the values of multiculturalism that creates religious tolerance among students strengthen. In particular, students do not differentiate between Islam and Christianity, and they mingle and interact well with each other in their education to maintain religious harmony and tolerance.
3. Rahmi (2023) said that, in the majority Muslim city of Padangpanjang and many mosque buildings, there is still a church where Christians / Catholics worship. This church is called St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in the halls of West Padang Panjang. The migrants who attend this church are mostly from the Batak tribe. Despite being in the middle of the majority, they can still carry out their worship quietly and peacefully. We must instill this kind of diversity as early as possible in order to create a golden generation that is full of tolerance in order to achieve the ideals of diversity in Indonesia.
4. The existence of this Chinese cemetery in Sungai Andok is clear evidence that tolerance and harmony between people in Padang Panjang City have been well established since

long ago. Minang people really appreciate people from other ethnicities without discriminating between ethnicities, customs and groups (Fitri Ramadhani, 2020).

#### **D. Mutual Cooperation**

Another attitude of understanding multiculturalism in everyday life is gotong-royong. The work of gotong royong consists of two types, namely first, cooperation that arises from the initiative of the community members themselves or bottom up, this cooperation occurs because there is a great need in society, (Sumarsono, in Derung 2018). Second, cooperation from the community itself, but it comes from outside, usually from the top down. It comes from the existing structure in the community itself, policies from superiors and is beneficial for the common welfare, (Puswanto, 2014: 43, in Derung 2018).

They mentioned that mutual cooperation is usually carried out at the Balarek event. Even though they have different tribal and religious backgrounds, they help each other to work together to cook and prepare for the event.

In other activities such as calamities, mutual cooperation in the people of Padangpanjang city can also be seen. No matter whose house it is, they help each other save and clean up the disaster. In the case of the current volcanic eruption, the people of Padangpanjang worked together to help victims of the disaster, from rescuing victims to providing the needs of the post in the city of Padangpanjang.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Departing from the above statement, Padangpanjang is a small city that has a diverse society. The diversity of Padangpanjang city society is caused by the background of a multicultural society. Diversity such as differences in terms of ethnicity, race, language and religion.

The city of Padangpanjang is also identified with the name Serambi Mekkah. This is because the majority of the population of Padangpanjang is Muslim. However, in this city we can also still find residents with other beliefs. As well as, Catholic Christianity, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

The results showed that Padangpanjang City tends to have a positive image. Because, the people of this city can apply an understanding of multiculturalism value education among the differences in diversity.

This is also evidenced by the existence of harmony between multicultural communities in the city of Padangpanjang. Differences in terms of culture, ethnicity, or beliefs, in a multicultural society, still carry the values of multiculturalism and interact well with each other.

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