

## RESPONSE OF MILLENNIAL MUSLIMS TO RELIGIOUS MINORITY GROUPS IN INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Religious minority groups have historically been positioned as the trigger for religious and social disharmony. This paper aims to explore the millennial Muslims' basis for their positioning towards minority groups in Indonesia. The data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and document studies were analyzed and then converted into narrative form, tables, diagrams, and charts. The findings show that there are two millennial Muslim responses towards religious minority groups. First, some are responding with acceptance of non-Islamic affiliated minority groups. Of the 412 surveyed respondents, 280 or 67, 96% stated their acceptance based on the juridical-constitutional reason that every citizen has the same rights and obligations, including the rights to live and obey the law. Representing the second millennial response, most respondents also rejected Islamic-affiliated minority groups. 383 respondents (93%) stated this rejection noting that they believe in the existence of these groups damaging Islam's image. The different forms of response are based on theological, juridical, and cultural reasons that can be found in religious arguments, legislation, and values of the local wisdom of the Indonesians. This study proposes the need of building better understanding among millennial Muslims regarding social diversity in Indonesia, and finding common ground for these differences that can be applied to avoid religious conflicts in the future.*

**Keywords:** response, millennial Muslim, religious groups, minority

### INTRODUCTION

Religious minority groups generate different responses among millennial Muslims in Indonesia, even though they live upon the same ground. On the

one hand, religious minority groups are considered a legitimate part of society, having the same rights and obligations as other citizens. In some cases, inter-religious group relations - particularly between the minority and the majority - show mutual acceptance (Jubba, Pabbajah, H Prasodjo, & Qodir, 2019; Makmur, Kuswarno, Novianti, & Syafirah, 2018; Saprillah, 2016). In this case, other groups are considered fellow citizens with the same attributes. so that their existence must be respected and given freedom (especially with respect to non-Islamic religious groups). A survey conducted from November 2019 to February 2020 with 412 respondents showed that 263 or 63.83% “gave freedom to religious minority groups to fulfill their wishes”; while 71 or 17.23% “made them working partners”; and 40 or 9.70% of the respondents stated “religious minority groups should join the majority group”; and only 38 or 9.22% stated their rejection. On the other hand, there is resistance from millennial Muslims towards minority Muslim groups. One of the reasons for this rejection is the claim that these are heretical groups (Munifah, 2017; Risdianto, 2017; Wahyudi & Wahid, 2015). Of the 412 respondents, only 29 (7.03%) accepted minority Muslim groups, n amely Shia and Ahmadiyya. This means that 383 (92.96%) rejected these two groups. Responses towards religious minority groups can take two forms, open and hidden (Scott, 1981).

Studies of the response to the existence of different social groups can be analyzed through three trends. First are studies that show an open attitude that provides space for the development of religious minority groups with all their dynamics. (El Yadari, 2012; Suryana, 2011; Supriyanto, 2018; Jubba et.al 2019). In this case, the existence of various social groups is placed as a group that has the same position and opportunity in social life. Second are the studies that place the existence of religious minority groups as sources of threat (Maliki, 2010; Farida, 2014; Khoiron, 2018; Rahmat, 2019), which also shows the rejection of religious minority groups. Third, the studies that view minority groups as a driving force for the formation of a more advanced and harmonious life order (Atabik, 2016; Setiarsa, 2018; Setyabudi, 2019; Alam, 2016). These studies emphasize the function of minority groups as a factor for the creation of a more dynamic and open social life. The three trends of studies have provided a strong discussion basis for debates regarding religious minority groups with several complex problems at hand. However, these studies have not touched on how different responses are represented by social groups, especially millennial Muslims.

This paper aims to complement the existing studies with a focus on the different views of millennial Muslims on the religious minority groups in Indonesia. Namely, how tolerant they are in responding to the groups

outside of themselves. To address this issue are three questions. *First*, what do millennial Muslims think of tolerance? This is closely related to what they understand about tolerance. *Second*, what is their attitude regarding the existing minority groups? This issue is also closely related to the question of how they conceptualize religious minority groups. *Third*, what justifies their different attitude in responding to the existence of religious minority groups? This question concerns differences in attitudes when looking at non-Islamic religious minority groups and Islamic affiliated religious groups.

This paper is based on the assumption that the different views among millennial Muslims regarding the religious minority groups are driven by several factors: ideological, juridical, and cultural. Ideologically, they strongly defend their beliefs as Muslims and view others as heretical (although there is also an affirmation that they also respect differences). The law also guarantees the right to religion (freedom) so that anyone can live and practice their faith, but in practice, there is still resistance to different religious groups. Likewise, the culture of the Indonesian people, which highly values kinship relations, is often “forgotten”, which leads to religious groups being tendentiously positioned. These three factors, in addition to being the driving force for an acceptable response, also trigger rejection from millennial Muslims towards religious minority groups in Indonesia.

## **RELIGIOUS MINORITY AND TOLERANCE**

Khorsand & Parvin (2016) refer to minorities as small groups in a specific place with their own ethnic, linguistic, and religious characteristics. Being a minority is closely related to numbers (Nurhayati, 2013; Rehayati, 2011). Minority groups have had an important role in history, but have not been extensively documented, so they are almost invisible and silent (Emadi, 2016). Minority groups go through a stigma that directly affects discrimination against them (Leak et al., 2015). In reality, state policies have created an environment that justifies the public rejection of religious minority communities (Syed & Ali, 2020). They are deprived of security and comfort. However, according to Sahu et al. (2012), insecurity among minorities can be overcome by increasing inter-community accommodation, strengthening spaces, and shared interests. In this case, social organizations play an important role in demystifying the distrust and stereotypes inherent in minority groups, so they can be accommodated. In this regard, Gada (2017) suggested that society should have an initiative in terms of economic improvement and educational progress in a critical manner, and increase communal awareness as the main steps to reduce the backwardness of religious minority communities.

A study by Zabad (2017) on ten religious groups, namely the Shia in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Lebanon and Egypt; Druze, Alawites, Christians and Kurds in Syria; Copts in Egypt; and Zaydis in Yemen shows that post-Arab Spring in the Middle East, minority communities have been vulnerable to turmoil, including violence and economic damages. Even in Iran, there have been human rights violations against members of the Bahia community, the country's largest non-Muslim religious minority (Moinipour, 2018). This violation has been designed in such a way that it does not attract unwanted attention from the international community. The motive for this effort is to slowly eradicate-not to suddenly eliminate-a particular community. Policies also led to persecution manifested in the form of religious intolerance and Shia supremacy. Khorsand & Parvin (2016) even emphasized the need for special attention on the part of the Iranian government towards religious minority communities by granting privileges in the form of legal independence to protect minority groups. In this case, acts of violence or intolerance require actions that respect the existence of minority groups. Tolerance among important groups is mainstreamed to support the realization of more harmonious lives.

Tolerance is one of the many responses to diversity and difference (Besch & Lee, 2018). Kühler (2019) defines tolerance using an analogy; a person (A), for some reason, objects to the actions or practices of another (B), but has no other reasons for accepting an action. Therefore, he (A) must refrain from interfering with or preventing (B) from acting as he pleases, even though (A) has the power to interfere. In this case, tolerance is characterized by deep ambivalence (Drerup, 2019). Tolerance is essentially an expression of uncertainty by recognizing the existence of social reality; it is the same as acknowledging the uncertainty of social reality to tolerate the existence of other people and then tolerate something contradictory to each other because it is regarded as correct (Gorman, 2019). There are three distinct sources of tolerance: individuals, culture, and institutions (Kaul, 2019). The objection and acceptance component of this tolerance involves at least people's judgments, beliefs, and practices (Lee & Besch, 2020). V. and B. Seiler classify tolerance into three types, namely disjunctive, conjunctive, and synergistic (Lalíková, 2016).

In addition, Lee & Besch (2020) proposes two forms of tolerance, i.e. the expression of respect and recognition. Meanwhile, Said Agil Al Munawar divides tolerance into two types, static tolerance and dynamic tolerance (Yohandi, 2018; Kamarauddin dan Sabannur, 2018). Another researcher, Mafrukha (2018), came up with a form of tolerance based on a fiqh perspective, i.e. internal tolerance, tolerance between schools of thought (*madhhab*)

and external tolerance. Internal tolerance includes tolerance in terms of faith, worship, *muamalah*, and criminal law. Meanwhile, tolerance between schools of thought means tolerance of the four imams of the *madhhab* on which Muslims worldwide, including Indonesia, rely on. Meanwhile, external tolerance concerns more about tolerance between different religions. This last type of tolerance needs to get the attention of Muslims in the world in particular, for the sake of creating a life that is *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a blessing for all creations). Millennial Muslims currently have an important position in determining the future of the nation-state and role of religion. Therefore, their position and role are needed in the context of today's religious society.

Religion and the younger generation often are linked although they appear within various dynamic perspectives that accompany them. Some existing literature tends to show a shift in understanding religion among the younger generation (the millennial generation). This shift in understanding has introduced a religious paradigm which has resulted in a transformation of millennial's religious expression. In Islam, for example, this shift is known among millennials as *hijrah*, shown with expressive behavior by attending various religious studies; the involvement of millennial actors who promise individuals in Islamic migration towards a better and more targeted life goal (Fajriani, 2019). The millennial generation tends to see religious discourse textually in interpreting holy texts, so a contextual understanding is required (Hartini, 2019). Likewise, they seek more religious references through the media, which shows formality in observing religion. In this case, religious activism has made the internet and online social media a new vehicle for the transformation of religious propaganda authority from traditional to modern for millennial literates. (Ahyar & Alfitri, 2019). This is shown by the management of the discourse of piety through the activities of the body which are uploaded continuously on social media. The Islamic generation can be formed with various purposes, including gaining popularity which leads to economic gain and popularity. (Anisa, 2018). This reality indicates that the values of religiosity when exposed to technology are adopted as an extension of the space for religious interaction, but there are also those who think that religion in online media is only a means of disseminating information and when one wishes to practice religious values, dedication is needed in the real world. (Pabbajah, Jubba, Widyanti & Iribaram, 2020).

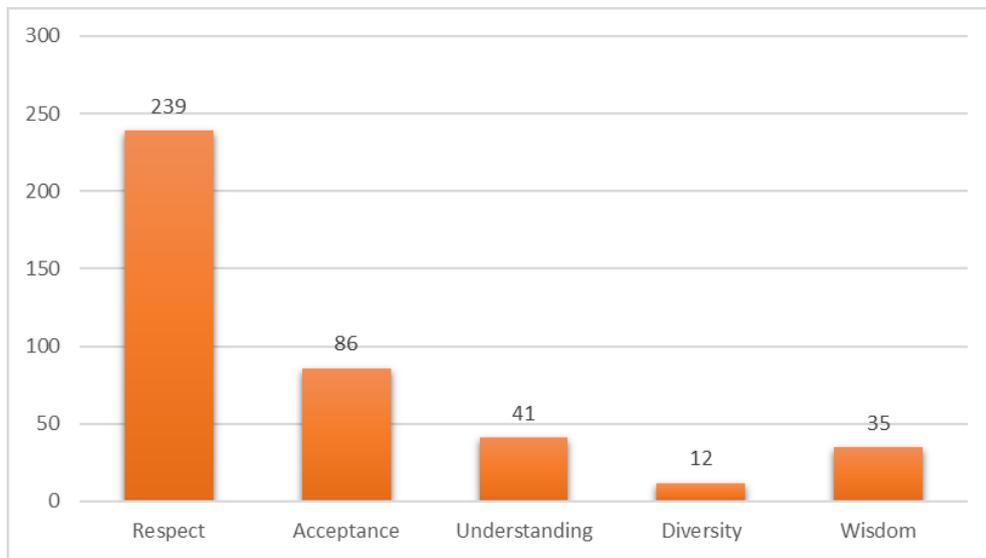
The correlation between religion, the internet, and the millennial generation has become unavoidable. The Millennial generation and the internet, social media in this case, have changed many patterns of communication, including in religion. This is in line with what Zulhasmi and Hastuti reported in their

study that *da'wah* on social media, which notes significant challenges and opportunities, especially when dealing with millennials as the majority users. Social media, despite having a positive contribution to *da'wah*, also has many issues that demand attention, such as prejudice, spread of hatred, and reluctance to access primary sources. (Zulhazmi & Hastuti, 2018). In addition, the religious perspective of the millennial generation is also affected by ideology as a fundamental factor in shaping religious understanding. Therefore, the role of religious literature, especially of Islam, in the seedbed of Islamism, is important among the millennial generation (Iswanto, 2018). The shift in religious understanding of the millennial generation clearly has an impact on religious attitudes, including in seeing differences in religious beliefs and understanding. In responding to the spirit of tolerance shown by the millennial generation, the majority are in the *indifferent* category, which proves that there is doubtful behavior towards the sense of tolerance they want to display (Nugraha & Firmansyah, 2019). It is quite different when a person has received significant religious education since childhood or has had environmental influences to develop his religious potential. After becoming a student or an adult, one tends to live based on the values of the religious teachings they were raised with. Through the literacy process and correct religious teaching, the millennial generation can become agents of change in the *wasatiyya* Islamic proselytization, the tolerant Islam that respects differences and is good for all members of society (Zain, 2019).

### **MAKING ROOM FOR TOLERANCE TOWARD THE MINORITY**

In simple terms, tolerance can be defined as an attitude of accepting and appreciating the existence of other different people or groups. In Arabic, tolerance is called *tasamuh*, which is to be kind and gentle to each other and to forgive each other. With regard to Islamic teachings, *tasamuh* is a commendable moral attitude in daily interaction, where there is mutual respect between fellow humans based on the boundaries set by religious teachings. However, the perception of tolerance among young people varies. When they were asked, "What is tolerance?" They answered with several words, such as respect (238 or 57.76%), acceptance (86 or 20.87%), understanding (41 or 9.9%), and diversity (12 or 2.9%), as well as wisdom (35 or 8.49%). In short, the perception of young people about the meaning of tolerance can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Young people's perception of the meaning of tolerance



Source: Processed from the Questionnaire, 2020

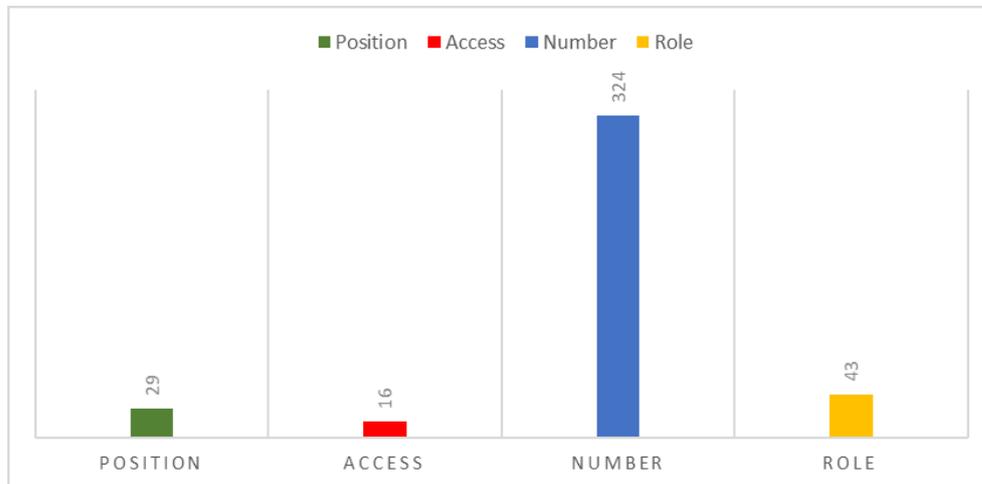
Figure 1 shows the various choices of words that represent their perception of tolerance. The word “tolerance” for the majority of millennial Muslims is perceived as “respect”. If you look at the words chosen, basically each word still correlates with one another.

The description above shows that millennials generally see tolerance as a form of making space for groups outside of their own (the majority), especially minority groups. Tolerance is very close to “respect”, which means respecting other groups to express themselves, including practicing the beliefs and teachings they believe in. Granting freedom to minority groups is a form of action that can build a more flexible relationship between religious groups. Religious minority groups such as Towani Tolotang, Aluk Todolo and Kaharingan are accepted based on the argument that they are also like “us”, having the same rights and obligations. However, what is often problematic is its practice in the community. This is because there is still rejection of minority groups, especially those connected with the practice of religious teachings or beliefs. If these minority groups are not religiously affiliated, then millennial Muslims tend to “comply” with existing state policies.

Meanwhile, “minority” is generally understood as something that is related to numbers, namely a small or insignificant number. The data collected through the questionnaire show that respondents generally agree that “minority” is closely related to a small number. However, there are answers other than “numbers” to explain the concept of minority. Some of them perceive that

minority is also related to “position”, “role” and “access”. In summary, some of these answers can be seen in the explanation of Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Millennial Muslim Perception about Minorities



Source: Processed from the Questionnaire, 2020

In Figure 2, it is clear that the majority of respondents stated that the minority is closely related to numbers (324 or 79%). Meanwhile, there are answers besides number - namely position (29 or 7%), role (43 or 10%), and access (16 or 4%). It can be understood that the minority-majority issue has other implications besides the question of number. Likewise, the variety of answers regarding the minority shows that students' knowledge of minority issues is not narrow.

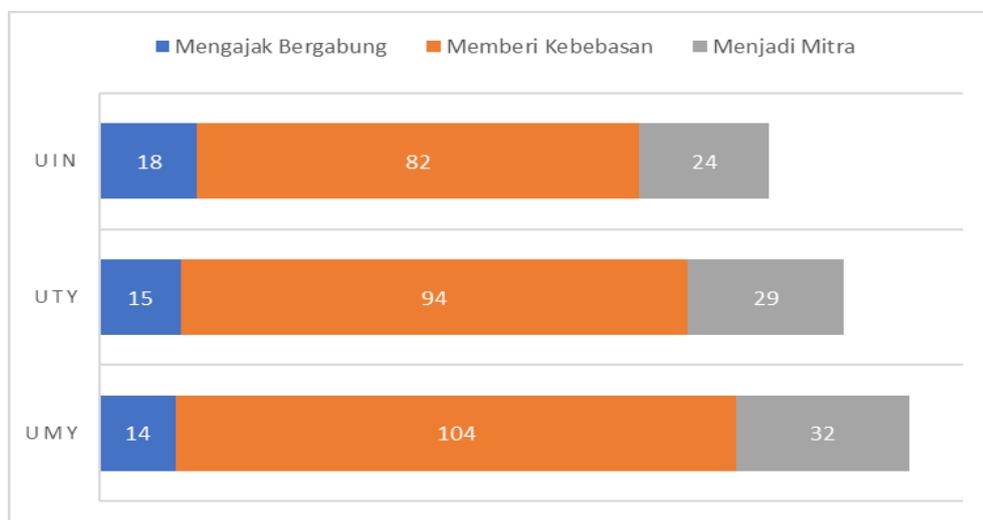
Minority groups cover many aspects that are not only related to religion, but also include other aspects such as gender, ethnicity, profession, etc. Religious minority groups, in particular, are generally treated poorly. It is common for them to get discriminatory treatment in the form of marginalization of position, limitation of rights, restrictions on roles, and deprivation of access. For example, it is very difficult for adherents/followers of a certain faith to get their civil rights such as carrying out worship freely according to the teachings they believe. Limitation of rights can be seen in the “coercion” to choose one “official” religion. They cannot be autonomous because they have to adhere to the recognized religions in Indonesia. So far, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity are religions that have been safe havens for them. The Towani Tolotang in Sidenreng Rappang, for example, chose Hinduism; Aluk Todolo in Toraja chose Christianity, Tengger in East Java chose Hinduism, Ammatoa in Kajang chose Islam. More often than not, they are placed as a group of

followers of non-mainstream religions (Pabbajah, Abdullah, Juhansar, & Jubba, 2019) who do not base their religious practices on mainstream religions. This also confirms that the bargaining position of religious minority groups is very weak (Maliki, 2010).

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS MINORITY GROUPS

There are three attitudes that millennial Muslims have towards minority groups. This attitude is based on various reasons, which are basically a form of their openness to the facts of the diversity of Indonesian society. This also explains the potential for a closer relationship in the future under the auspices of young Muslim groups. The three attitudes are (1) inviting to join the majority group; (2) giving freedom to minority groups; and (3) building partnership. Of the three attitudes, students generally chose “giving freedom” to minority groups to carry out their activities, especially religious activities as they wish. This means that minority groups are given room to express their teachings or beliefs. In summary, the percentage of these three attitudes can be seen in Figure 3 below based on the higher education institutions the students come from.

Figure 3. Attitudes of Millennial Muslims towards Minority Groups



Source: Processed from the Questionnaire, 2020.

Diagram 1 clearly illustrates that there is an attitude of acceptance among millennial Muslims at three higher education institutions. The majority of them give freedom to religious minority groups to practice their belief (280 respondents). In addition, some respondents want to make these minority

groups their partners (85 respondents), and the rest (47 respondents) state that they invite minority groups to join the majority. This illustrates that, in general, millennial Muslims provide flexibility to minority groups to exist and provide room for them to remain in their state.

The flexibility in question is to provide room for religious minority groups to freely practice their beliefs. One of the reasons is that in Islam, respect for belief is very clear. This can be found in QS. Al-Kafirun 1-6 which essentially leaves matters of belief to the internal (belief) of each adherent. “For you is your religion, for me my religion” is a very firm basic principle for all religious adherents not to interfere with the beliefs of followers of other religions. In the history of Islam, several events show the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad who highly respected other religions. The *Fathu Makkah* incident in which non-Muslims and Muslims prioritized maintaining harmony in Medina is a historical fact that shows respect for each other is highly appreciated. In this case, different beliefs are no longer a barrier to creating harmony, because what is being put forward is peace for all, a humanitarian issue.

Several efforts have attempted to shape the religious character of the millennial generation from various perspectives. One perspective is through an educational process that has relevance between the concept of integration - such as the integration of cultural values with the concept of Islamic education (Husein Ritonga & Bafadhal, 2018; Siswanto, 2019). This is offered as a solution for the achievement of educational goals for the millennial generation in the era of globalization with all its complexities (Sukarman, 2017). In addition, strengthening the millennial character through understanding the traditional values practiced in a society, for example through the commemoration of religious holidays, where the values exemplified by the Prophet can affect the character building of the millennial generation (Musfiah Rifqi, 2018). For example, the *Susuk Wangan* tradition, which contains educational values such as religious, social, moral, and cultural values, must be re-introduced to the younger generation. These values should be instilled to shape good character (Wulan et al., 2018). These efforts can be made to build the character and religious perceptions of the millennial generation. However, it is necessary to build a religious perception among Muslim intellectuals, especially millennials since they still tend to have an attitude of dissatisfaction with the status quo, so that new innovations and innovative ideas and thoughts --sometimes out of the mainstream or out of the box-- are needed (Nata, 2019).

## **JUSTIFICATION OF DIFFERENT RESPONSES**

The acceptance and rejection of religious minority groups is based on three

reasons. *First* are theological reasons. In the Qur'an, there are explicitly several verses which state that differences (including beliefs) are not something new. Differences are part of natural law (*sunnatullah*) which must be acknowledged as revealed in Q.S Al Hujurat and several other verses. The verses about differences contained in the Qur'an are described briefly in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Information / Theological References

Qur'an Surah-Ayat	Translation	Substance
Al An'am; 108	Revile not those unto whom they pray beside Allah lest they wrongfully revile Allah through ignorance...	Prohibition of insulting / abusing the gods of followers of other religions
Hud; 118	And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not differing.	Allah allows for differences
Yusuf; 99	And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together. Wouldst thou (Muhammad) compel men until they are believers?	Allah allows for differences
Al Kafiruun; 2-6	I worship not that which ye worship; Nor worship ye that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion.	Prohibition of interfering in the affairs of other religions
Al Hujurat 13	O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.	Recommendation to respect diversity

Source: Processed from the verses of the Qur'an.

Islam is a religion of blessing for all creations, not only for Muslims. The root word of Islam is *salama* (safe, peaceful) so Islam is the religion of salvation for all beings. In several hadiths, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) places great emphasis on every Muslim to spread peace to anyone. This is the real form of Islam as the religion of blessing for all. In the history of the spread of Islam,

Muslims have lived in harmony with minority groups. This is because in Islam, the dignity of a person as the caliph of Allah on earth cannot be insulted, just because he is part of a minority group or a group that has different beliefs from Muslims. *Second*, juridical reasons. The 1945 Constitution also explicitly states that every citizen must provide room for different groups (especially religious groups) to practice their faith. The basis used to accept minority groups is the regulations as can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Constitutional Basis for Minority Group Rights

Source	Content	Substance
1945 Constitution	Article 28 E (1): Everyone is free to embrace a religion and worship according to their religion, choose education and instruction, choose a job, choose citizenship, choose a place to live in the territory of the country and leave it, and have the right to return.	Every citizen has freedom of choice.
	Article 29 (2): The State guarantees the freedom of every citizen to embrace their own religion and to worship according to their religion and faith.	Every citizen has the right and freedom to choose and embrace a religion.
Law Number 12 / 2005 concerning International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights	Article 18 (2): No one can be forced of his freedom to adhere to or determine their religion or belief according to their choice.	Everyone has the freedom to choose a belief and there should be no coercion over the choice of belief (religion).
	Article 18 (3): Freedom to practice and determine one's religion or belief can only be limited by provisions based on law, and which are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.	Restrictions on citizens from choosing a religion can only be done according to statutory regulations.

Source: Laws and legislation.

Some of the laws and regulations abovementioned (not only those shown in Table 2) affirm that minority groups have the same room as other groups, especially in practicing their religious beliefs. This also confirms that legally there is no difference in the treatment of every citizen and group, especially religious groups in Indonesia. In this case, there is a clear and firm guarantee from the state for the religious minority groups to express their faith through religious practices that they believe without intervention, let alone pressure

from other groups, including the state.

Third is cultural. The culture of the Indonesian people is filled with peculiarities. This can be seen from the dynamics of everyday life that are never devoid of colorful differences, be it ethnicity, language, tradition or religion. The condition of a plural nation makes differences no longer a barrier to mutual respect. The tradition of interaction between Islam and the culture of the Indonesian people has a long history with many ups and downs (Jubba, Rustan, & Juhansar, 2018). A family is often composed of people with different religious beliefs (Suhadi, 2014). Views like this are very common in families of various ethnicities in Indonesia. In Javanese society, religion is understood as *ageman* (clothing). Clothing is body protection and is located on the outside so that differences in clothing do not prevent people from accepting each other because they are very formal, not substantive. In Bugis society, for example, religious differences are often placed under ethnic equality, meaning that whatever religion is embraced, they have the same culture as Bugis people. It is the cultural similarity that takes precedence so conflicts can be avoided. Local wisdom such as *padaidi'* (fellowship) has a meaning that goes far beyond differences in belief because this wisdom is based on the spirit of *sipakatau'*, which humanizes humans (Jubba, 2018). In this regard, respect for human dignity is above all. Of course, this spirit is very relevant to the Islamic teachings, which do not differentiate the status of a person or group.

The three reasons above illustrate that religious minority groups still face various issues. However, if we review the response of millennial Muslims, basically they are very rational in stating their reasons. In summary, the reasons used by millennial Muslims, both those who reject and those who accept these two Islamic religious minority groups, can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Opinions on Islamic Religious minority Groups

Statement	
Reject	Accept
Disrupting public order	The rights of citizens are guaranteed by law
Contrary to Indonesian culture	Part of diversity
Disrupt the unity	Freedom of religion
Deviant Islamic teachings	Part of Islam

Source: Processed from the questionnaire, 2020.

In Table 3, it can be seen that there are two forms of opinion towards the Shia and Ahmadiyya groups in Indonesia. The existing statement confirms that these two groups receive different treatment in the Muslim community, especially the millennial group. Millennial Muslims have arguments in deciding their choice regarding whether to accept or reject religious minority groups in Indonesia. They actually have sufficient knowledge, especially regarding the legal basis related to the existence of various religious groups in Indonesia, which is very diverse to date.

Apart from all the debates regarding the existence of religious minority groups, the fact that there is acceptance and rejection is also an indisputable reality in the practice of social life in Indonesia today. For example, the Islamic minority group (Shia) still faces unfair treatment, as in the case of the Shia in Sampang, Madura (Nurish, 2015). Likewise, the Ahmadiyya also face verbal discrimination, particularly about being 'deviant' and 'outside of Islam', as well as non-verbal which results in a ban on building places of worship as it happened in Tangerang. (Simamora, Hamid, & Hikmawan, 2020). In addition, the incident occurred in East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, houses belonging to Ahmadiyya followers were destroyed by vigilantes and accompanied by expulsion (Simamora et al., 2020; Wahab & Fakhruddin, 2019). Undoubtedly, this is contrary to the notion of pluralism and diversity as divine reality which is inevitable (Vahid, 2018). Such rejection also demonstrates the potential for internal conflict in Islam (Alfandi, 2013). In many cases, there are Islamic groups that have quite wide access, including religious facilities, but there are also groups that are labeled heretical, deviant, and destructive. (Pabbajah et al., 2019; Farida, 2014).

Regarding the rejection of Shia and Ahmadiyya, there are two types of responses. First, the rejection was represented by puritan groups such as DDII, Persis, Al-Irsyad, and FUUI which firmly rejected it in the name of purifying Islamic tradition. This form of rejection is more open (Scott, 1981). Islamic teachings are the final teachings that should not be confused with new teachings, especially regarding beliefs as embodied in the pillars of faith. However, under certain conditions, moderate Islamic groups, especially Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have their own attitudes which give room for tolerant understanding (Muhtarom, 2017). Second, claims regarding the period of arrival of Shia in Indonesia that is considered to have come at a later period (the second period was in the 1980s, the first was claimed in the 8th century at the same time as the arrival of Islam in Aceh). Likewise, Ahmadiyya is considered a "newcomer", having only entered Indonesia in 1924 (Sabara, 2014). The crucial phase of Shia development continued in

the Reform era, and in 2000 an organization was formed to gather the Shia congregation, namely IJABI or the Association of the Indonesian Ahlul Bait Congregation (Hasim, 2012). This results in an unfair perception of religious groups that are considered “newcomers”. The presence of a new group comes with other inherent impacts, such as new values, either directly or indirectly affecting other groups that have existed before.

The description above affirms the rejection and acceptance of religious minority groups, although they have received guaranteed regulations and even legitimacy from religion, their existence continues to be questioned. Religious minority groups occupy a less strategic (weak) position and do not have enough media to fight the domination of other religious groups that have already had wide room and opportunities to thrive. The difference in reasons used by millennial Muslims, both in rejecting and accepting the existence of other groups, indicates that basically the young Islamic group has an independent attitude, meaning that their choice of attitude is also based on various policies and even justification of religion (Islam). In the view of Kuhler (2019), in addition to moral, ethical, and pragmatic reasons, political reasons are also the basis for acceptance and rejection of something.

## CONCLUSION

This study reaffirms the different responses of millennial Muslims regarding religious minority groups in Indonesia. There is a response that on the one hand accepts the existence of these groups based on religious texts (ideology), constitutional and cultural reasons. However, these three factors also gave birth to millennial Muslims’ acceptance of religious minority groups. First, millennial Muslims accept religious minority groups by emphasizing a very strict *nash* (Qur’an) justification for respect for religious diversity; there is even no reason to force other religions to become part of one religion. In addition, the constitution also explicitly protects the rights of minorities. Culturally, the diverse conditions of the nation and the long history of the formation of the nation-state are supported by many religious groups, including religions outside the mainstream that we know today. This open acceptance occurs to religious minority groups that are not affiliated with Islam. The presence of non-Islamic religious groups is considered part of a more multicultural and diverse life. These religious groups pose no obstacle or trigger for conflict because each of them carries out religious teachings following the teachings of their religion. This argument indicates people’s awareness in which all social groups, constitutionally, have the same rights as other citizens and are free to practice their faiths.

Second, based on the justification of religious, constitutional, and cultural texts, it also creates rejection of religious minority groups. This rejection occurs to Islamic religious minority groups which have been the targets of various discriminatory actions. Such rejection is because these groups are considered to practice deviant teachings that disrupt Islam due to differences with the majority (mainstream). The doctrine that is believed and practiced generates responses that actually put them into a judgmental position. Differences in Islamic understanding and practice not only have triggered conflict, but have also created differences in religious practices that arise from the interpretations of each group. In many cases, there have even been persecution and acts of violence against religious minority groups. In addition, their acceptance is also based on quite strong reasons. The existing religious minority groups are also a complement to societal life.

Different attitudes related to the existence of religious minority groups in Indonesia show that there are still crucial issues in terms of current social relations. There are inconsistent attitudes, especially in positioning religious minority groups, even though they have justification from religion (argument / holy text), the constitution, and culture. It has an impact on religious minority groups which have always been in a dilemma. On the one hand, religious minority groups provide an increasingly open room for dialogue by involving all groups in a forum to find shared agreements, but on the other hand, diversity can be a trigger as well as a threat to social order when each group maintains their differences. This study only focuses on the analysis of the different responses of millennial Muslims regarding the reality of the multicultural and multireligious Indonesian people. The discussion that has yet to be developed in detail provides a practical framework to instill the value of openness to the Islamic generation. This is because one of the challenges that Indonesia will face in the future is the difficulty and reluctance to accept the existence of other groups with different identities. Therefore, it is necessary to build a bridge, through a non-structural inclusive education model, in order to raise the collective awareness of millennial Muslims on the importance of diversity which must be addressed openly to form a stronger and more open social life structure in the future.

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