

## EXPLORATION OF STUDENT RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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### Abstract

This article describes the exploration of religious tolerance from the perspective of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP; Padang State University) students. The research is motivated by the development of a diverse conception of religious tolerance based on authority of the state and the culture of local communities. Students are part of the academic community that are constantly in flux. However, the conception of religious tolerance from a student's perspective has not been developed comprehensively, so further studies are needed to understand how students explore religious tolerance at UNP. This research method uses a qualitative approach. The subject of this study are the active students across different study programs; they are also cross-organizations, cross-religious and cross-cultural. We have also selected the active lecturers registered at UNP. Sampling was conducted with snowball sampling technique. Data collection uses in-depth interviews and observation.. The data analysis technique uses descriptive analysis. The results of this study reveal the indicators of religious tolerance from the perspective of UNP students, namely, being open toward differences, having mutual respect, having independence in acting, and giving the freedom for people to carry out worship, and prioritizing positive interaction between individuals and interfaith groups. The results of this study can be used to construct student religious tolerance assessments.

**Keywords:** Religious Tolerance, Plurality, Multiculturalism, Religious Moderation, Students

### Abstrak

*Artikel ini mendeskripsikan toleransi beragama dari perspektif mahasiswa Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP). Penelitian dilatarbelakangi berkembangnya keberagaman konsep toleransi beragama yang berfondasi pada otoritas negara dan berfondasi pada kultur masyarakat. Mahasiswa merupakan bagian golongan akademik yang gemar berdinamika. Namun konsep toleransi beragama perspektif mahasiswa belum terbangun secara komprehensif, sehingga diperlukan kajian lebih lanjut terkait toleransi beragama mahasiswa di UNP. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Subjek penelitian ini mahasiswa aktif lintas prodi, lintas organisasi, lintas agama dan lintas budaya yang terdaftar di UNP dan informan pendukung merupakan dosen aktif yang terdaftar di UNP. Pengambilan sampel dengan teknik snowball sampling. Pengumpulan data menggunakan wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkap indikator toleransi beragama perspektif mahasiswa UNP yakni kesadaran berperilaku terbuka dalam perbedaan, saling menghormati dan menghargai, kesadaran berperilaku merdeka dan kebebasan dalam menjalankan ibadah serta kesadaran berperilaku interaksi positif individu dan kelompok lintas agama. Hasil penelitian ini dapat digunakan untuk mengkonstruksi assemen toleransi beragama mahasiswa*

**Kata Kunci:** Toleransi Beragama, Pluralitas, Multikultural, Moderasi Beragama, Mahasiswa

## Background

Religion and belief have always been a part of human life because humans are creatures with a spiritual dimension<sup>1</sup> and requires spirituality<sup>2</sup> to give meaning to life<sup>3</sup>. The development of multicultural life is increasingly being felt, especially in the current era of global advances in information technology. Harmonious cross-religious social interaction requires behavior that promotes religious tolerance<sup>4</sup>.

The essence of religious tolerance<sup>5</sup> is behavioral awareness<sup>6</sup>. The intended goal of behavioral awareness is the realization of a harmonious<sup>7</sup> expression of religious experience<sup>8</sup>. Fritjhof Schuon writes that religion is exoteric form and is conceived in various forms. However, regardless of differences in religions, when viewed from the esoteric dimensions, these religions all prioritize divine wisdom<sup>9</sup>.

The concept of religious tolerance has continued to develop along with advancement in science, understanding, and experience of interfaith community life.

Tolerance in Latin means meekness, leeway, relief, and patience. Tolerance in Indonesian comes from the word "tolerant". It means the nature or attitude of tolerance, respect, allowing opinions, views, beliefs, habits, and behavior that are different or contrary to one's own

convictions<sup>10</sup>. In Arabic, tolerance is termed *tasamub*<sup>11</sup>. *Tasamub* tends to be equated with the terms *ibtimal* (accommodating), *tasabul* (relaxing) and *sambah* (generosity and spaciousness)<sup>12</sup>. The UNESCO perspective of tolerance is mutual respect, mutual acceptance, mutual respect amidst cultural diversity, freedom of expression, and human character<sup>13</sup>.

Results of studies on the indicators of religious tolerance vary. Among them, Witenberg has shown that indicators of religious tolerance are awareness for attitudes and actions that prioritize justice, equality (fairness), and concern (empathy) for others<sup>14</sup>. Witenberg constructed indicators of religious tolerance in terms of psychological studies, namely individual development tasks. The study is called the psychology of tolerance.

Ardiansyah has shown that the indicators of religious tolerance are mutual respect, respect for differences, and freedom to embrace a religion of one's choice<sup>15</sup>. He constructed the indicators of religious tolerance in terms of historical studies on the implementation of the Medina Charter during the reign of the Prophet Muhammad.

Ahsanul Khalikin, et al has shown that indicators of religious tolerance are the ease of building houses of worship, interfaith interaction,

<sup>1</sup> Ken Wilber, *Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution, The Collected Works of Ken Wilber. Vol. 2*, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Shorrock, 'The Transpersonal in Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counselling', *The Transpersonal in Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counselling*, 2007, 1–260 <<https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230591165>>.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas A. MacDonald, Roger Walsh, and Shauna L. Shapiro, *Meditation: Empirical Research and Future Directions, The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology*, 2013 <<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118591277.ch24>>.

<sup>4</sup> Rivka T. Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*, 1st edn (Singapore: Springer, 2019) <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3789-5>>.

<sup>5</sup> Tony Buzan, *The Power of Spiritual Intelligence*, I (New York, USA: Harper Collins Publishers, 2002).

<sup>6</sup> Tillman Diane, *Pendidikan Nilai Untuk Kaum Dewasa-Muda ; Living Values Activities for Young Adult, Textbook*, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Casram Casram, 'Membangun Sikap Toleransi Beragama Dalam Masyarakat Plural', *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya*, 1.2 (2016), 187–98 <<https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v1i2.588>>.

<sup>8</sup> Casram.

<sup>9</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*, Second pri (United States America: Theosophical House, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> Ardiansyah, 'Madinia Vol.XVIII, No. 2, Desember 2014', *Madinia*, Vol.XVIII.2 (2014).

<sup>11</sup> Ardiansyah.

<sup>12</sup> Nasaruddin Umar, *Islam Nusantara Jalan Panjang Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia.Pdf* (Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Kevin Boyle and Juliet Sheen, *Freedom of Religion and Belief: A World Report, Freedom of Religion and Belief: A World Report*, 2013 <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203411025>>.

<sup>14</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>15</sup> Ardiansyah.

and equality in fulfilling human rights<sup>16</sup>. Ahsanul Khalikin, et al constructed the indicators of religious tolerance in terms of human rights.

The PPIM Team has shown that the indicators of religious tolerance are mutual respect<sup>17</sup>, positive social interaction, and willingness to recognize civil liberties<sup>18</sup>. The PPIM team constructed the indicators of religious tolerance in terms of the theoretical developments of Sullivan, Pierson, and Marcus<sup>19</sup>.

From the various indicators of tolerance, the development of the concept of religious tolerance is very dynamic. According to Forst, the perspective of tolerance is divided into several parts, namely, the conception based on the power or authority of the state and the conception based on the culture and desires of the people<sup>20</sup>. Religious tolerance cannot be fully attributed to one cause, such as personal factors, because tolerance is rooted in a wider process of social, cultural, and political interaction<sup>21</sup>. According to Menchik and Perpinsky, religious tolerance can be understood in situational terms<sup>22</sup>. For example, the understanding of the local community in Padang City regarding religious pluralism turns out to be different from the conception advocated by the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) or liberal groups. Local communities understand pluralism not in mainstream theoretical frameworks, but

rather in dynamic, practical, and applicable meanings<sup>23</sup>. Likewise, the context of religious tolerance on campus will be different from the religious tolerance in the broader social context.

Psychological obstacles to religious tolerance are influenced by cognitive capacities, epistemic abilities, identity status, intergroup attitudes, worldview protection, and personality<sup>24</sup>. These obstacles are related to the two main aspects of religion, namely ideas and identity<sup>25</sup>. Dwi Winanto Hadi has shown that religious tolerance in Indonesia tends to be low. This is influenced by the level of education, economic status, classification of residence, employment status, gender, and age of the individual<sup>26</sup>. Toto Sunarya has shown that religious tolerance has been a persistent problem in the country<sup>27</sup>. The actualization of religious tolerance in Indonesia has not been optimal. Thus, it is necessary to promote sustainability, as well as to develop and foster religious tolerance, especially in the education sector.

The influence of higher education on religious tolerance in Indonesia is rarely explored<sup>28</sup>, especially religious tolerance from a student perspective. Bahari points out that since students are the next generation of the nation's leaders and agents of change, it is necessary for them to develop knowledge, experience, and skills

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<sup>16</sup> Fathuri Ahsanul Khalikin, *Toleransi Di Daerah Rawan Konflik*, ed. by Fathuri Ahsanul Khalikin (Jakarta: Puslitbang Kehidupan Keagamaan 2016, 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Christopher M. Federico & Jhon Sullivan, *The Political Psychology of Democratic Citizenship*.

<sup>18</sup> . TIM PPIM UIN, Dkk. Jakarta (Yunita Faela Nisa, *Kebinekaan Di Menara Gading Toleransi Beragama Di Perguruan Tinggi*, ed. by Abdullah Afrimadona, Dididn Syafrudin, *PPIM UIN Jakarta*, Pertama (Jakarta, 2021), IV.

<sup>19</sup> TIM PPIM UIN Jakarta (Yunita Faela Nisa, IV.

<sup>20</sup> Rainer Forst and Rainer Forst, *The Tolerant Society, Tolerance in Conflict*, 2013 <<https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139051200.016>>.

<sup>21</sup> James L. Gibson & Amanda Gouws, *Overcoming Intolerance in South Africa*, first published (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>22</sup> Jeremy Menchik, 'Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism, *Kongres Muhammadiyah Ke 20 Di Jogja*', 1931, pp. 1–214.

<sup>23</sup> Wanda Fitri, 'Pluralisme Di Tengah Masyarakat Santri Minang Sebuah Pengenalan Pluralitas Lokal Di Smuatra Barat', *Islam Realitas Journal of Islamic & Social Studies*, 1.1 (2015), 55–68.

<sup>24</sup> Nastasya Van Der Straten Waillet and Isabelle Roskam, 'Religious Education: The Official Journal of the Religious Education Association Are Religious Tolerance and Pluralism Reachable Ideals? A Psychological Perspective', October 2014, 37–41 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2013.747873>>.

<sup>25</sup> Waillet and Roskam.

<sup>26</sup> Dwi Winanto Hadi, *Analisis Sikap Toleransi Di Indonesia Dan Faktor-Faktor Di Indonesia* (Jakarta, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Toto Suryana, 'Konsep Dan Aktualisasi Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama', *Pendidikan Agama Islam -Ta'lim*, 9.2 (2011), 127–36.

<sup>28</sup> TIM PPIM UIN Jakarta (Yunita Faela Nisa, IV.

in dealing with the nation's diversity<sup>29</sup>. Students are an academic community that likes change. The constant flux of students' thinking about religious tolerance need to be managed and developed so that it becomes a source of reliable knowledge and behavior. However, the concept of religious tolerance from the perspective of students has not been widely discussed by the scholarship. Thus, it is necessary to conduct research on religious tolerance among students<sup>30</sup>. The results of the Research and Development Center for the Ministry of Religion Affairs in 2016 found that religious tolerance in the city of Padang is relatively low, and the factors contributing to intolerance are quite prominent including fulfillment of the right to education<sup>31</sup>.

Considering the recommendations of previous research, it is necessary to follow them up by conducting exploratory research on religious tolerance for the Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP) students.

UNP is a state university that is an educational legal entity (BHP). Institutionally, UNP is independent<sup>32</sup>. The UNP academic community is diverse. UNP students come from multicultural and multi-religious backgrounds, including ethnicities from the Minangkabau, Aceh, Gayo, Batak, Mandailing, Nias, Mentawai, Malay, Betawi, Sundanese, Javanese, and other groups in Indonesia. The students adhere to various religions such as Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism<sup>33</sup>. In addition, there are dozens of study programs and several levels of education. As stated by Raihani, an important condition for fulfilling an exploratory study of religious tolerance from a student's point of view is the presence of various

social varieties interaction in a group<sup>34</sup>. The uniqueness of UNP students can be seen from how they think. UNP students naturally prioritize independent thinking. This is formed according to the UNP motto; "alam takambang jadi Guru (learning from nature)"<sup>35</sup>. Students are given the freedom to choose the natural world as the arena of learning. Thus, the students' way of thinking is expected to develop progressively, naturally, and originally.

This research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach. It aims to describe religious tolerance from the perspective of UNP students. Data collection tools in this study were direct and indirect interview guidelines. Researchers conducted in-depth and intense interviews. In addition, researchers also made observations and documentation. The key informants for this study are 50 active students across different study programs, organizations, cultures, and religions. It also includes supporting informants consisting of 10 active and registered lecturers at UNP. The sampling technique was snowball sampling, in which the researcher met and conducted in-depth interviews with informants who were considered to have the capability to provide the information needed until certain conditions indicated that the data was saturated. The data is saturated when the information conveyed are repeated and have many similarities. Some of the questions that the researchers asked the informants were: (1) When did you come to know the term religious tolerance? (2) From what source do you know the term religious tolerance? (3) Who gave you an explanation about religious tolerance? (4) What are indicators of religious tolerance? (5) Why is religious tolerance important and what is the

<sup>29</sup> H. Bahari, *Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa (Studi Tentang Pengaruh Kepribadian, Keterlibatan Organisasi, Hasil Belajar Pendidikan Agama, Dan Lingkungan Pendidikan Terhadap Toleransi Mahasiswa Berbeda Agama Pada 7 Perguruan Tinggi Umum Negeri)*, ed. by MA H. Bahari, Cet I (Jakarta: Maloho Jaya Abadi Press, Jakarta, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> H. Bahari.

<sup>31</sup> Ahsanul Khalikin.

<sup>32</sup> Tim Pelaporan, *Laporan Kinerja Tahun 2019* (Padang).

<sup>33</sup> FM, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>34</sup> Raihani, 'Creating a Culture of Religious Tolerance in an Indonesian School', *South East Asia Research*, 22.4 (2014), 541-60  
<<https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2014.0234>>.

<sup>35</sup> FIP, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

purpose of religious tolerance? Data was collected by conducting data assistance, data reduction, and data triangulation and were then analyzed descriptively.

Exploration of religious tolerance occurs when individuals have awareness for behaving according to their knowledge, experience, and value system<sup>36</sup>. According to Forst, the perspective of tolerance is divided into two, namely, conceptions based on state power or authority and conceptions based the culture of the people and their desire to foster understanding and respect for others<sup>37</sup>. This study aims to collect data on the knowledge, views, and experiences of UNP students regarding religious tolerance. This can be conceptualized through examining the justifications for critical incidents of UNP students.

### Introduction and Student Knowledge of the Term Religious Tolerance

Based on the results of interviews with informants regarding their knowledge of religious tolerance, the following can be outlined;

**Table 1.** Introduction and knowledge of students about the term religious tolerance

When did you hear and learn of the term religious tolerance?	F	%
When studying at SD/MI/SDIT	5	10
When studying at SMP/MTs/SMPIT	7	14
When studying at SMA/SMK/MA/SMAIT	20	40
During the start of university classes	15	30
When viral information circulates	3	6
Total	50	100

(Source: Arjoni research; November-December 2021)

The description of Table 1 explains the number of answers from informants who know the term religious tolerance. The dominant answer is that they got acquainted with the term when studying at high school 40% and at the beginning

of university lectures 30%. This shows that the development of student recognition and knowledge of the term religious tolerance begins in late adolescence and early adulthood. This research is directly proportional to the results of Witenberg, who showed that in early adolescence, late adolescence, and young adulthood, people are more able to reason about tolerance focusing on the types of judgments and justifications they experience<sup>38</sup>. Further investigation of student reasoning generally develops through learning in high school, as stated by DN below:

"For the first time, I got to know the term religious tolerance when I studied the subjects of Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), Religious and Moral Education, Sociology Education, Anthropology and Minangkabau Natural Culture Local Content at MAN"<sup>39</sup>

This is in line with what was conveyed by SS: "I learned about the importance of religious tolerance for the first time when I was studying Religious and Moral Education, PPKn, and Anthropological Sociology. And because I came from the Riau Archipelago, I also studied Arabic-Malay Local Content, which also taught about religious tolerance in high school"<sup>40</sup>.

From another perspective, TA students argue that

"I learned the term religious tolerance when I started registering for college at UNP, besides that [I learned it] when I was studying Religious Education in the Church with other campus friends"<sup>41</sup>

From this, we see that the beginning of students' acquaintance with the term religious tolerance occurred during high school and at the beginning

<sup>36</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>37</sup> Forst and Forst.

<sup>38</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>39</sup> DN, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> SS, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>41</sup> TA, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

of university lectures. This strengthens the results of Witenberg research. Religious tolerance begins to develop and influences positive attitudes and beliefs between the ages of 6 and 24<sup>42</sup>. The results of this study are also in line with the research of Arjoni, et al which revealed that the religious tolerance of Xavarius Bukittinggi high school students of Minangkabau ethnicity and Batak ethnicity are in the tolerant category<sup>43</sup>. Besides that, the results of research by Nastasya van der Straten Waillet and Isabelle Roskam has shown that psychological obstacles to achieving religious tolerance include being influenced by individual cognitive capacity. This shows that individual reasoning and knowledge have the potential to activate religious tolerance behavior in students in their teens and early adulthood<sup>44</sup>.

### Information Sources for Students' Knowledge of Religious Tolerance

Based on interviews with informants regarding their sources of information about the term religious tolerance, the results can be seen in Table 2 below;

**Table 2.** Sources of information for students' knowledge about the term religious tolerance

From what source did you learn the term religious tolerance?	F	%
School textbooks of high school classes such as PPKN, Religion, and Morals, Local Content	7	14
University lecture reading books both scientific and popular	10	20
Magazines, newspapers, and tabloids	5	10
Social media, viral information	9	18
Journal articles	4	8
Explanation of Teachers and Lecturers	10	20
News on TV and Radio	5	10
Total	50	100

(Source: Arjoni research; November-December 2021)

Table 2 explains how students get their information about the term religious tolerance. The most popular source is lecture reading books both scientific and popular (20%) and teacher's and lecturer's explanations (20%). As stated by the informant DS below:

"The Sources of information from which I got acquainted with the term religious tolerance tended to be mostly from explanations from teachers when in high school and university lecturers as well as explanations from scientific and popular reading books which tell stories about the importance of religious tolerance in life. It is faster and easier to accept"<sup>45</sup>.

Media information on religious tolerance tends to be known through interactive discussions with students guided by lecturers with the use of supporting media, as explained by informant WF below:

"Religious tolerance is more interesting to understand through interactive discussions with fellow students who are guided by lecturers. It is also more interesting to use the media of viewing films containing religious tolerance such as films of *Verses of Love*, *Assalam Alaikum Beijing*, and other short story videos"<sup>46</sup>.

This research is consistent with Carol Ferrara's research regarding religious tolerance in the education system in France which has shown that certain types of learning affect students' tolerance and understanding<sup>47</sup>. In addition, this study reinforces the research of Maali Mohammed Jassim Alabdulhadi which has shown that from the analysis of the content of the topic in Islamic education textbooks in Kuwaiti secondary schools, tolerance is mentioned more often, thus

<sup>42</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>43</sup> Arjoni Arjoni, Charles Charles, and Intan Sari, 'Religious Tolerance of Minangkabau and Batak Ethnic Students in Xaverius Bukittinggi High School', *JOMSIGN: Journal of Multicultural Studies in Guidance and Counseling*, 4.1 (2020), 79-100 <<https://doi.org/10.17509/jomsign.v4i1.22398>>.

<sup>44</sup> Waillet and Roskam.

<sup>45</sup> DS, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP*, 2021.

<sup>46</sup> WF, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Carol Ferrara, 'Religious Tolerance and Understanding in the French Education System', *Religious Education*, 107.5 (2012), 514-30 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2012.722481>>.

providing students with a broad understanding of the importance of religious tolerance<sup>48</sup>.

The research findings emphasizes the need for educators to offer positive and creative management of learning content for the development of student's capacity for religious tolerance, as conveyed by lecturer FM (2021) below:

"Educators are creators whose role is to guide and train broader reasoning in embodying religious tolerance in students, especially the example, competence, and creativity of these lecturers in this independent learning curriculum. The independent curriculum gives the freedom for students to manage learning content and to have more opportunities to be creative in developing the students' religious tolerance"<sup>49</sup>.

Along with this opinion, the FIP lecturer said:

"In the current independent learning curriculum at the tertiary level, educators can apply the Self-Regulated Learning model to develop student religious tolerance. This is an independent learning system prepared by lecturers by providing many references that students can use to develop students' religious tolerance literacy"<sup>50</sup>.

This explanation indicates that the source of information for students' knowledge of religious tolerance is obtained from references in lectures and explanations from educators. We will now discuss the data related to the question "who explains religious tolerance?"

### **The person whose role is to provide Students Knowledge Information About Religious Tolerance**

Based on the results of interviews with informants regarding the people whose role is to

provide information and knowledge to students about religious tolerance, Table 3 shows:

**Table 3.** People provide information on students' knowledge of the term religious tolerance

Who explained religious tolerance to you?	F	%
Teachers, Counselors, Lecturers, and other Educators	15	30
Seniors in Student Organizations both within and outside of campus	4	8
Campus Friends	6	12
Community friends	9	18
Resource persons for seminars, webinars, and training	5	10
Religious figures, community leaders	9	18
Family	2	4
Total	50	100

(Source: Arjoni research; November-December 2021)

The description of the Table above illustrates the answers to the question of who provides information and knowledge to students on religious tolerance. The dominant position is held by teachers, counselors, lecturers, and other educators by 30% as conveyed by the following ER informants:

"As far as I know, people who play a big role in explaining the importance of student religious tolerance are lecturers, teachers, counselors, and other educators. In my opinion, it is educators who are more intensely meet students and so have the opportunity to inspire them in the learning process"<sup>51</sup>.

This statement was also corroborated by other informants as stated by FS:

"In my opinion, religious and community leaders play an important role in educating the public about the importance of religious tolerance among students, because these figures, such as religious counselors and teachers, should contribute to educating the community and society. Lecturers and other

<sup>48</sup> Maali Mohammed Jassim Alabdulhadi, 'Religious Tolerance in Secondary Islamic Education Textbooks in Kuwait', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 41.4 (2019), 422–34 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2019.1585329>>.

<sup>49</sup> FM.

<sup>50</sup> FIP.

<sup>51</sup> ER, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP (Padang, 2021)*, DESEMBER.

educators also have the opportunity to provide guidance and training to develop of religious tolerance for us students”<sup>52</sup>.

Apart from this, the contribution of friends from organizations also plays a role in educating students about religious tolerance, as revealed by NA below:

“In my opinion, friends from the organizational community also play a role in socializing the importance of religious tolerance among friends across organizations. I feel that the coaching of organizational seniors has made me more open to differences and to see diversity more openly”<sup>53</sup>.

This research is consistent with the research by the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta PPIM Team, which have shown that the tolerant attitude of lecturers influences the attitude of students<sup>54</sup>. Furthermore, Raihani also revealed that religious teachers play an important role in shaping students' understanding of diversity and religious tolerance by teaching aspects of other religions<sup>55</sup>. The this study are also in line with the research by Teguh Wijaya and Anindito Aditomo and the research by PPIM UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, which has shown that organizational friends and students' peers play a major role in developing religious tolerance. Next, we will show that the informants' views on what matters are important and are indicators of religious tolerance<sup>56</sup>.

### Indicators of Religious Tolerance from a Student Perspective

Based on the results of interviews with informants regarding matters that they consider to be important in religious tolerance. Table 4 shows the following;

**Table 4.** Religious Tolerance Indicator from a Student Perspective

What are indicators of religious tolerance?	F	%
Mutual respect and appreciation	15	30
Maintaining freedom of worship	15	30
Openness in the face of differences	10	20
Positive social interactions	10	20
Total	50	100

(Source: Arjoni research; November-December 2021)

Table 4 reveals the indicators of religious tolerance from a student perspective, namely mutual respect at 30%, maintaining the freedom of worship at 30%, being open in the face of differences at 20%, and positive social interaction by 20%. Further investigation by the researchers reveals the reasons why students chose to their respective opinions. DN said:

"In my opinion, the important things that must exist in religious tolerance are mutual respect and respect for each other's religious beliefs and maintaining the freedom for people to carry out their acts of worship. I remember when I was studying local content class at the Minangkabau Natural Culture, a Minangkabau saying was mentioned; "Elok dek awak katuju dek urang (when we behave well according to us, others also approve). What this means is that should respect each other in everything we do. This behavior is the main capital to build positive social interactions and to make life more harmonious and peaceful"<sup>57</sup>.

Furthermore, ML students (2021) also have the view;

“Religious tolerance in my opinion; is how we appreciate and respect friends who are different from us. The most important thing in religious tolerance is the way we treat someone who is different from us and how we respect

<sup>52</sup> FS, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021), NOVEMBER.

<sup>53</sup> NA, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021), NOVEMBER.

<sup>54</sup> TIM PPIM UIN Jakarta (Yunita Faela Nisa, IV.

<sup>55</sup> Raihani.

<sup>56</sup> Teguh Wijaya Mulya and Anindito Aditomo, 'Researching Religious Tolerance Education Using Discourse Analysis: A Case Study from Indonesia', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 41.4 (2019), 446–57 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2018.1556602>>.

<sup>57</sup> DN.



the time and place of worship, and how we don't justify our own religion to different friends"<sup>58</sup>.

Other students said that what needs to be considered in religious tolerance is an attitude of openness towards differences, as stated by NAN (2021):

"In my opinion, the most important thing in realizing religious tolerance is being willing and ready to accept the different concepts of faith and worship of each religion. The difference is beautiful like the rainbow of life. With differences, we can exchange knowledge, share, and learn how to be tolerant"<sup>59</sup>.

This was strengthened by students who were active in organizations (such as campus student organizations). According to HAS:

"Efforts to realize religious tolerance apart from having an open attitude to accepting differences, respecting each other, and giving freedom for people to practice their own religion, also require concrete positive social interaction with the diverse campus communities. These important things can be used as a benchmark for tolerance religion on campus"<sup>60</sup>.

From the results of student interviews above, indicators of religious tolerance from the perspective of UNP students can be identified, namely: having mutual respect, looking after each other, allowing people to worship freely, having an open attitude towards differences, and building positive social interaction between adherents of religions. This research is in line with the statement by Kurtz, according to whom a tolerant society is an open, pluralistic and democratic society that respects civil liberties and human

rights"<sup>61</sup> and is the center of harmonious inter-group life and cooperation between people<sup>62</sup>. Our study also asks "why is religious tolerance important and what is the purpose of religious tolerance?"

### The Purpose of Religious Tolerance

Based on the results of interviews with informants regarding the goals of religious tolerance according to students, Table 5 shows the following;

**Table 5.** Purpose of Religious Tolerance according to Students

Why is religious tolerance important and what is the purpose of religious tolerance according to you?	F	%
To create positive social interaction	15	30
To maintain peace and harmony	15	30
To avoid disputes and conflicts	10	20
To get rid of hatred	10	20
Total	50	100

(Source: Arjoni research; November-December 2021)

Table 5 explains the urgency of religious tolerance. The dominant answer is to create positive social interaction and to create peace and harmony in life. The results of this study are in line with the definition of tolerance from the UNESCO perspective, namely as mutual respect, mutual acceptance, mutual respect amidst cultural diversity, freedom of expression, and human character<sup>63</sup>. Witenberg also revealed that tolerance is awareness for beneficial judgments and beliefs involving the principles of justice, fairness, concern (empathy), and consideration for the suffering of others<sup>64</sup>.

The results of this study strengthen indicators of tolerance from previous studies. Ardiansyah has shown that the indicators of religious tolerance are mutual respect, respect for

<sup>58</sup> ML, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>59</sup> NAN, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021), II.

<sup>60</sup> HAS, *Transkrip Hasil Wawancara Tentang Eksplorasi Toleransi Beragama Mahasiswa UNP* (Padang, 2021).

<sup>61</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>62</sup> Witenberg, *The Psychology of Tolerance Conception and Development*.

<sup>63</sup> Boyle and Sheen.

<sup>64</sup> Rivka T. Witenberg, 'Subordination of Racial Tolerance to Freedom of Speech: Some Considerations for Education in Contemporary Multicultural Societies', *Australian Psychologist*, 39.2 (2004), 114-17 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00050060410001701825>>.

differences, and freedom to embrace a religion<sup>65</sup>. Ahsanul Khalikin, et al, has shown that the indicators of religious tolerance are the ease of building houses of worship, interfaith interaction, and equality in fulfilling human rights<sup>66</sup>. The PPIM Team has shown that the indicators of religious tolerance are mutual respect, positive social interaction, and a willingness to recognize the civil liberties of those with whom one does not agree<sup>67</sup>.

The findings of this study can be synthesized and compiled into a construct indicator of student religious tolerance, namely:

(1) Behaving openly in the face of differences. The intended awareness to maintain positive attitudes and actions, and to understand, accept, and maintain a religious plurality. The construct of this indicator is strengthened by the research results of Abdul Muhid's research, which reveals that hospitality and openness have a positive effect on religious tolerance<sup>68</sup>. Friendliness and openness indicate a behavior that likes to be friendly and humble. This encourages oneself to behave tolerantly towards anyone. Furthermore, the investigation of Joshua N. Hook, et al has shown that intellectual humility is a positive predictor of religious tolerance<sup>69</sup>. This is directly proportional to Casram's research which reveals open religious appreciation and practice, which has the potential to embody human values<sup>70</sup>. Intellectual humility, appreciation, and religious practice are an open-minded awareness to accept differences and develop human values. The construct of this indicator is specifically strengthened by the research results of Wanda Fitri which revealed that Islam in Minangkabau is egalitarian, open to anyone, and has a life motto "where the earth stands there the sky is upheld". This saying is then

naturally expressed through a model of socio-cultural tolerance<sup>71</sup>.

(2) Awareness to respect and value each other. This awareness is a positive attitude and consists of action that respects and maintains religious symbols, to be tolerant in worship, to commemorate religious holidays, to provide support for adherents of religions, to develop faith and devotion to God, and to appreciate adherents of other religions and faiths in order to uphold benevolence and humanity. The construct of this indicator is strengthened by historical studies of religious tolerance, namely the application of the Medina charter which has been exemplified directly by the Prophet Muhammad . This is contained in his words: "Whoever hurts a protected minority, he hurts me and whoever hurts me, he hurts Allah (HR. Thabrani). This wise and prudent attitude of the Prophet attracted the sympathy of Jews and Pagans of Medina, and so they acknowledged the leadership of Muhammad<sup>72</sup>. Thus, the awareness to respect each other can be an indicator of religious tolerance.

(3) Awareness for independent behavior in providing opportunities for worship. Awareness for attitudes and actions that provide opportunities to worship, to grant permission to build places of worship in accordance with applicable regulations, and to invite adherents of religions and/or beliefs to worship in their respective places of worship. This indicator construct strengthens the results of Joe Julian's research, uncovering the problem of freedom of religion which is not managed properly and triggers social interaction disturbances. Thus, a manager of religious freedom education is

<sup>65</sup> Ardiansyah.

<sup>66</sup> Ahsanul Khalikin.

<sup>67</sup> TIM PPIM UIN Jakarta (Yunita Faela Nisa, IV.

<sup>68</sup> Abdul Muhid, 'Religious Tolerance among College Students: How It's Influenced by Religious Orientation and Personality Traits?', *Humanitas Indonesian Psychological Journal*, 17.1 (2020), 55–63 <<https://doi.org/10.26555/humanitas.v17i1.12222>>.

<sup>69</sup> Joshua N. Hook and others, 'Intellectual Humility and Religious Tolerance', *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12.1 (2017), 29–35 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1167937>>.

<sup>70</sup> Casram.

<sup>71</sup> Wanda Fitri.

<sup>72</sup> Ardiansyah.

needed<sup>73</sup>. In addition to this, Roberto Buonamano's research has shown that the concept of freedom of religion requires development to maintain the integrity of human rights<sup>74</sup>. Thus, the awareness for independent behavior in providing opportunities for worship can be an indicator of religious tolerance.

(4) Awareness builds positive social interactions. This awareness is a positive attitude to build interfaith cooperation in the fields of order and security, preserving nature, caring for humanity, advancing education and the social economy, and integrity of the nation, state, and religion. The construct of this indicator is directly proportional to the research results of Carolin Rapp and Markus Freitag, which revealed that there is a positive relationship between associational diversity and tolerance<sup>75</sup>. Furthermore, the findings of Hariani Santiko revealed that the character of the Indonesian nation is to prioritize cooperation and common deliberation<sup>76</sup>. The habit of cooperation and deliberation is part of a multicultural personality. This finding is consistent with the research by Rafida Azmi and Anisia Kumala which revealed that multicultural personality has a positive effect on tolerance in students<sup>77</sup>. Furthermore, the results of a more specific study by Nofriadi and Syafwan Rozi have revealed that positive social interaction in the West Sumatra region takes place since adulthood. This is indicated by the development of intercultural tolerance in the people of West Sumatra (Rao Pasaman)<sup>78</sup>.

This study has discussed the various indicators of religious tolerance from a student perspective, which was constructed based on theoretical and empirical studies in the context of religious tolerance from the perspective of UNP students. These indicators are awareness for open behavior, independence, respect, building positive social interactions between individuals and group in order to achieve a life of harmony and peace in the local communities, nation, and religion.

## Conclusion

The exploration of religious tolerance by UNP students has revealed several findings: UNP students were acquainted with the term religious tolerance during their studies in high school and at the beginning of lectures at UNP. This shows that religious tolerance develops with the growth and development of individual reasoning in late adolescence and early adulthood.

Sources for information on religious tolerance generally come from school/lecture books and explanations by teachers and lecturers. This shows that these references can become a source for students' religious tolerance literacy.

Besides that, the role of educators, such as lecturers and teachers is important in providing guidance, training, and assistance for the development of student religious tolerance. High School and Higher Education curriculum is a reference for the development of religious tolerance and is supported by optimal policies from various groups, such as the government, religious leaders, and other community leaders.

<sup>73</sup> Joe Julian, 'On Religious Freedom and Civic Learning', *Intercultural Education*, 11.2 (2000), 137–44 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/713665238>>.

<sup>74</sup> Roberto Buonamano, 'Religious Freedom in a Secular Human Rights Order', *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, 21.1 (2020), 68–91 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2020.1732935>>.

<sup>75</sup> Carolin Rapp and Markus Freitag, 'Teaching Tolerance? Associational Diversity and Tolerance Formation', *Political Studies*, 63.5 (2015), 1031–51 <<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12142>>.

<sup>76</sup> Hariani Santiko, 'Toleransi Beragama Dan Karakter Bangsa: Perspektif Arkeologi', *Sejarah Dan Budaya*, 7.1 (2013), 1–8.

<sup>77</sup> Rafida Azmi and Anisia Kumala, 'Multicultural Personality Pada Toleransi Mahasiswa', *TAZKIYA: Journal of Psychology*, 7.1 (2019), 1–10 <<https://doi.org/10.15408/tazkiya.v7i1.13493>>.

<sup>78</sup> Safwan Rozi Nofriadi, 'Penerapan Nilai Toleransi Antar Budaya Dalam Pelaksanaan Hukum Kewarisan Islam Pada Masyarakat Perbatasan Di Rao Pasaman Sumatera Barat', *Ijtihad, Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan*, 17.1 (2017), 85–112 <<https://doi.org/10.18326/ijtihad.v17i1.85-112>>.

The formation and development of knowledge, reasoning, and understanding experienced by students about religious tolerance reveal their perspective on religious tolerance. This includes awareness for having an open mind regarding differences, awareness for mutual respect, awareness for independent behavior and giving freedom for people to carry out their own worship, and awareness for positive social interaction between individuals and or interfaith groups. The aim of religious tolerance is to create positive social interactions, maintain peace and harmony, avoid disputes and conflicts, and be free from hostility.

The results of this study can contribute to the construction of student religious tolerance indicators that are based on progressive academic culture and performance and to the development of student religious tolerance assessments.

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### **Interview**

DN, Mahasiswa (Prodi BK UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

DS, Mahasiswa (Prodi Pendidikan Sosiologi Antropologi UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

ER, Mahasiswa (Prodi Teknik Bangunan UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

FIP, Dosen (Prodi Pendidikan Seni Budaya UNP), wawancara, {Desember 2021}

FM, Dosen (Prodi BK UNP), wawancara, {Desember 2021}

FS, Mahasiswa (Prodi Manajemen Perhotelan UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

HAS, Mahasiswa (Prodi PG PAUD UNP), wawancara, {Desember 2021}

ML, Mahasiswa (Prodi PPkn UNP), wawancara, {Desember 2021}

NA, Mahasiswa (Prodi PLS UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

NAN, Mahasiswa (Prodi Ekonomi UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

SS, Mahasiswa (Prodi Psikologi UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

TA, Mahasiswa (Prodi Ekonomi UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}

WF, Mahasiswa (Prodi Pendidikan Fisika UNP), wawancara, {November 2021}