

**RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE QUR'AN AND HADITH**M. Basor Hidayatullah Lubis<sup>1</sup>, Jesti Damara<sup>2</sup>, and Muhamad Yahya<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia<sup>3</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia**Corresponding Author:**

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2026**Abstract**

This study examines the concept of religious tolerance in Islam based on the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Diversity in ethnicity, culture, race, and religion is a social reality that cannot be separated from human life, especially in Indonesia as a multicultural country that upholds the principle of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity). However, differences often trigger social conflict and intolerance when not accompanied by mutual respect and understanding. Islam, as a religion of mercy for all creation, teaches tolerance (tasamuh) as a fundamental value reflected in both the Qur'an and Hadith. This research uses a literature study method by analyzing books, journal articles, and other academic references related to religious tolerance in Islam. The findings show that the Qur'an strongly emphasizes freedom of religion and respect for differences, particularly through Surah Al-Baqarah verse 256, which rejects compulsion in religion, and Surah Al-Kafirun verse 6, which affirms mutual respect between followers of different faiths. In addition, the Hadith of the Prophet demonstrates persuasive, wise, and peaceful approaches in interacting with non-Muslims. The study concludes that Islamic teachings promote harmony, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence among people of different religions without compromising Islamic beliefs. Therefore, understanding the values of tolerance in the Qur'an and Hadith is essential for preventing extremism, strengthening interfaith harmony, and building peaceful social relations in contemporary multicultural societies.

**Keywords:** Hadith, Religious Tolerance, Qur'an

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## INTRODUCTION

Diversity is a divine law that cannot be denied in human life. Differences in ethnicity, nationality, culture, race, and religion are social realities that have become an integral part of the dynamics of human life throughout the world. Indonesia, as a country with the motto “BhinnekaTunggal Ika” (Unity in Diversity), is a concrete example of how religious and cultural pluralism can coexist within a single nation. However, this diversity often leads to social friction, and even religiously tinged horizontal conflicts, if it is not grounded in a strong understanding and attitude of tolerance among its adherents.

Is a concrete example of how religious and cultural pluralism can coexist within a single nation. However, this diversity often leads to social friction, and even religiously tinged horizontal conflicts, if it is not grounded in a strong understanding and attitude of tolerance among its adherents. Islam, as a religion of mercy for all creation, has inherently placed tolerance (*tasamuh*) as one of its fundamental values. Etymologically, tolerance derives from the word “tolerant,” known in Arabic as *tasamuh*, which conveys the meanings of respecting, allowing, and accepting existing differences. Terminologically, tolerance is defined as an attitude of consideration toward various stances, views, beliefs, and convictions that differ from one’s own. This value of tolerance is not only practiced in social life but has been comprehensively formulated by Islam through its two primary sources of teachings: the Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

The Quran, as the holy book of Muslims, affirms the principle of tolerance in numerous verses. One of the most fundamental is the word of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 256, which states that there is no compulsion in embracing Islam, because the truth of Islam is evident and clear. This verse serves as the primary foundation for religious freedom in Islam, affirming that belief is a personal right of every human being that cannot be forced upon anyone. Similarly, in Surah Al-Kafirun, verse 6, there is a firm yet courteous principle: “To you your religion, and to me mine,” which illustrates that Islam acknowledges the existence of other religions while maintaining a strong Islamic identity (Fadilah et al., 2025).

In addition to the Quran, the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also serves as a rich source of teachings on tolerance. In various hadith narrations, the Prophet taught the importance of respecting adherents of other religions, including the People of the Book, without compromising core doctrinal principles. The Prophet’s message to Mu’adh ibn Jabal when he was sent to Yemen, as narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari, reflects a persuasive, educational, and wise approach to preaching to non-Muslims. This teaching simultaneously affirms that Islam rejects all forms of coercion in matters of faith and prioritizes dialogue and mutual respect among people of different faiths (Fahmi et al., 2019).

The relevance of studies on religious tolerance from the perspective of the Qur’an and Hadith has become increasingly important in this contemporary era. The emergence of various movements of intolerance, extremism, and radicalism in the name of religion demands a correct and comprehensive understanding of the true teachings of Islam (Al-kubise, 2023). From the perspective of the psychology of religion, religious maturity is a crucial factor that fosters tolerance among adherents of various religions. By understanding the values of tolerance derived directly from the Qur’an and Hadith, it is hoped that Muslims can serve as role models in building a harmonious, peaceful, and mutually respectful social life amidst diversity.

Based on this background, this article aims to examine and analyze the concept of religious tolerance in depth based on the arguments found in the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This study is expected to provide a meaningful academic contribution to efforts to understand Islam as a religion that upholds human values, respects diversity, and promotes interfaith harmony, particularly in Indonesia and the wider Islamic world.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The method employed in this study is a literature study or library research approach. Library research is a method that relies on various written sources as the primary data for analysis and interpretation. Unlike field research, which collects data directly from respondents or research sites, literature study emphasizes the examination of theories, concepts, and previous research findings that are relevant to the topic being investigated. This approach enables researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon through the analysis of existing scientific literature.

According to Ramadhan (2021), literature study is a type of research conducted from the beginning to the completion of the study by utilizing various literature sources. The process involves identifying, collecting, reviewing, and synthesizing information obtained from books, scientific journals, conference proceedings, and other scholarly publications. Through this method, researchers are able to construct a strong theoretical foundation and identify research gaps that require further discussion and exploration.

In conducting this study, the author collected data from a variety of references, including textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, proceedings, and credible online sources. These references were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to the discussion of the research topic. The use of diverse sources is intended to provide comprehensive information and ensure that the analysis is supported by reliable and up-to-date literature.

The data collection process was followed by a systematic review and analysis of the selected literature. The author carefully examined the concepts, theories, and findings presented in each source and then compared and synthesized the information to identify common themes and significant issues related to the topic under investigation. This analytical process allowed the author to develop a deeper understanding of the subject and to formulate a coherent discussion based on the available evidence.

Based on the findings obtained from the literature review, the author subsequently organized and interpreted the information in accordance with the objectives and focus of the study. The discussion presented in this paper is therefore derived from a critical examination of various scholarly sources and is intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Through this library research approach, the study contributes to the enrichment of theoretical perspectives and offers valuable insights for future research in the related field.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In principle, Islam is a religion that teaches tolerance, as found in the Holy Book (the Noble Qur'an) and also in the hadith of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. Islam's own view of other religions includes the application of a firm yet courteous principle: "Your religion is for you, and my religion is for me." Allah, Exalted and Glorified be He, states in Surah Al-Kafirun, verse 6: لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ "Meaning: To you is your religion, and to me is my religion".

Islam teaches that there are differences among human beings in terms of culture, tribe, ethnicity, and religious beliefs. These differences serve to foster mutual understanding and the development of social bonds among people. Diversity is an inescapable and undeniable social reality, particularly in Indonesia, as embodied by the Pancasila principle of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika": "Unity in Diversity".

In Islam, the concept of religious tolerance generally refers to openness, acknowledging differences, and demonstrating respect for those differences. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the psychology of religion, religious maturity is a factor that fosters tolerance among followers of different faiths (Ilmiah & Syakhshiyah, 2022).

The concept of tolerance is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. However, if we consider the meaning of tolerance (tasamuh)-which implies respecting differences-the Qur'an has extensively taught us how to maintain brotherhood and respect differences, so that harmony and peace may be fostered among all people (Klaina & Putra, 2025). This is because the prerequisite for a peaceful life is respecting differences among tribes, nations, races, cultures, and religions. Apart from the Qur'an, the definition of tolerance in the Indonesian Dictionary, linguistically (etymologically), derives from the word "toleran" (English: tolerance; Arabic: tasamuh; Dutch: tolerantie). "Toleran" implies "to tolerate." Meanwhile, according to terminology, tolerance is an attitude of consideration (respecting, allowing, permitting) toward one's stance (opinions, views, beliefs).

### Quranic Verses on Tolerance

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Meaning: There is no compulsion in (adhering to) the religion (Islam). Indeed, the right path is clearly distinguished from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in the truth and believes in Allah has indeed held fast to a very strong rope that will not break. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

Ibn Kathir stated, "Do not force anyone to convert to Islam. For the truth of Islam is already so clear and evident. Therefore, there is no need for coercion to enter Islam. However, whoever Allah guides to accept Islam, whose heart becomes more open and who receives the light of Islam, has entered Islam through clear guidance. However, whoever Allah has blinded the heart, hearing, and sight of, there is no need to force him to enter Islam. There is no benefit in entering Islam under duress. The scholars have mentioned that the reason for the revelation of this verse concerns the Ansar. However, the meaning of this verse is general (Iman et al., 2022).

This verse serves as the primary foundation of Islamic teachings on religious freedom. It affirms that there must be no pressure or coercion in choosing one's faith, including toward those who have not yet embraced Islam. According to Ibn Kathir's Tafsir, the context of this verse's revelation relates to a Companion from the Ansar who sought to force Islam upon his Jewish son. However, Allah rejected that attitude and affirmed that faith is a personal right. Sayyid Qutb, in *Fi Zilalil Qur'an*, emphasizes that faith is a matter of the heart and reason that cannot be forced. True faith can only grow from understanding, sincerity, and personal awareness, not from external pressure. In contemporary life. This verse underscores the importance of a persuasive approach in da'wah and the rejection of all forms of coercion regarding faith, supporting a peaceful and educational approach in conveying religious teachings.

This verse affirms that Islam recognizes freedom of religion as a human right. Within the family, this verse can be taught through open dialogue with children about religious diversity. In schools, freedom of religion must be a guiding principle in the management of interfaith education. Meanwhile, in society, this value promotes tolerance among people of different faiths.

"Say: 'O disbelievers.' This verse is actually addressed to all disbelievers on earth. However, the context of this verse specifically refers to the disbelieving Quraysh. Regarding this surah, some scholars state that due to the ignorance of the Quraysh disbelievers, they invited the Messenger, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, to worship their idols for one year, and then they would take turns worshipping the object of the Messenger's worship (namely Allah the Exalted) for another year as well. Ultimately, Allah the Exalted revealed this surah (Iman et al., 2022). Allah commanded His Messenger to completely disassociate himself from the religion of those polytheists. "I will not worship what you worship," meaning the idols and rivals other than Allah.

"And you are not worshippers of the Lord whom I worship," meaning that I worship Allah alone; He has no partner. "And I will never be a worshipper of what you worship," meaning that I will not worship by following the practices you perform; I only wish to worship Allah in the way that Allah loves and is pleased with. "And you have never been worshippers of the God I worship," meaning that you do not follow Allah's commands and laws in performing worship; rather, what you do is invent your own forms of worship according to your own whims.

These verses clearly indicate the need to distance oneself from polytheists and all forms of worship they practice. A servant should have a deity whom he worships. The worship he performs must, of course, follow what his deity has taught. The Messenger, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, and his followers worship Allah in accordance with what Allah has prescribed. This is the consequence of the declaration of sincerity: *"There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah"* (Abraham & Creed, 2025). The meaning of this noble statement is "there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and the way to perform that worship is by following the teachings of the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him. "The polytheists perform acts of worship directed toward other than Allah, even though Allah has not permitted it.

This verse affirms the principle of religious freedom and a firm stance in upholding one's faith while respecting the beliefs of others. It demonstrates that everyone has the right to embrace and practice their respective religions without coercion.

## Hadisths on Religious Tolerance

### Let us Continue to Respect One Another Across Religions

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُقَاتِلٍ أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ أَخْبَرَنَا زَكَرِيَّا بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ صَيْفِيٍّ عَنْ أَبِي مَعْبُدٍ مَوْلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِمُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ جِئْنَا بَعَثَهُ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ إِنَّكَ سَتَأْتِي قَوْمًا أَهْلَ كِتَابٍ فَإِذَا جِئْتَهُمْ فَادْعُهُمْ إِلَى أَنْ يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ هُمْ أَطَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ فَإِنْ هُمْ أَطَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُؤْخَذُ مِنْ أَعْيَانِهِمْ فَتُرَدُّ عَلَى فُقَرَائِهِمْ فَإِنْ هُمْ أَطَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ فَإِيَّاكَ وَكَرَائِمَ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاتَّقِ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ حِجَابٌ

Meaning: Muhammad bin Muqatil narrated to us, 'Abdullah narrated to us, Zakariya' bin Ishaq narrated to us from Yahya bin 'Abdullah bin Shayfiy from Abu Ma'bad, a companion of Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, who said: The Messenger of Allah, peace and

blessings be upon him, said to Mu'adh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, when he sent him to the land of Yemen: "Indeed, you will encounter the People of the Book; when you meet them, invite them to bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. If they obey you in this matter, then inform them that Allah has made obligatory upon them five daily prayers, both day and night. If they obey you in this matter, then inform them that Allah has made obligatory upon them zakat, to be taken from the wealthy among them and distributed to the poor among them. If they obey you in this matter, then do not take their sacred property, and fear the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between him and Allah." (Bukhari, No. 1401).

### **Islam is a religion without compulsion.**

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *لَا تَصْنَعُوا هَذَا، اَعْمَلُوا مَا تُسْتَطَاعُ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يَمَلُّ* حَتَّى تَمَلُّوا، وَإِنَّ أَحَبَّ الدِّينِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا دَاوَمَ عَلَيْهِ صَاحِبُهُ. Meaning: "Stop, do what you are able to do, and by Allah, Allah does not grow weary until you grow weary, and the religion most beloved to Him is that which is practiced by its adherents consistently" (Al-Bukhari, 1422).

In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, by studying the hadiths that convey a linguistic understanding of tolerance as a core characteristic of the Islamic faith, it means that religious tolerance is an understanding that must exist within a person so that they may become accustomed to it. Religious tolerance means tolerance in the realm of one's own faith, which relates to belief in God held in the heart. Religion, on the other hand, outlines two fundamental relational concepts that must be applied by its followers. Vertically and horizontally. Tolerance toward non-Muslims, on the other hand, implies cohesion in interfaith relations, measured by respecting each other's teachings within their respective beliefs. Respect for adherents of other religions is strongly encouraged in Islamic teachings because if Muslims respect other religions, those religions will also respect Muslims. With public awareness of the importance of pluralism, tolerance, and harmony within religious diversity, there is no sense of discrimination between adherents of one religion and those of another. Followers of different religions respect one another despite living with differing beliefs; this can be seen in their coexistence (Fadilah et al., 2025).

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion, this study concludes that Islam fundamentally teaches and upholds the values of religious tolerance as derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. The concept of tolerance (tasamuh) is deeply embedded in Islamic teachings, emphasizing respect for differences, recognition of diversity, and the rejection of coercion in matters of faith. Qur'anic verses clearly affirm that belief is a personal right that cannot be forced, while also providing guidance on how to maintain peaceful relations with followers of other religions.

Furthermore, the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad reinforces these principles through practical examples of interaction with diverse communities. The Prophet demonstrated a persuasive, wise, and compassionate approach in conveying Islamic teachings, prioritizing dialogue, justice, and mutual respect. This indicates that tolerance in Islam is not merely a theoretical concept, but a value that must be practiced in everyday life, both in individual attitudes and social interactions.

In a broader social context, religious tolerance plays a crucial role in maintaining harmony and unity, especially in pluralistic societies such as Indonesia. Diversity in religion, culture, and ethnicity is a reality that cannot be avoided, and without a strong foundation of tolerance, it may lead to conflict and division. Therefore, the values of tolerance taught in Islam are highly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges such as intolerance, extremism, and

social fragmentation. These teachings encourage peaceful coexistence and strengthen social cohesion among different communities.

Finally, this study emphasizes the importance of internalizing and implementing the values of tolerance based on the Qur'an and Hadith in various aspects of life, including education, family, and society. Strengthening understanding through continuous learning, dialogue, and real practice can help prevent intolerance and build a more inclusive, peaceful, and respectful social order. Thus, religious tolerance in Islam is not only a moral obligation but also a key foundation for creating a harmonious and sustainable society.

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