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## Tolerance behavior among society in city of Tomohon, North Sulawesi

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### Abstract

This study highlights the uniqueness of tolerance behavior practiced among society in city of Tomohon in North Sulawesi. There is such sustainable harmonious situation supported by the tolerance behavior within the diverse ethnicity, religion, races and lingual practices. The study uses qualitative approach and grounded theory as data analysis technique to analyze the identification of several social activities in society of Tomohon city. Those tolerance behaviors are clearly captured in various activities such as market trade, community gathering, wedding and funeral ceremony, and religious celebration day. Those kinds of social activities have been successfully accommodated the interaction among the people. The implementation of local value without hesitation to external thoughts that turn into social norm also support the realization of tolerance among the local and immigrants with different religion and ethnic background.

**Keywords:** tolerance, social activities, social norm, religion, ethnic

### Introduction

One of the fascinating features of Indonesian society is the plurality of cultures and religions. The French historian Denys Lombard once referred to Java as "Le Carrefour Javanais" or "Javanese Exhibition," where various cultures meet in a geographical cross (Lombard, 1996) <sup>[1]</sup>. It is depicted with the fact that the structure of Indonesian society is characterized by two unique characteristics. Meanwhile, according to Nasikun (2006) <sup>[2]</sup> the structure of Indonesian society is characterized by two unique categories. Horizontally, it consists of social unity based on ethnic, religious, customs and regional differences. Whereas vertically, the structure is characterized by the presence of incisive distinction between higher and lower level communities.

In consequence, the shift among religious, ethnic groups, cultures or customs seemed to trigger the horizontal split within the society. Since 1997, Indonesia has been struck by many conflicts that occurred in various regions such as Ambon, Papua, Kalimantan, Poso. Those areas have suffered severe physical and social damage caused by those conflicts. The conflicts appear particularly because of the lack of tolerance in religion and cultural understanding among the society. These issues continue to thrive following many social and economic interest through different types of community and regions.

In contrast to those situations in those parts of Indonesia, where horizontal conflicts are frequently encountered, the people in North Sulawesi is obviously maintain the well preserved tolerance. The society evidently remain calm, secure, and peaceful among each other although they are diverse in ethnicity, religion, races and lingual practice (Pangalila, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>. This harmonious and tolerance situation is obviously noticeable in city of Tomohon North Sulawesi.

In addition, except the Minahasa as the main local community, Tomohon also receives many settlers from various regions outside the city such as Java, Sangir, Bolaang Mongondow, Gorontalo, Totemboan and Tionghoa. They had been settled in this area long time ago and had assimilated as one local society. The majority of Tomohon city people embrace Christianity, but also there are numbers of Moslem, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism. Despite the growing number of immigrants and mostly other religions, the harmonization of daily life is well maintained. There has never been any friction among the immigrants and local communities.

According to the above background, this study aims to identify types of tolerance behaviors among local society in city of Tomohon. It relates to the kind of social behaviors that practices within the local activities and also the norms which applied to rule the ways of Tomohon's people behave.

### Literature Review

#### i) Definition of Tolerance

In general, tolerance is defined as personal or group qualities that manifest themselves as 'the desire to receive "others" the way they are and to interact with them in the basis of understanding and consent (Drobizheva, 2003) <sup>[4]</sup>. It is explained that tolerance is strongly related to attitudes and actions that respect different religious, ethnic, ethnic, opinion, attitude, and other person's differences. Drobizheva (2003) <sup>[4]</sup> also add that tolerance become the medium for social interaction owned certain distance in the people's relationship. Based on these explanations, the characteristics of tolerance are defined as the attitude that respects the different of religions, ethnic groups, the use of languages, and indeed opinions and acts.

## ii) Definition of Society and community

The term society derived from the Latin word *socius*, meaning "friend". The term society itself comes from the Arabic root *syaraka* meaning "to participate" (Koentjaraningrat, 2002) <sup>[5]</sup>. Gillin (1954) <sup>[6]</sup> had formulated society as the largest group of people which has resemblance or try make in common the certain customs, traditions, attitudes and feelings of unity. Particularly they share similar language, religion, and thoughts. They also practiced certain norms to uniforms the social acts as the core of their social interaction.

In addition, in local scale, society is disported into the local community which commonly resides in smaller area like city or village, yet sometimes it applies to nation. (Soekanto, 2012) <sup>[7]</sup>. If the group members, whether large or small, live together in such a way as they are able to attain the major life interest, the group is called a local community. Meanwhile, the group of people who come and occupy the certain area which are previously not their places, the community is called as immigrants. Particularly this people is moving to the region and adapting with the local community in the process of their social interaction (Stephen et. al, 1999). Consequently, the presence of the social displacement yet interaction and assimilation generates social diversity among the society. This diversity in the context of community life includes the differences in ethnic, religious and belief, ideology, customs, politeness, and economic situation (Setiadi, et al., 2007) <sup>[9]</sup>.

## iii) Social Behaviors and Interaction

Popenoe (1988) <sup>[10]</sup> explained that social interaction is a social process involving interpersonal, group, and personal relationships with groups. Social interaction is the main requirement of social activities. Soekanto (2012) <sup>[7]</sup> added that the ongoing process of interaction is based on various factors, among others, the factor of imitation, suggestion, identification and sympathy.

On the other hand, social behavior is a set of behaviors that are owned by humans and influenced by customs, attitudes, emotions, values, ethics, power, persuasion, and genetics. The behavior of individual is divided into fair behavior, acceptable behavior, strange behavior, and deviant behavior. The acceptance of someone's behavior is measured relatively to social norms and governed by various social controls (Nawawie, 2009) <sup>[11]</sup>.

## Methodology

### i) Research Approach

This study is a qualitative research with descriptive and analytical approaches that highlight the importance of examining and analyzing the life of a phenomenon or appearance of what is happening in a stream of consciousness. According to Byrne (2001), qualitative research examines life experiences (i.e., the lived experience) in an effort to understand and give them meaning. This is usually done by systematically collecting and analyzing narrative materials using methods that ensure credibility of both the data and the results <sup>1</sup>

This approach is more concerned in-depth observation and interview techniques become very important in data collection, and researchers become the main instrument. The use of qualitative descriptive approach because it is suitable

with the problems studied, and also because: (1) the approach <sup>3</sup> this study is more flexible, (2) able to present the data directly, the nature of the relationship between the informant and the researcher, (3) ) can adapt and be sensitive to the phenomena encountered in the field. Qualitative approach is applied to explore the meaning of tolerance on their own behavior in the world of social interaction of Tomohon City North Sulawesi.

### 2) Research Site

This research was conducted in Tomohon City-North Sulawesi. The reason for choosing this area because Tomohon city is quite famous as a city of full tolerance. The majority of the people of Tomohon are from Minahasa group with Christian as their main religion. The local interactions embraces the harmony among immigrants and local community.

### iii) Data Collection and Analysis Technique

This research utilizes grounded theory as the main research method. Strauss and Corbin (1998) <sup>[12]</sup> explained grounded theory is theory obtained from phenomena study which represent the research itself. It is also defined <sup>8</sup> there are three kinds of data analysis in coding process that is Open Coding, Axial Coding, and Selective Coding. This research also uses several kind of validity test in process analysis. First, internal validity or credibility is applied for the aspect of truth, external validity of transferability for the method application, dependability for aspect of consistency, and confirm ability for the aspect of neutrality (Sugiyono, 2011) <sup>[13]</sup>.

## Results and discussion

The tolerance behaviors in city of Tomohon are clearly observed from the social behaviors practiced among people's activities and also social norms that influence social interaction within the daily life. This research has analyzed those behaviors with several different occasions to attain the people's behaviors and the norm in detail. Most of them relate each other and strengthen the bond between tolerance and social value in city of Tomohon.

### i) Tolerance in social behaviors

The attitude and tolerance behaviors in city of Tomohon are mostly triggered by the social interaction among the people that practiced in many different social activities such as economic trade in local market, community gathering, funeral ceremony, and religious celebration day.

### Social behaviors in the Local Market

Economic trade in the local market is normally run by embracing the whole social elements. No discrimination between immigrants and local community. There is no distinction among sellers and buyers relates to their religion or ethnics. They interact each other in adequate friendliness hence create conducive environment for market trade. The social interactions are practiced in a way of warm greetings to almost everybody in the market without any hesitate upon their religion or ethnic background. These tolerance behaviors are mainly forced by the Minahasa culture which did not embrace royal system.



### **Social Behaviors in community gathering**

In the daily life of the Tomohon community, family value is obviously visible in such kind of community gathering. The gathering in this context is relate to the certain ethnic background or territorial based that form an association to accommodate the community members. As it noted, there are local neighborhood association name Rukun Kawanua that popular among the majority of people in city of Tomohon. There are also immigrant group association such as Javanese and Ambon community, and other religion-based association for Moslem and Christian people. These types of local association become the potential social capital that maintained by the people in city of Tomohon and Minahasa community.

Based on the result of interviews and observations, the study reveals that some of these typical community associations exists regardless of religious and ethnics background, especially when it relates to local neighborhood association. They share such interactions within the same group with various kind of activities. For instance, Arisan or community gathering in level of Kelurahan (district) is the activity known for gathering and collecting money to be shared for every member in certain period of time. The purpose of this gathering is not only for creating informal savings among the people but also for creating occasion hence all the members can be gathered and interact each other. In addition, Arisan also particularly represent the cultural value of Mapalus or known as value of mutual cooperation that become the strongest social characteristic of Minahasa people. Lastly, arisan is able to accommodate all the community members to participate in social interaction including immigrant community.

### **Social Behavior in Funeral Ceremony**

In city of Tomohon, people from both local and immigrants are actively involved without any barrier in interacting, including in the funeral ceremony. Normally, people with similar background in religion always attend the ceremony even tough there are no formal invitation like the wedding ceremony does. It is overly more counted when the dead person is relatives, neighbors or colleagues. Particularly for the people with different religion, the presences are counted in the ceremony but not in the context of religious ritual. In addition, there are such habits for bringing snack to the grieving family to cherish them as well as to support the ceremony. Those social acts above show how the tolerance embrace the society without any barrier.

### **Social Behavior on Religious Celebration Days**

The ultimate tolerance acts mostly recognized when it turns into religious aspect. It also applies to situation in city of Tomohon during religious celebration day such as Christmas for the Christian and *Lebaran* for Muslim. Alike other custom, people will be visiting each other to give greeting upon the special day, especially for those people in the same religion. However, the visiting activities are also carried to other who are not celebrating the day. For, instance Muslims is visiting the Christian when they celebrate Christmas, and Christian is visiting back during *Lebaran* moment. Indeed, in special occasion name Ketupat day, almost all people among the community are visiting each other to embrace the cherish

moment. The younger people also involve in guarding both churches and mosques when celebrating the religious days. It strengthens the interaction yet avoid provocation that might threaten the harmony among the society.

This inviting habit had become one of the most important cultural value for people in Tomohon which are precious to be maintained. It is obviously successful in keeping the tolerance among the society. They are able to practice fitted interaction yet remain respect the boundary from different background. Since the local community is heterogeneous, the people need less effort to keep the tolerance actively be held.

### **ii) Tolerance in social norms**

Tolerance in Tomohon society is influenced by moral values built by local people such as mutual respect, serving each other, solidarity, mutual decision making and mutual help. In such social interaction, each individual acts according to their position, status, and role. Human action in social interaction is always based on the values and norms prevailing in society. By the norm, every human being fights for his interests and needs within boundaries without violate the rules and harm the interests of others. Thus the orderly, secure, and peaceful life can be realized. Moreover, human life in society are not only governed by law but also regulated by religious norms, morality, decency, and other rules. These social rules are binding in the sense of obedience from the member of community in which the rules apply.

In the context of Tomohon city, the majority of social behaviors are influenced by social norm from the moral value that apply to all people especially the Minahasa group. According to Turang (1997) <sup>[14]</sup>, the concept of moral values that became the orientation of Minahasan society and revealed through social behavior are *Masyas sigian* means mutual respect for each other, *Masaali* means service especially children to parents, *Marukup* means togetherness or solidarity, *Maseng peleng* or *Paumung* means deliberation and the last, *Mapalus* means mutual help. The study revealed that by applying these norms, people especially between local and immigrants never offend upon religion or ethnicity background, not even in words. In the daily life of the community of local communities and immigrants. Elegantly, the people sustain this high mutual respect to keep the harmony continuously present in their social life.

### **Conclusions**

The tolerance behaviors in city of Tomohon are obviously depicted from the social behaviors practiced among people's activities and also social norms that influence social interaction within the daily life. The tolerance presents within various kind of social activities, market trade, local gathering, weddings, funeral and religious celebration. These occasions successfully accommodate the interaction among the society in the city of Tomohon. The implementation of local value without hesitation to external inputs that turn into social norm support the realization of tolerance among the local and immigrants with different religion and ethnic background.

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