

# Social Integration in Multi-Religious Society of Sekaran Village Kayen Kidul Subdistrict Kediri Regency

Welling Yonado<sup>1\*</sup>, Winarno<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Hendri Nuryadi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

\*) Corresponding author: [yonadowelling@gmail.com](mailto:yonadowelling@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*This research paper explores the intricate dynamics of social integration within the multi-religious society of Indonesia. As a nation characterized by its diverse religious landscape, Indonesia presents a unique context for examining how various religious communities interact, coexist, and collaborate. The study delves into the challenges and opportunities associated with fostering harmonious relationships among different religious groups, while considering the role of cultural, historical, and governmental factors in shaping the social fabric of Sekaran Village, Kayen Kidul Subdistrict, Kediri Regency. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, this research aims to shed light on the strategies employed by individuals, communities, and institutions to promote social integration and religious tolerance. By investigating the successes and setbacks in achieving cohesiveness amidst diversity, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of social integration in multi-religious societies and provides insights that could inform policy recommendations and community initiatives.*

Keywords: Social Integration; Multi-Religious; Society.

## Introduction

Social integration in multi-religious communities is a crucial aspect in understanding the relationships among individuals, groups, and religions in a diverse context. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly relevant in our globalized world, where various religious groups and beliefs coexist within the same communities. Harmony among religions and healthy social interactions are essential to ensure peace and stability in diverse societies. However, the process of social integration within a community does not negate the existence of conflicts as an integral part of social phenomena and change. Kalsum, A. U., & Fauzan, F. (2019). The process of social integration within a society does indeed play a crucial role in creating unity and social stability, but that does not mean that conflicts should be overlooked or considered as something negative.

In recent decades, we have witnessed various conflicts stemming from religious differences in various parts of the world. These conflicts are often triggered by misunderstandings, prejudices, and religious intolerance. For instance, issues like persecution of religious minority groups, acts of terrorism in the name of religion, and civil wars fueled by religious conflicts have shaken many nations. Therefore, it is important to conduct in-depth scientific research on social integration in multi-religious communities to find solutions that can help prevent conflicts and create inclusive and harmonious societies. This aligns with the views of Agustin, A. A. (2018) that achieving the aspiration of peace among different religious communities is a significant effort in restoring the essence of religion and the true purpose of human life.

Many incidents of conflict among religious followers occurred during the transition from the New Order government to the early years of the reform era in Indonesia, such as the Poso Conflict in 1998, the Ambon

Conflict in 1999, and the Tolikara Conflict in 2015. Even to this day, similar conflicts continue to emerge in Indonesia, including conflicts between religious groups and interfaith conflicts caused by differences in beliefs and doctrines, identity politics, claims of religious supremacy, as well as acts of discrimination and injustice. In fact, the Setara Institute has reported an increase in intolerance cases in Indonesia during the early months of 2023, indicating that tensions among religious followers remain an issue that needs to be addressed. This aligns with the views of Hashemi, A. (2017), that diverse communities are more susceptible to minor conflicts related to their diversity. Therefore, diversity in society can be a potential source of conflict, especially if not managed effectively. Communities consisting of various backgrounds, beliefs, cultures, and values tend to face differences of opinion and potential conflict.

One of the causes of various structural and horizontal conflicts in various regions of Indonesia is the use of emotional elements in the realm of religion that cross boundaries (Rahman, 2018). This underscores the valuable insight into one of the contributing factors to conflicts in Indonesia and highlights the importance of managing emotions and rhetoric related to religion wisely to prevent the escalation of detrimental conflicts in society. According to Sopiyan, W., Hidayat, R. H., Setiawati, R., & Hadi, F. N. (2022), the issues of social integration and conflicts in the religious context are two interrelated aspects that cannot be separated. Therefore, to maintain harmony among religious followers, joint efforts and cooperation from various parties are required to take wise, planned, and comprehensive actions. Wibowo, T. (2016), emphasizes the importance of collaboration and coordination among various parties in preserving harmony and peaceful coexistence among different religious communities. This is a wise approach because religious issues and differences in beliefs are often complex and require well-planned and coordinated solutions. By taking holistic and collaborative actions, the possibility of creating a more harmonious environment and avoiding interfaith conflicts can be enhanced.

One region that reflects the complexity of religion in Indonesia is Sekaran Village, located in the Kayen Kidul District, Kediri Regency. It is a rural area where various religious groups coexist within one community. The presence of diverse religions, beliefs, and religious practices in this village raises profound questions about social integration and interfaith harmony. The village has been recognized as a village that is aware of religious harmony in East Java province by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2021. Sekaran Village has a long history of welcoming residents representing various religions such as Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, and Hinduism. The community here has a rich and diverse range of religious traditions that reflect the unique religious pluralism. However, amidst this diverse religious landscape, challenges to social integration also arise.

One of the challenges faced by Sekaran Village is how to maintain and strengthen tolerance and interfaith harmony in an increasingly complex and changing environment. Issues such as stereotypes, prejudices, religion-based minor conflicts, and a lack of interfaith understanding can threaten community relations and disrupt social peace. In this context, the author aims to explore social integration in the multi-religious community of Sekaran Village. This research seeks to understand the dynamics of interfaith relations in the village, outline the challenges faced, and identify the efforts made by the community, local government, and religious organizations to support positive social integration.

## **Method**

This scientific article is written using the method of literature review or library research. This method falls under the category of qualitative research, in which the researcher relies solely on the analysis of existing literature, such as scientific articles, journals, and online sources, without conducting field research. This method is primarily used for preliminary studies to delve into emerging phenomena in society or in a specific research field.

The data used in the preparation of this scientific article is derived from various relevant literature on the research topic, and the data analysis process involves the collection, organization, and synthesis of information from various sources to draw conclusions in the research.

## Result and Discussion

### *The Condition of Multi-Religious Society*

A multi-religious society is a community composed of individuals who adhere to various religious beliefs or different faiths. According to Setiawan, D., & Amal, B. K. (2016), a multi-religious society is one where several religions coexist and thrive in a particular region. The conditions of a multi-religious society can vary greatly depending on many factors, including geography, culture, history, and politics. According to González, F. C., & D'Amato, G. (Eds.) (2016), in their book, they argue that new forms of religious diversity have emerged and continue to demand specific policies from the state, placing pressure on established religious governance practices, while simultaneously creating a series of normative dilemmas. Therefore, the state must address the evolution of religious diversity without violating normative principles such as freedom of religion and justice. This is a complex issue because the state must strike a balance between protecting individuals' rights to practice their religious beliefs and maintaining social order.

Indonesia is one of the prime examples of a highly diverse multi-religious society in the world. Some characteristics and descriptions of the condition of the multi-religious society in Indonesia include. Religious Diversity, Indonesia is renowned for its religious diversity. The major religions in Indonesia include Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and traditional religions such as indigenous beliefs and animism. Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia, followed by Christianity, and there are also communities practicing minority religions.

Religious Pluralism, The fundamental principle in Indonesian society is religious

pluralism. Despite the majority of the population being Muslim, the principle of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," which means "unity in diversity," is highly valued and upheld. This means that various religions and beliefs are acknowledged and respected.

Freedom of Religion, The Indonesian Constitution guarantees the freedom of religion, granting citizens the right to practice, profess, and propagate their religion according to their beliefs. This includes the right to worship, construct places of worship, and conduct religious ceremonies. Article 29, paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia states, "The state guarantees the freedom of every citizen to adhere to his or her own religion and to worship according to his or her religion and belief."

Indonesian citizens live together peacefully and are tolerant of other religions. Interactions among people of different religions often occur harmoniously, and mutual respect for each other's beliefs is a highly valued principle. While there are many examples of religious tolerance, Indonesia has also experienced some religious conflicts, especially in regions with religious diversity. These conflicts can involve issues such as religious conversion, blasphemy, or ethnic and religious tensions. The condition of the multi-religious society in Indonesia reflects the complexity of religious and cultural diversity. Despite the challenges and conflicts that may occasionally arise, the principles of pluralism, freedom of religion, and religious tolerance remain strong characteristics of Indonesian society.

The multi-religious community in Sekaran Village has become a miniature model of religious harmony in Indonesia. This is evidenced by data from the 2014 population monograph of Sekaran Village, which indicates the religious diversity in the village. Sekaran Village covers an area of 90 hectares with a population of 2,749 people. There are four religions that reflect religious pluralism in Sekaran Village, namely NU Islam with 1,501 followers, LDII Islam with 550 followers, Hinduism with 392 followers, Christianity with 205 followers, and Catholicism with 101 followers. This data reflects the religious diversity present in the village.

The people of Sekaran Village lead a harmonious life and value the principles of tolerance in their interactions. Despite living alongside neighbors who follow different religions, they coexist peacefully. They understand that religious principles and sensitivities do not overlap, applying only to matters of common concern in community life. This statement, as mentioned by Jannah, A. U., Prastiyani, E. D., & Hamidah, D. (2018:124), provides a positive portrayal of the values of tolerance and harmony in Sekaran Village. This is something to be appreciated because it demonstrates that the community in the village is capable of leading a harmonious life despite their diverse religious backgrounds. The understanding that religious principles do not interfere with daily life, except for common matters, is a sign of high tolerance.

The presence of religious harmony in society is something that can bring significant benefits, such as promoting peace, stability, and shared well-being. It also demonstrates the community's ability to appreciate differences and engage in interfaith dialogue. However, it remains crucial to ensure that this harmony is consistently maintained and enhanced, and that individuals' rights to practice their religion are respected. Furthermore, the routine behaviors that naturally create positive habits have fostered a high level of tolerance in Sekaran Village, where they naturally respect religious activities without creating conflicts with other religions. These natural attitudes have shaped the community's behavior in Sekaran Village to be highly tolerant, where they genuinely appreciate the religious activities conducted by followers of other religions.

These facts have depicted the community of Sekaran Village as a positive example of religious tolerance. The positive habits and behaviors that respect the religious activities of followers of other religions are commendable, as they reflect a high degree of mutual respect and tolerance. Tolerance is a crucial aspect in maintaining peace and harmony in a diverse religious society. Natural attitudes that promote tolerant behavior help the community to coexist harmoniously without triggering religion-based conflicts. It also demonstrates that the residents of Sekaran Village understand the importance of diversity and how to lead peaceful everyday lives in a religiously diverse context.

Examples like this can inspire other communities to promote tolerance and mutual respect, demonstrating that interfaith harmony is possible amidst diverse religious beliefs. It is important to continue nurturing and upholding these values to have a positive impact on society at large.

### *Factors that inhibit and promote social integration*

Social integration in a multi-religious community can face several inhibiting factors. Here are some of the main factors that can influence social integration in Sekaran Village, including. 1) Stereotypes and Prejudice, Stereotypes and prejudices against other religions can be barriers to social integration. Negative views of other religions can lead to mistrust and discomfort in interfaith interactions. 2) Inequality and Discrimination, Social inequality and discrimination against specific religious groups can hinder integration. Inequality in access to education, employment, or social services can create dissatisfaction and tension in the community. 3) Identity Politics, The use of religion as a tool for identity politics can trigger interfaith conflicts. Politics that reinforce religious differences and attempt to exploit them for political purposes often hinder social integration. 4) Insensitivity and Ignorance, Lack of understanding of other religions and insensitivity to the needs and concerns of other religious groups can inhibit integration. Education and interfaith awareness can help address these issues.

Social integration in a multi-religious community is a complex challenge, and the above factors can interact with each other. To overcome these barriers, there is a need for the promotion of tolerance, interfaith education, and raising awareness about the importance of social integration in diverse religious communities.

Factors promoting social integration are factors that drive the formation of harmonious and positive social relationships among individuals or groups in society. Social integration in a multi-religious community can be driven by various factors. Here are some key factors that promote social integration in this context, 1) Tolerance and Mutual Respect:

Tolerance of other religions and mutual respect are key factors in promoting social integration. When the community has understanding and respect for religious diversity, interfaith interactions can proceed harmoniously. 2) Interfaith Education, Education that promotes understanding of other religions can help reduce stereotypes and prejudices. This education can help build awareness of shared values and commonalities among religions. 3) Multicultural Awareness, Awareness of diversity and multiculturalism can drive social integration. Recognizing and celebrating religious and cultural differences can strengthen a sense of inclusion in the community. 4) Participation in Collective Activities, Social, cultural, or religious activities involving various religious groups can promote social integration. This allows people to collaborate, interact, and build positive relationships beyond their religious context. 5) Leadership and Tolerance Promotion, Community leaders, including religious leaders, can play a crucial role in promoting tolerance and interfaith harmony. Messages of tolerance and peace from religious leaders can influence public perceptions. 6) Inclusive Policies, Policies that support the inclusion and protection of the rights of all religious groups in society are essential for facilitating social integration. This includes anti-discrimination laws and policies that promote interfaith harmony. 7) Everyday Social Interactions, Opportunities to interact in daily life, such as in the workplace, school, or community settings, are vital in promoting social integration. The more people from diverse backgrounds interact, the better the chances of understanding one another.

Strong social integration in a multi-religious community can enhance stability, peace, and shared prosperity. Therefore, it is essential to continue promoting the factors that support social integration and address the barriers that hinder it.

### *Social integration in Sekaran Village*

The community in Sekaran Village is an interesting example of a multi-religious society living together harmoniously. Here is an overview of the community's conditions in Sekaran Village. Significant Religious

Diversity, Sekaran Village has a population that represents various religious beliefs, including Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, and traditional beliefs. While the majority of the population is Muslim, religious diversity is a prominent feature of its social landscape. Strong Religious Traditions, Each religious community in Sekaran Village actively practices its religious traditions. Religious ceremonies, celebrations, and rituals of various beliefs are regularly observed, contributing to the rich tapestry of religious culture. Prominent Interreligious Harmony, Interreligious harmony is a distinguishing feature of Sekaran Village. People of various faiths interact peacefully and respect each other's beliefs. Incidents of interreligious conflict are rare, and the community has mechanisms for resolving differences amicably. According to Holt-Lunstad, J., & Lefler, M. (2022), social integration is a concept that encompasses various aspects and can be explained as the level of individual participation in diverse social interactions, including engagement in social activities or relationships, as well as a sense of community and identification with the social roles played by individuals.

The process of social integration in the multi-religious community of Sekaran Village can be explained as follows. Strong Religious Tolerance as the Foundation, Strong religious tolerance serves as the foundation for social integration in Sekaran Village. People of various faiths respect each other's beliefs and actively participate in their respective religious ceremonies. Ongoing Interreligious Dialogue, Continuous interreligious dialogue is an essential tool for maintaining religious harmony. Religious leaders and community figures often act as mediators in resolving differences and promoting mutual understanding among religious communities. Inclusive Political Participation, Inclusive political participation is an integral part of social integration. People from diverse religious backgrounds are actively involved in elections, political campaigns, and decision-making processes, even within governmental structures that represent the four religions, ensuring that the community feels fair and empowered in the political process. Active Citizenship Education, Schools in Sekaran Village actively incorporate citizenship

education that encourages tolerance and appreciation of religious diversity. This helps the younger generation understand the importance of diversity in society. Government Support for Religious Harmony, Local governments have taken concrete steps to support religious harmony. Programs such as interreligious dialogue, training sessions, and cultural activities involve various religious communities in the process of building an inclusive society.

This process of social integration reflects the success of Sekaran Village in promoting tolerance, interreligious harmony, and inclusive political participation. The multi-religious community in Sekaran Village has created a harmonious environment where religious differences are seen as a source of cultural richness and are respected and welcomed with open arms.

## Conclusion

This research provides an in-depth insight into the condition of the community in Sekaran Village, Kayen Kidul Subdistrict, Kediri Regency, which is a multi-religious community living in harmony. Based on the research findings, the following conclusions can be drawn, Sekaran Village has significant religious diversity, with strong religious traditions among various religious communities. Interfaith harmony is a distinctive feature of Sekaran Village, where religious tolerance and positive interfaith interactions are the norm. The process of social integration in Sekaran Village includes inclusive political participation, citizenship education that promotes tolerance, and ongoing interfaith dialogue. The role of religious leaders and support from the local government play a crucial role in maintaining religious harmony.

## References

- Agustin, A. A. (2018). Perdamaian Sebagai Perwujudan Dalam Dialog Antar Agama. *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya*, 1(2),17-34. <https://doi.org/10.31538/almada.v1i2.206>
- González, F. C., & D'Amato, G. (Eds.). (2016). *Multireligious society: Dealing with religious diversity in theory and practice*. CRC Press.
- Halili Hasan (2023) Laporan Indeks Kota Toleran (IKT) 2022 SETARA Institute. <https://setara-institute.org/indeks-kota-toleran-2022/>
- Hashemi, A. (2017). *Interaksi antar umat beragama (studi kasus islam-kristen di kecamatan sukakarya kota sabang)* (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh). <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/787>
- Holt-Lunstad, J., & Lefler, M. (2022). Social integration. In *Encyclopedia of gerontology and population aging* (pp. 4577-4586). Cham: Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69892-2\\_646-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69892-2_646-2)
- Jannah, A. U., Prastiyani, E. D., & Hamidah, D. (2018). Perilaku Masyarakat Multi Agama Dalam Kehidupan Bertetangga Desa Sekaran Kec. Kayen Kidul Kab. Kediri. *Asketik: Jurnal Agama dan Perubahan Sosial*, 2(2).
- Kalsum, A. U., & Fauzan, F. (2019). Integrasi sosial dalam membangun keharmonisan masyarakat. *JAWI*,2(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.24042/jw.v1i1.2841>
- Kemenag Jatim (2021) Desa Sekaran Terpilih Sebagai Desa Sadar Kerukunan Tingkat Jawa Timur Tahun 2021 <https://jatim.kemenag.go.id/berita/526608/desa-sekaran-terpilih-sebagai-desa-sadar-kerukunan-tingkat-jawa-timur%C2%A0-tahun-2021>
- Mutmainnah, F., & Purnomo, P. (2022). Analisis Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal Dalam Menumbuhkan Sikap Toleransi Terhadap Perbedaan Keyakinan se-Kecamatan Kayen Kidul, Kabupaten Kediri. *JURNAL KOULUTUS*, 5(1), 117-134.
- Rahman, A. R. (2017). Peran Agama Dalam Memperkuat Integrasi Nasional (Dalam Prespektif Sejarah). *Lensa Budaya: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Budaya*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.34050/jlb.v12i1.3049>
- Setiawan, D., & Amal, B. K. (2016). Membangun Pemahaman Multikultural dan Multiagama Guna Menangkal Radikalisme di Aceh Singkil. *Al-Ulum*, 16(2), 348-367. <https://doi.org/10.30603/au.v16i2.155>
- Sopiyan, W., Hidayat, R. H., Setiawati, R., & Hadi, F. N. (2022). Integrasi Sosial Dalam Masyarakat Beragama Sebagai Mediasi Konflik Sosial. *El-Ghiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*,20(02),219-234. <https://doi.org/10.37092/el-ghiroh.v20i02.381>
- Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945, Mahkamah Konstitusi Republik Indonesia

Wibowo, T. (2016). Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Menjaga Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama Di Desa Sekaran Kecamatan Kayen Kidul Kabupaten Kediri. *Kajian Moral Dan Kewarganegaraan*,2(4).  
<https://doi.org/10.26740/kmkn.v2n4.p%25p>