

Empirical Reassessment of Religious Tolerance in Padang City

Studi Empiris tentang Toleransi Beragama di Kota Padang

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ABSTRAK

Hasil survei terkait tingkat toleransi di Kota Padang termasuk rendah. Untuk meningkatkan Indeks Kota Toleran (IKT) perlu ada contoh praktik toleransi beragama di Kota Padang untuk dikembangkan di seluruh lapisan masyarakat setempat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan praktik-praktik toleransi beragama di Kota Padang dengan lokus penelitian di Kampung Pondok. Penelitian lapangan ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Fokus kajiannya mengenai pengalaman dan makna praktik toleransi beragama di masyarakat. Teknik pengumpulan data dengan wawancara ke sejumlah pihak seperti tokoh agama, pejabat pemerintah, pengurus rumah ibadah, serta warga masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat di Kampung Pondok merepresentasikan praktik toleransi beragama melalui interaksi antarumat beragama, pelestarian budaya lokal, dan keterlibatan masyarakat dalam berbagai organisasi sosial. Tiga temuan penelitian: 1) Interaksi sosial lintas agama di Kampung Pondok terjadi secara aktif dan harmonis; 2) Masyarakat di Kampung Pondok melakukan berbagai kegiatan dalam menopang praktik toleransi antarumat beragama; 3) Jaringan kewargaan (citizenship networks) dibangun melalui jejaring komunitas dan perjumpaan sosial.

Kata Kunci: Toleransi beragama; Kota Padang; modal sosial; keterlibatan kewargaan; pluralisme

ABSTRACT

The survey results regarding the level of tolerance in Padang City are low. To increase the Tolerant City Index (IKT), there needs to be an example of the practice of religious tolerance in Padang City to be developed at all levels of local society. This research aims to find practices of religious tolerance in Padang City, with the research locus in Pondok Village. This field research uses a qualitative approach with case study methods. The focus of the study is on the experience and meaning of the practice of religious tolerance in society. Data collection techniques include interviews with a number of parties, such as religious leaders, government officials, administrators of places of worship, and residents. The research results show that the community in Pondok Village represents the practice of religious tolerance through interaction between religious believers, preservation of local culture, and community involvement in various social organizations. Three research findings: 1) Interfaith social interaction in Pondok Village occurs actively and harmoniously; 2) The community in Pondok Village carries out various activities to support the practice of tolerance between religious believers; 3) Citizenship networks are built through community networks and social encounters.

Keywords: Religious tolerance; Padang City; social capital; civic engagement; pluralism

INTRODUCTION

Strengthening the governance of interreligious harmony at the local level remains a major challenge for regional governments, amidst the uneven practice of tolerance across various regions in Indonesia (Sumaktoyo 2017). Amid increasingly diverse social life, local governments are becoming more aware of the importance of policies that promote the governance of interreligious harmony, emphasizing inclusive practices and tolerance (Darningtyas 2023). Padang City, in the context of interreligious harmony, is among the cities that frequently receive low tolerance scores based on assessments conducted by various survey institutions in Indonesia. Evidence from multiple surveys suggests this: An organization Elsam (2017), Setara Institute (2023), Ma'arif Institute (2016), Litbang Kemenag (2020), Indeks Kerukunan Umat Beragama (2022) (Burhani, H., & Ulum 2022; Elsam 2017; Ihsani and Yosarie 2023; Muslim et al. 2018; Rais 2016; Sila and Fakhrudin 2020). According to the SETARA Institute's 2024 report, Padang City ranked 91st out of 94 cities and listed among the four least tolerant alongside Aceh, Depok, and Cilegon continues to enforce majority-oriented policies that institutionalize discrimination and weaken the governance of diversity in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the assessment results of these survey institutions require a more

adequate explanation grounded in an empirical perspective, particularly one based on evidence of actual tolerance practices (Brian J. Grim 2006; Prasetyo and Halimatusa'diyah 2024; Ritonga et al. 2024; Yustisia 2019) These practices have been deeply rooted in the daily lives of the people of Padang City. Moreover, Padang has long been recognized for possessing substantial social capital in fostering a tolerant coexistence among various ethnic and religious groups (Mubarak 2019). The Padang city government's policies in promoting tolerance, supported by adequate social capital, serve as key factors in advancing interreligious harmony in the city.

Most studies related to tolerance in Padang City tend to assess tolerance levels based on the rankings provided by several survey institutions, which often place Padang among the cities with low tolerance scores. In general, the methodologies employed by these institutions primarily rely on public opinion surveys. That public opinion surveys conducted by survey institutions have their limitations and inherent challenges compared to studies on other social themes, thus requiring survey instruments (questionnaires) that must be truly neutral (Fernandes 2019). Survey data obtained through public opinion tend to represent the views of the general population. However, there is a need for testing the antecedents of tolerance based on the social facts of tolerance practices within society. Another limitation is what is referred to as "high replication and low elaboration". The high replication and low elaboration stem from the fact that the tolerance questions asked in surveys tend to focus on the same issues, such as having a non-Muslim neighbor, building a non-Muslim place of worship, or electing a non-Muslim public official. The strongest rejection tends to come from activities related to worship, such as a non-Muslim building a place of worship or a non-Muslim conducting a communal prayer within their community (Mujani 2019; Sumaktoyo 2017). Thus, public opinion surveys on low tolerance in a particular region do not always correlate directly with the actual practices of tolerance within society. Religious Moderation Index (RMI) is considered more representative and neutral in capturing the level of tolerance in a given region, as it encompasses substantive dimensions such as national commitment, anti-violence stance, openness to religious and cultural differences, and accommodation of local traditions—elements that are not fully addressed in the IKT, which tends to be normative and policy-centric (Sukestiyarno et al. 2022).

Studies on the low tolerance in Padang City are often linked to the existence of religious-based regulations, particularly the Sharia Regional Regulations (Perda) implemented in various aspects of public life (Puneri Salim, Simbuka, and Luntajo 2016; Rohidin et al. 2023; Taufik 2024; Zulfadli, Jamhari Makruf 2024; Zulfadli, Anggraini, and Fajri 2020). In sociological terms, studies on tolerance in Padang City emphasize the relations between the majority and minority, which also occur in the interaction between the Minangkabau ethnic group and non-Muslims in Padang City (Ashadi 2015). Although the relationship between the majority and minority groups in Padang City, social capital in interfaith relations in Padang City has been deeply rooted in the community's social practices, manifested in the form of equality and cooperation among its members (Guyanie and Tamtowi 2022; Hakim 2012; Mubarak 2019) In the field of education, religious identities are formed through social interactions and education suggests that multicultural education and interfaith dialogue need to be strengthened in order to foster deeper tolerant attitudes among the younger generation (Ashadi 2020; Zulfadli 2025). From a cultural perspective, the Minangkabau culture recognizes the concept of 'Malakok,' which is the process of accepting newcomers, whether based on ethnicity or religion, into the existing clan structure of Minangkabau (Ashadi 2018; Kahn 1980; Sefriyono n.d.).

Based on the existing studies, it is emphasized that the practices of tolerance in Padang City have not been well depicted. Nevertheless, there are many examples of tolerance practices that need to be exposed that tolerance is indeed practiced in the daily lives of Padang's residents. This study complements the shortcomings of previous studies by emphasizing tolerance practices, or as Sila (2020) terms it, 'Groundedly applied,' as well as government policies in managing the existing diversity in Padang City, which is known to be quite heterogeneous. Tolerance practices in Padang City are important to highlight in order to obtain balanced and adequate information that tolerance is indeed practiced in the everyday experiences of Padang's residents. Specifically, this study answers how tolerance practices in

Padang City are represented in various forms, such as policies, social practices, and certain religious symbols. A deep understanding of these tolerance practices can provide a model for managing interreligious relations in a predominantly Muslim society, particularly in West Sumatra. Showcasing tolerance practices can serve as a valuable lesson learned and a best practice example, which could inspire similar practices in other Padang's society and other regions across Indonesia

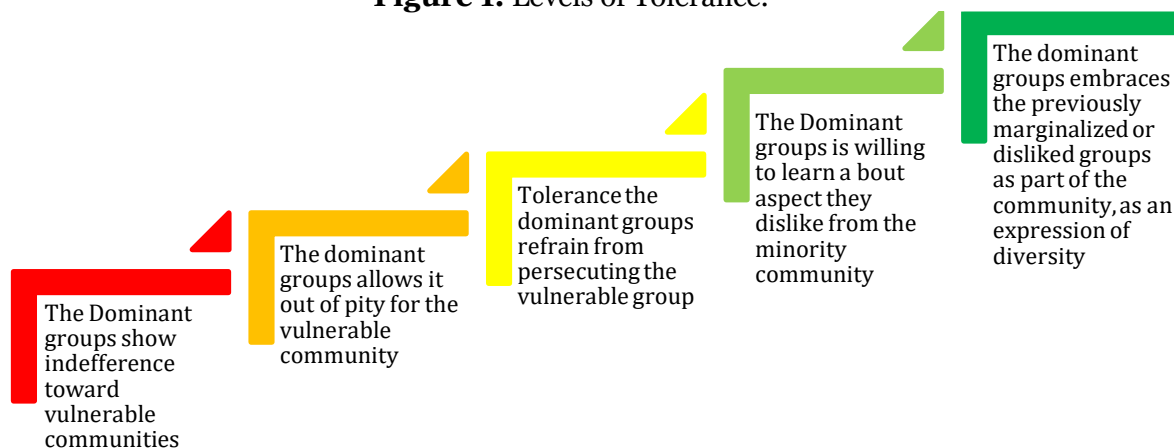
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tolerance can be defined as an attitude of mutual respect and acceptance of differences between individuals or groups. Acceptance of various forms of difference allows each individual to practice their beliefs and live their life according to their own choices, as long as it does not harm others or disturb public order (Bagir 2017; Rahmawati and Haryanto 2020). Tolerance can be categorized into social tolerance and political tolerance. Social tolerance refers to the attitude of positively accepting the differences that exist among groups outside one's own group. Meanwhile, political tolerance is related to an individual's willingness to respect the political and social rights of those outside their own group (Sumaktoyo 2017). In addition to these two categories, there is also religious tolerance, which emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and appreciation for each individual's religious beliefs in a diverse society.

Religious tolerance is an attitude that accepts the freedom of expression in belief and the practice of religion by citizens who follow a different religion from their own, while considering the constitutional rights of these citizens as equal to the rights of those who follow their own religion. On the other hand, 'religious intolerance' is an attitude that rejects, and seeks to prohibit or limit the expression of belief and/or religious practices of citizens who follow a different religion, while viewing the constitutional rights of their own religious adherents as superior to those of others (Mietzner and Muhtadi 2020). According to Menchik (2016), the tolerance that has developed in Indonesia has not fully emphasized individual freedom in religion. This form of tolerance allows pluralism but still operates within the boundaries of Islamic values and public morality. On the other hand, intolerance, according to Menchik, is not just the oppression of minorities, but rather an attitude that rejects the recognition and rights of religious groups considered to deviate from the majority norms. This includes actions to restrict groups seen as heretical or deviating from mainstream Islam, such as the Ahmadiyah and local belief groups. Through this concept, Menchik demonstrates that tolerance in Indonesia is not fully neutral as in liberal democracies, but is influenced by the dominance of Islamic values that define the boundaries between accepted and non-accepted groups (Menchik 2016).

Tolerance is not merely a positive attitude toward differences, but more about refraining from repressive actions by the dominant group. Walzer (1997) formulates tolerance into five levels, as shown in the figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Levels of Tolerance.



Sources: Walzer (1997)

The model of levels of tolerance shows the evolution of the dominant group's attitude towards minority groups, ranging from indifference, passive tolerance, to refraining from discrimination. At a more advanced stage, tolerance transforms into respect, where the dominant group begins to understand and accept the existence of vulnerable groups. The pinnacle is inclusion and diversity, when minority groups are not only accepted but also valued and involved equally in shared life. In the context of intergroup relations, Varshney (2002) emphasizes the importance of civic engagement in preventing ethnic conflicts, particularly between Hindus and Muslims in India. He distinguishes two forms of civic engagement: quotidian engagement, such as neighborly relations and informal social activities, and associational engagement, such as participation in civil society organizations. Varshney's study of 50 cities shows that cities with strong associational ties tend to be more socially stable and have fewer conflicts. This is because formal organizations can build social capital that bridges differences, strengthens a sense of solidarity, and fosters trust between groups (Varshney 2002).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study method, locus in Kampung Pondok, Padang City. The material object or unit of analysis focused on the religious tolerance practices in Padang City. The diversity of entities and social groups that had coexisted harmoniously in Padang City was a tangible manifestation of tolerance practices in urban society. This study also served as a model for problem-solving, demonstrating that tolerance practices were deeply rooted in the daily life of the people of Padang City.

Field data collection was conducted from July to November 2024. The data collection techniques included in-depth interviews and documentation from various sources, such as mass media, local regulations, and public narratives. The data sources in this study consisted of religious leaders, local government officials, religious facility administrators, as well as residents of Kampung Pondok, the administrators of 'FKUB' (The Forum for Religious Harmony), Islamic Community Guidance – Office of Ministry of Religious Affairs Padang City, and National and Political Unity Agency – Padang City. Participants were purposively selected to reveal various perspectives and direct experiences regarding tolerance practices in the field. Therefore, this analysis was not only descriptive but also interpretive and reflective of the social dynamics that developed in Padang City.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Portrait of Religious Diversity and Social Dynamics in Padang City

The majority of the population in Padang is Minangkabau, and Islam is the dominant religion, with 96.82% of the city's population adhering to Islam, according to data from the Ministry of Home Affairs in mid-2023 and BPS in 2025. Additionally, 2.85% of the population practices Christianity (1.53% Protestant and 1.32% Catholic), 0.32% follow Buddhism, and the remaining 0.01% consists of adherents of Hinduism, Confucianism, and other beliefs. Although mosques dominate the number of places of worship, there are also churches and temples, reflecting the religious diversity in Padang City (Kota Padang dalam Angka Padang Municipality in Figures 2025 2025). As show in the table below:

Table 1. The number of places of worship in Padang City is as follows.

Subdistrict	Temple/Mo nastery	Protestant Church	Catholic Church	Chinese Temple	Mosque
Bungus teluk kabung	-	-	-	-	17
Lubuk Kilangan	-	-	-	-	40
Lubuk Begalung	-	1	-	-	88
Padang Selatan	1	15	2	1	43
Padang Timur	-	-	-	-	79
Padang Barat	2	21	1	-	47
Padang Utara	-	1	-	-	65
Nanggalo	-	-	-	-	55

Kuranji	-	-	-	-	112
Pauh	-	-	-	-	50
Koto Tangah	-	2	-	-	208
Padang	3	40	2	1	804

Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS-Statistics Indonesia) 2024

Islam is the most widely practiced religion in Padang City, although the population diversity is asymmetric, with a significant gap between the majority (Islam and the Minang ethnicity) and minorities (other religions and ethnic groups). The interfaith social relations in Padang City are quite interesting to observe, especially since Padang is the capital of West Sumatra Province, which is often considered one of the regions with low tolerance according to the Setara Institute 2024. This is as shown below:

Table 2. 10 Cities with the Lowest Tolerance City Index Scores in 2024.

Rank	City	Score
85	Sabang	4,457
86	Bandar Lampung	4,450
87	Palembang	4,433
88	Pekanbaru	4,420
89	Mataram	4,387
90	Lhokseumawe	4,377
91	Padang	4,257
92	Banda Aceh	4,260
93	Cilegon	4,193
94	Depok	4,010

Sources: Setara Institute 2024

Nevertheless, SETARA Institute’s 2024 report highlights the findings of the Tolerant City Index, which indicate institutionalized discrimination and weak diversity management in Padang City, stand in contrast to the normative narrative that prevails at the local level. On one hand, the SETARA Institute report highlights the existence of intolerant practices and exclusive policies that do not reflect the principles of tolerance—such as restrictions on minority worship and the cancellation of certain cultural celebrations. On the other hand, statements by local figures, including the Chairperson of the Interfaith Communication Forum (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama/FKUB) and religious facility administrators, suggest that interreligious life in Padang is harmonious and peaceful, free from discrimination. This perspective is echoed by Salmadanis, the Chairperson of the Padang City FKUB (Interview, Chairperson of national and political unity agency (FKUB) Padang City, June 10, 2024).

In general, interreligious harmony in Padang City remains stable. Non-Muslim residents are able to coexist peacefully with the Muslim majority, enjoying a secure and harmonious social environment. There are no significant disturbances to public order, and socio-economic activities proceed smoothly. This is reflected in the statement of Mr. Ridwan, a temple caretaker:

"We have been able to live out our religious practices harmoniously with the surrounding Muslim and non-Muslim communities. During events such as Independence Day, Chinese New Year, and Eid al-Fitr, everyone helps one another, and people of various ethnic backgrounds coexist peacefully, especially among traders in Kampung Pondok. This reflects the Minangkabau principle, “where the earth is stepped on, there the sky is upheld,” emphasizing mutual understanding as the basis of peaceful living." (Ridwan, interview June 27, 2024)

In general, the public believes that individuals are free to choose their religion and perform religious practices without fear or coercion. Diversity should be viewed as an instrument for advancing shared goals—namely, equality and social justice—so that the aspirations for a more harmonious religious life can be realized. This is crucial, as one of the challenges we may face is the risk of disharmony or disintegration within society. In the

context of representation in Padang City—where the demographic structure is dominated by a religious majority—power sharing appears limited in political positions within the government. This conclusion emerged from an interview with the Head of Islamic Community Guidance (Bimas Islam):

"Christian religious counselors are assigned at the provincial level under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, while Padang City has only an Islamic counselor due to the Muslim majority. Even so, we are still included in interfaith celebrations, and counselors for other religions remain available at the provincial office." (Aris Junaidi, interview June 4, 2024)

Although the population of Padang is predominantly Muslim, its citizens generally show high levels of respect for the places of worship of other religions. This is evident in the way the community maintains harmony around non-Muslim houses of worship and refrains from disrupting religious practices. As stated by a Buddhist leader in Padang:

"We are all brothers, connected by our shared humanity. Right in front of us stands a mosque, yet there is no divide. As long as our hearts remain pure and filled with peace, harmony will always prevail. Even during our religious activities, which often coincide with the call to prayer, we are not disturbed. Likewise, when Muslims or Christians hold their events, they too are undisturbed." (Sugiharto Bante, interview November 7, 2024)

The Buddhist Center is the only officially recognized Vihara in Padang City. Across West Sumatra, there are four Viharas—in Padang, Padang Panjang, Bukittinggi, and Payakumbuh. Although the local Hindu temple (Pura) has been formally established, its existence is not widely known beyond the Hindu community. This Pura is the only one in West Sumatra, serving all Hindu practitioners across the province. Made Subawa, caretaker of Pura Jagatnatha, shared the following:

"The construction of the Pura has long faced licensing obstacles. Although residents of Pantai Air approved the plan in 1998, the Padang City Government unexpectedly revoked the permit, causing the project to be canceled. The committee then requested land from the Indonesian Air Force (TNI AU) at the Tabin Air Base—where many personnel are Hindu—and the request was eventually granted." (Made Subawa, interview November 10, 2024)

The Hindu temple in Padang is not only the sole Pura in the city but also in the entire province of West Sumatra. Its location is quite hidden, unlike the more accessible places of worship for other religious groups—especially for Muslims. With Hindus comprising less than 0.1% of West Sumatra's 5.6 million residents, establishing a Pura is no easy feat. Before the establishment of Pura Jagatnatha, worship was held in rotation at private homes. This should draw more attention from the Padang City Government, as the Hindu community—despite being a religious minority—also has the right to worship and observe their rituals freely.

Living as a Hindu minority in West Sumatra demands patience and perseverance in the face of limited prayer facilities, scarce religious tools, and restricted access to religious education. As expressed by Made Subawa:

"To truly understand and practice Hindu teachings, it would be ideal to receive instruction at the Pura itself. But for Hindus who live far from the temple, that is difficult. Many can only attend on religious holidays, given how remote and hidden the location is. We hope that the Padang City Government pays greater attention to this issue—at least in terms of providing adequate facilities and support for Hindu worship and education." (Made Subawa, interview November 10, 2024).

The government, which is constitutionally mandated to ensure the freedom of religion and worship, must not only facilitate interfaith dialogue but also guarantee equal access to religious facilities and education for all believers—including minority groups like the Hindus in Padang, who live as full residents of the city

Kampung Pondok as a Model of Religious Moderation in Padang City

The Religious Moderation Village in Padang City is strategically designed to sustain interreligious harmony and promote a high degree of tolerance among diverse faith communities (Wali Kota Padang Siapkan Kampung Pondok jadi Kampung Moderasi Beragama 2024). This initiative, spearheaded by the FKUB in collaboration with the Mayor of Padang and the Padang City Office of National Unity and Politics (Kesbangpol), was launched because Kampung Pondok is home to a highly diverse and devout population. The diversity of its residents is reflected in their ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. Despite these differences, the community has maintained peaceful, harmonious, and cooperative coexistence.

This sentiment is echoed by Reverend Bilman Simanjuntak, who shared a compelling example of interfaith solidarity:

"Amidst our differences, we find peace here. There is no pressure or conflict with the surrounding residents. When disaster struck Padang, Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists all helped one another. It wasn't only during difficult times; even in joyous moments, we share. During Qurban celebrations, we also received meat distributions, and we've distributed food aid to the Muslim majority as well. This Moderation Village truly represents a model for interreligious harmony." (Rev. Bilman Simanjuntak, interview November 8, 2024)

The Padang City Government, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and FKUB jointly organize interfaith dialogues and community meetings at Kampung Pondok, inaugurated by the Acting Mayor. Speakers from 'Kesbangpol', the Police's Community Division, and 'FKUB' emphasize the village's pluralistic and harmonious community, making it an ideal candidate for a Religious Moderation Village. Kampung Pondok in Padang has been designated as a village of religious moderation by the 'FKUB' and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in collaboration with the Padang City government.

In the context of measuring regional tolerance, the approach used by the Tolerant City Index (IKT), as developed by institutions such as the Setara Institute, often emphasizes normative and policy-based dimensions. While valuable, this approach tends to overlook the lived experiences and everyday religious practices of local communities. As a more contextual and substantive alternative, the Religious Moderation Index (RMI) developed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs operationalized by Sukestiyarno et al. (2022) proposes four key dimensions: *national commitment*, *tolerance*, *anti-violence*, and *accommodation of local culture*. These dimensions enable a more comprehensive assessment of tolerance that extends beyond formal policy indicators to include civic attitudes and inclusive religious behavior. In this regard, RMI is considered more neutral and representative in capturing the actual landscape of religious tolerance. In the case of Padang City—particularly in Kampung Pondok—these four dimensions are evidently embodied in interfaith cooperation, mutual respect for minority religious symbols, ongoing interreligious dialogues, and the preservation of inclusive local cultural values. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the Religious Moderation Index as a complementary, if not alternative, framework for evaluating tolerance in religiously diverse urban contexts such as Padang.

Cultural Diversity as a Social Tolerance Bond in Padang City

In Padang City, several behaviors exhibited by the local community reflect pluralism and the coexistence of different religious and cultural groups. One of the key factors contributing to this harmony is the influence of the Minangkabau culture, which is the dominant ethnic group in Padang. Their traditional philosophy, such as "*dima bumi dipijak, disitu langit dijunjuang*" (wherever you stand on earth, that's where the sky is upheld), "*lamak di awak katuju di urang*" (appetite in one's body, destination in the other's), as well as the fusion of indigenous arts and culture with incoming cultures, plays a significant role in

fostering unity and tolerance among the people. These local wisdoms provide an excellent foundation for building a peaceful society.

This practice reflects how the Minangkabau community can manage diversity in a harmonious and mutually beneficial way. The “spread of sugar” (serak gulo) tradition is an important part of the cultural heritage of the Indian Muslim descendants in Padang. This tradition not only preserves cultural values but also strengthens social bonds within the community. Held at the end of Jumadil Akhir in the Islamic calendar, Serak Gulo has become a festive annual event, held in front of the Muhammadiyah Mosque in Pasar Gadang. During this event, the community gathers to celebrate, share happiness, and honor the traditions that have been passed down for years. Serak Gulo is often filled with various activities such as joint prayers, traditional foods, and cultural performances. By continuing to preserve this tradition, younger generations are taught the importance of maintaining cultural identity and religious values.

Picture 1. The Tradition of Spreading Sugar



Sumber: <https://www.kompas.id/baca/nusantara/2020/01/26/manisnya-berbagi-dalam-tradisi-serak-gulo-2, 2024>

Besides Serak Gulo tradition, Cap Go Meh celebration or the Dragon Dance, which is one of the traditional arts of the Chinese community in Padang, West Sumatra. The presence of the Chinese ethnic group in Padang has, to some extent, been influenced by the Minangkabau ethnic group. This is because the Chinese community has long settled in Padang. One example of the influence of the Chinese ethnic group on the Minangkabau ethnic group can be seen in the Dragon Dance performed by the Lim family group. The Lim family’s Dragon Dance group also includes indigenous people in their performances. As seen in the following picture:

Picture 2. The Chinese New Year Celebration in Padang City



Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS-Statistics Indonesia) 2024

The Chinese New Year (Imlek) celebration in Padang is not only celebrated by the Chinese ethnic group but is also enlivened by various social and religious entities in the city. This depicts the social reality of Padang as a city born from diversity and differences, living harmoniously side by side. This city does not belong to just one ethnic or religious group, but serves as a shared home for all its residents, including those from the Minang, Chinese, Keling-Indian, Javanese, Nias, and non-Muslim communities. Cultural diversity is a key asset for fostering harmony, as local traditions can facilitate dialogue, strengthen belonging, and reduce religious anxiety. Various religious and social organizations in Kampung Pondok also promote interfaith understanding and cohesion.

The Role of Citizenship Networks as Pillars of Tolerance in Padang City

The Kampung Pondok area in Padang is one of the regions that has a strong social capital in the form of cross-ethnic and interfaith citizenship networks. This area serves as a shared living space for communities from diverse backgrounds, such as Minang, Chinese, Javanese, Batak, Nias, Indian, and other ethnic groups, as well as followers of various religions including Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The Kampung Pondok area, or the "Kampung Cina" (Chinese Village) as it is popularly known, is a symbol of diversity, where the relationship among residents functions well and harmoniously. It is not only inhabited by the Minang people but also by communities from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, including the Chinese community living in Kampung Pondok. One example of peaceful coexistence can be found in the Tanah Kongsu Market, located on Jalan Kelenteng, Kampung Pondok, West Padang District. This market serves as a social interaction space that reflects interethnic and interfaith tolerance practices amid daily economic activities. The Tanah Kongsu Market is accessible via Jalan Kelenteng, Jalan Niaga, or through the residential area. It is also located near the See Hin Kiong Temple, the oldest temple in Padang. Various daily necessities are sold at this market during operating hours, ranging from food, drinks, fruits, vegetables, fish, to meat. Specifically, pork is sold in a separate section, neatly arranged according to its type, to ensure it does not mix with other food items or vendors, most of whom are Minang Muslims. This arrangement demonstrates a tangible form of respect for the beliefs and needs of each group in daily life in Padang, and thus, the Tanah Kongsu market is considered a proof of tolerance in Padang City (Pasar Tanah Kongsu Bukti Toleransi di Kota Padang 2024).

Picture 3. Minang-Chinese Interaction at Tanah Kongsu Market in Padang City



Source: <https://sumbar.antaraneews.com/berita/163667/minang-tionghoa-menyatu-di-pasar-tanah-kongsu, 2024>

The Tanah Kongsu Market in South Padang District, is a concrete example of the harmonious relationship between the Minang and Chinese ethnic groups. Despite their different cultural backgrounds and beliefs, both communities have succeeded in building close ties through economic activities in the market. Interestingly, there is a designated area for the sale of pork, which is arranged in such a way to prevent any mixing with other areas, as a form

of respect for the majority of Muslim traders and buyers. In the interactions between sellers and buyers, the use of "Bahasa Minang Pondok," a Minangkabau dialect adapted by the Chinese community, strengthens cultural adaptation and enhances social interactions among ethnic groups. The harmonious social life in the Tanah Kongsu Market reflects the values of tolerance and mutual respect that have long been cultivated between the Minang and Chinese communities in Padang City.

The presence of neighboring places of worship in Padang City reflects the living and preserved pluralism of religion and culture. One concrete example is the Al-Hakim Mosque and the Warman Buddhist Vihara, located close to each other on Muara Street. These two places of worship not only have spiritual significance but also represent cultural heritage that showcases the diverse identities of the people of Padang. The harmony between the Muslim and Buddhist communities in this area is a reflection of tolerance that is not merely symbolic but is present in daily practice. As stated by Sudharma, the Chairman of the Warman Buddhist Vihara, the relationship between the communities has always been harmonious without conflict, and even the Vihara's courtyard has been used as a parking area for Muslims attending the Eid prayer. This practice of mutual respect demonstrates that interfaith harmony is not only possible but can also thrive when values of understanding and respect for differences are jointly upheld in community life.

The people of Padang City frequently visit Kampung Pondok not only for economic and recreational activities, such as enjoying coffee and purchasing souvenirs, but also as a reflection of adaptive social trust and social capital. These daily practices reflect *quodidiana* engagement, which enhances tolerance by fostering mutual respect and acceptance of differences as part of the social dynamics. In this context, Kampung Pondok is not only a center for culinary and trade activities but also functions as a social space that encourages the creation of social cohesion amidst the diversity of urban communities. Referring to Claridge's (2018) social capital theory, interactions in Kampung Pondok exhibit bonding, bridging, and linking forms of social capital—ranging from internal group solidarity to intergroup engagement through cultural and interfaith activities, as well as connections with formal institutions (Claridge 2018). This aligns with Prasetyo (2024), who shows that interreligious interactions enhance tolerance across multiple dimensions, supporting social contact theory that cross-identity engagement strengthens bridging social capital and reduces prejudice (Prasetyo and Halimatusa'diyah 2024).

Although the Minangkabau ethnic group, which is predominantly Muslim, is the dominant group (dominant culture) in Padang, religion and local identity remain the main references in managing diversity. On the other hand, migrant groups such as the Chinese, Nias, Indian communities, and minority religious groups like Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucians have demonstrated adaptive and open attitudes by fostering relationships based on mutual respect and adjusting to local values. This attitude of mutual understanding has significantly contributed to the creation of harmony and relatively stable social cohesion in Padang. This phenomenon aligns with Sila's explanation, as quoted by Parsudi Suparlan (2017), regarding the dominant culture model and managing diversity from within. Conversely, in Sambas and Maluku, the unwillingness of migrant groups such as Madurese and BBM (Bugis, Buton, Makassar) to respect local cultures has led to social disharmony and even violent conflicts (Sila 2017; Suparlan 2006).

CONCLUSION

This study shows that although Padang City is often ranked low in the Tolerance City Index (IKT) by several national survey institutions, in reality, it has tolerance practices that are alive and deeply rooted in the everyday life of its community. Field findings reveal that religious harmony in Padang City is realized through close social interactions, cultural diversity that is respected, and support from local governments and religious organizations such as FKUB in creating spaces for dialogue and cooperation among religious communities. Kampung Pondok, as the main site of this study, reflects the face of pluralism and religious moderation through

symbols in public spaces, economic activities, adjacent places of worship, and cultural traditions that accommodate various ethnic groups and religions.

Using Micael Walzer's theoretical framework on tolerance levels, along with Ashutosh Varshney's theory of civic bonds, it is shown that there are positive tolerance practices in Padang City, where the majority group not only restrains itself but also actively embraces minorities as an integral part of society. Furthermore, Claridge's (2018) social capital theory strengthens the idea that practices of bonding, bridging, and linking in society have formed a strong citizenship network. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of a practice-based approach and local context in understanding and assessing tolerance.

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