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Religious Tolerance among University Students in North Maluku: Relationships with Islamic Religious Education Learning, Guidance and Counseling Services, and Respectful Mind

Agus[1]*, Mawardi Djamaluddin[1], Rukmana Arahmin[1], Nur Rahmah Asnawi[2], Fauji Koda[3]

[1]Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ternate Indonesia, [2]Universitas Islam Makassar Indonesia, [3]Universitas Muhammadiyah Maluku Utara Indonesia
E-mail: * agus@iain-ternate.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Religious tolerance is an important concern in higher education, particularly in culturally and religiously diverse contexts. This study examined the relationships among Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, Guidance and Counseling (BK) services, respectful mind, and religious tolerance among university students in North Maluku. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted with 100 students from five higher education institutions. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed distinct patterns of relationships among the constructs. BK services showed a strong positive relationship with respectful mind ($\beta = .737$, $p < .001$), but their direct relationship with religious tolerance was not statistically significant ($\beta = -.061$, $p = .608$). PAI learning was positively related to religious tolerance ($\beta = .233$, $p = .005$), but its relationship with respectful mind was not statistically significant ($\beta = .147$, $p = .145$). Respectful mind demonstrated the strongest direct relationship with religious tolerance ($\beta = .809$, $p < .001$). These findings indicate that PAI learning and BK services occupy complementary positions within the estimated model: PAI learning is more directly associated with religious tolerance, whereas BK services are more closely associated with respectful mind. The study contributes to research on higher education by integrating religious learning, counseling services, and respectful mind within a single structural model. The findings highlight the potential value of combining religious learning with interpersonal and counseling-oriented experiences that foster perspective-taking, respectful interaction, and constructive engagement with diversity.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Guidance and Counseling, Respectful Mind, Religious Tolerance*

ABSTRAK

Toleransi beragama merupakan salah satu isu penting dalam pendidikan tinggi, khususnya dalam konteks masyarakat yang memiliki keragaman budaya dan agama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI), layanan Bimbingan dan Konseling (BK), respectful mind, dan toleransi beragama pada mahasiswa di Maluku Utara. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain survei cross-sectional yang melibatkan 100 mahasiswa dari lima perguruan tinggi. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terstruktur dan dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pola hubungan yang berbeda antarvariabel. Layanan BK memiliki hubungan positif yang kuat dengan respectful mind ($\beta = .737$, $p < .001$), tetapi tidak memiliki hubungan langsung yang signifikan secara statistik dengan toleransi beragama ($\beta = -.061$, $p = .608$). Pembelajaran PAI memiliki hubungan positif dengan toleransi beragama ($\beta = .233$, $p = .005$), tetapi hubungannya dengan respectful mind tidak signifikan secara statistik ($\beta = .147$, $p = .145$). Respectful mind menunjukkan hubungan langsung paling kuat dengan toleransi beragama ($\beta = .809$, $p < .001$). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran PAI dan layanan BK memiliki posisi yang saling melengkapi dalam model yang diestimasi. Pembelajaran PAI lebih berkaitan secara langsung dengan toleransi beragama, sedangkan layanan BK lebih erat berkaitan dengan respectful mind. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian pendidikan tinggi dengan mengintegrasikan pembelajaran agama, layanan konseling, dan respectful mind dalam satu model struktural. Temuan ini juga menegaskan pentingnya mengintegrasikan pembelajaran agama dengan pengalaman interpersonal dan layanan konseling yang mendorong kemampuan melihat perspektif orang lain, interaksi yang saling menghormati, serta keterlibatan konstruktif dalam menghadapi keberagaman.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Agama Islam, Bimbingan dan Konseling, Respectful Mind, Toleransi Beragama*

INTRODUCTION

Religious tolerance is an important dimension of social life in Indonesia's pluralistic society, particularly in higher education, where students encounter differences in religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and ways of thinking. Tolerance involves more than passive acceptance of diversity; it includes recognizing differences, respecting others, and maintaining constructive interaction despite disagreement. In educational settings, these capacities are important because students' responses to difference influence interpersonal relationships and social interaction across diverse groups (Thadi & Supian, 2023; Nugroho, 2019). Developing religious tolerance therefore requires

educational environments that foster not only knowledge but also constructive attitudes toward diversity.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) provides an important educational context for developing such attitudes. Through religious and moral learning, students encounter values such as justice, compassion, respect, and peaceful coexistence. PAI learning may therefore contribute beyond the acquisition of religious knowledge by shaping how students understand and respond to people with different beliefs and perspectives. When religious values relate to students' social experiences, PAI may be associated with more constructive attitudes toward religious differences (Fahmi, Mujahidin, & Rahman, 2021).

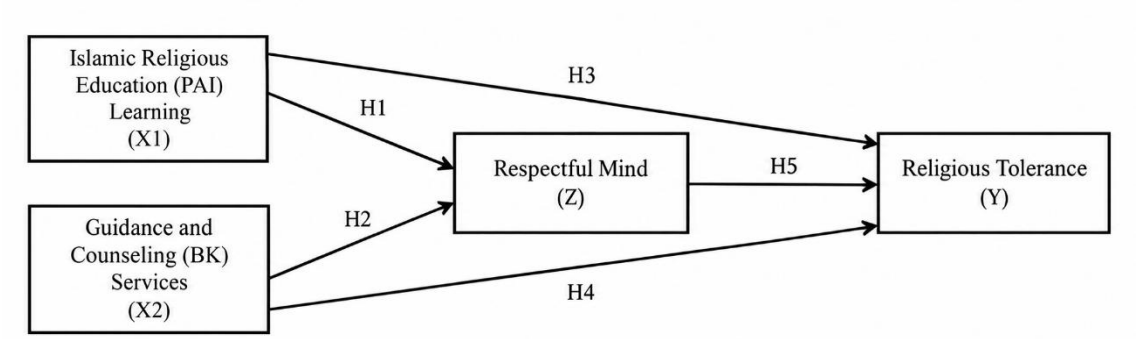
Guidance and Counseling (BK) services provide another educational context for students' personal and interpersonal development. Through guidance and counseling activities, students may develop self-understanding, empathy, communication skills, and the capacity to respond constructively to interpersonal differences. These competencies are relevant in diverse educational environments, where respectful interaction requires students to recognize different perspectives while maintaining positive relationships. Thus, PAI learning and BK services can be viewed as complementary educational contexts: PAI provides religious and moral understanding, while BK supports students' personal and interpersonal development.

The concept of respectful mind proposed by Gardner (2006) offers a theoretical perspective for understanding how students respond to differences. As one of Gardner's five minds, *respectful mind* refers to the capacity to recognize differences, understand others, and develop constructive relationships across differences. This concept is relevant to religious tolerance because both involve respect for diversity and constructive interaction with others. Previous research has also indicated the relevance of counseling interventions to the development of a respectful mind among students (Lestari et al., 2023). Conceptually, respectful mind represents a broader interpersonal capacity, whereas religious tolerance refers more specifically to attitudes toward religious diversity. This distinction provides a basis for examining respectful mind as an intervening construct between educational experiences and religious tolerance.

Although previous studies have examined religious tolerance in relation to religious education and have discussed guidance and counseling in students' interpersonal development, these areas have largely been investigated separately. However, relatively limited attention has been given to integrated models that examine PAI learning and BK services in relation to religious tolerance while considering respectful mind as an intervening construct. This

gap is particularly relevant in higher education, where students regularly encounter diverse social, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

The present study addresses this gap by examining university students from five higher education institutions in North Maluku that provide PAI courses and BK services. Rather than assuming that PAI learning or BK services directly determine religious tolerance, the study examines their statistical relationships with respectful mind and religious tolerance, as well as the possible indirect relationships through respectful mind. Specifically, the study investigates: (1) the relationship between PAI learning and respectful mind; (2) the relationship between BK services and respectful mind; (3) the relationship between PAI learning and religious tolerance; (4) the relationship between BK services and religious tolerance; and (5) the relationship between respectful mind and religious tolerance. It also examines the specific indirect relationships of PAI learning and BK services with religious tolerance through respectful mind. The proposed relationships are presented in Figure 1.



Note: X1 = Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning; X2 = Guidance and Counseling (BK) Services; Z = Respectful Mind; Y = Religious Tolerance. H1–H5 represent direct relationships, while H6–H7 represent specific indirect relationships through Respectful Mind.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Relationships among PAI Learning, BK Services, Respectful Mind, and Religious Tolerance

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the statistical relationships among Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, Guidance and Counseling (BK) services, respectful mind, and religious tolerance among university students in North Maluku. PAI learning (X1) and BK services (X2) were specified as exogenous constructs, *respectful mind* (Z) as the intervening construct, and religious tolerance (Y) as the endogenous construct. The structural model examined five direct relationships: X1 → Z, X2 → Z, X1 → Y, X2 → Y, and Z → Y, as well as two specific indirect relationships through respectful mind.

The study involved 100 active university students from five higher education institutions in North Maluku Province that provide PAI courses and Guidance and Counseling services. Respondents were selected using cluster random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using Likert-scale response options. Four constructs were measured: PAI learning (X1), BK services (X2), respectful mind (Z), and religious tolerance (Y). Each construct was initially represented by 10 reflective indicators. The measurement indicators were developed or adapted from relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), following established guidelines for PLS-SEM applications, particularly in educational research (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022). The analysis consisted of two main stages: assessment of the measurement model and assessment of the structural model. The measurement model was evaluated in terms of indicator outer loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while convergent validity was assessed using outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT), following established recommendations for variance-based structural equation modeling (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

The structural model was evaluated using standardized path coefficients, bootstrapped *t*-statistics, *p*-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), and effect sizes (f^2). R^2 was used to assess the proportion of variance explained in the endogenous constructs, while f^2 was used to assess the contribution of individual exogenous constructs to the endogenous constructs. Hypothesis testing employed bootstrapping to assess the statistical significance of the proposed direct relationships.

The specific indirect effects of PAI learning and BK services on religious tolerance through respectful mind were also examined using bootstrapped estimates and confidence intervals. The proposed mediation relationships were interpreted based on the significance and confidence intervals of the specific indirect effects, together with the corresponding direct relationships (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Hair et al., 2022).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The study involved 100 university students from five higher education institutions in North Maluku. The respondents consisted of 40 male students (40%) and 60 female students (60%). Female students therefore constituted a larger proportion of the sample. Gender was reported as a descriptive characteristic and was not included as a predictor or grouping variable in the structural model.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	40	40%
Female	60	60%
Total	100	100%

Measurement Model Assessment

Because the study employed PLS-SEM with reflective constructs, the measurement model was assessed before evaluating the structural relationships. The assessment considered indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, following established PLS-SEM procedures (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

1. Indicator Reliability and Initial Model Assessment

For reflective constructs, indicator reliability is initially examined through outer loadings. Higher outer loadings indicate that an indicator is more strongly associated with its intended construct. However, decisions regarding indicator retention or deletion should not be based solely on a single loading threshold; construct-level reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and the theoretical relevance of each indicator should also be considered (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

The initial PLS-SEM estimation showed considerable variation in the outer loadings of the 40 indicators. Four indicators exhibited particularly low loadings: PAI7 (0.034), PAI8 (0.079), BK9 (0.057), and TOL10 (0.374). Several other indicators showed borderline loadings, including PAI9 (0.684), BK1 (0.667), BK2 (0.646), BK8 (0.664), and RES5 (0.694). RES7 recorded a relatively low loading of 0.584. These results indicate that the initial measurement model requires further assessment and refinement before the final measurement properties of the constructs can be established.

Figure 2 presents the initial PLS-SEM estimation, including the outer loadings, structural path coefficients, and R^2 values. The model produced R^2 values of 0.760 for Respectful Mind and 0.907 for Religious Tolerance. These R^2 values represent the structural model and are therefore considered separately from the assessment of indicator reliability.

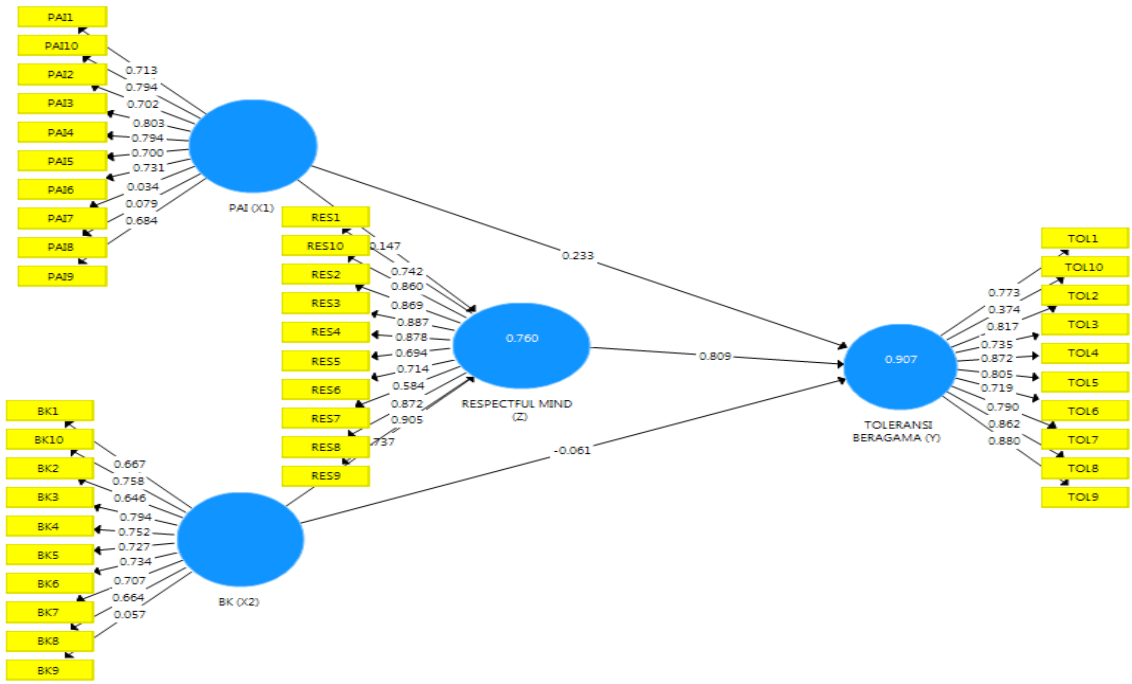


Figure 2. Initial PLS-SEM Model Estimation

The initial results provide a basis for evaluating indicators with weak measurement performance. Indicators with very low loadings, particularly PAI7, PAI8, BK9, and TOL10, were identified for potential removal. Indicators with borderline loadings were retained provisionally for further evaluation based on construct reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), discriminant validity, and theoretical relevance. Following this assessment, the measurement model was re-estimated to obtain the final set of indicators and construct-level reliability and validity statistics.

Table 2. Initial Outer Loadings of the Measurement Model

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Initial Assessment
PAI Learning (X1)	PAI1	0.713	Retain
	PAI2	0.702	Retain
	PAI3	0.803	Retain
	PAI4	0.794	Retain
	PAI5	0.700	Retain
	PAI6	0.731	Retain
	PAI9	0.684	Further assessment

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Initial Assessment
	PAI10	0.794	Retain
BK Services (X2)	BK1	0.667	Further assessment
	BK2	0.646	Further assessment
	BK3	0.794	Retain
	BK4	0.752	Retain
	BK5	0.727	Retain
	BK6	0.734	Retain
	BK7	0.707	Retain
	BK8	0.664	Further assessment
	BK10	0.758	Retain
Respectful Mind (Z)	RES1	0.742	Retain
	RES2	0.869	Retain
	RES3	0.887	Retain
	RES4	0.878	Retain
	RES6	0.714	Retain
	RES8	0.872	Retain
	RES9	0.905	Retain
	RES10	0.860	Retain
Religious Tolerance (Y)	TOL1	0.773	Retain
	TOL2	0.817	Retain
	TOL3	0.735	Retain
	TOL4	0.872	Retain
	TOL5	0.805	Retain
	TOL6	0.719	Retain
	TOL7	0.790	Retain
	TOL8	0.862	Retain
	TOL9	0.880	Retain

Note: Preliminary decisions are based on the initial outer loadings and do not represent the final measurement-model decisions. The final model was re-estimated after evaluating indicator-level and construct-level reliability and validity.

The initial results provided a basis for evaluating indicators with weak measurement performance. Four indicators with very low loadings—PAI7 (0.034), PAI8 (0.079), BK9 (0.057), and TOL10 (0.374)—were removed from the measurement model. In addition, RES5 (0.694) and RES7 (0.584) were removed because of their relatively low loadings on Respectful Mind and their higher cross-loadings on BK Services. Other indicators with borderline loadings were retained because their measurement performance was considered together with

construct-level reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and theoretical relevance. The measurement model was then re-estimated using the retained indicators.

2. Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

Indicator-level assessment was complemented by construct-level measures of internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. For the reflective constructs, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

Following indicator refinement, the measurement model was re-estimated using the retained indicators. The resulting construct-level reliability and convergent validity statistics were examined to determine whether the refined measurement model provided adequate evidence of internal consistency and convergent validity. As shown in Table 3, Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.90 to 0.95, composite reliability values ranged from 0.91 to 0.95, and AVE values ranged from 0.52 to 0.71. These results indicate adequate internal consistency reliability and convergent validity across the four constructs.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity After Model Refinement

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Acceptable
PAI Learning (X1)	0.91	0.91	0.55	Acceptable
BK Services (X2)	0.90	0.91	0.52	Acceptable
Respectful Mind (Z)	0.95	0.95	0.71	Acceptable
Religious Tolerance (Y)	0.94	0.94	0.65	Acceptable

Note: The final measurement model retained 34 of the 40 initially specified indicators after indicator refinement.

Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.90 to 0.95, composite reliability values ranged from 0.91 to 0.95, and AVE values ranged from 0.52 to 0.71. These results indicate that the retained indicators provide adequate evidence of internal consistency and convergent validity.

3. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed to determine whether the four constructs represented empirically distinct concepts. For the reflective measurement model, the assessment considered the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT), with cross-loadings providing additional information about potential indicator-level overlap between constructs (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

The initial cross-loading results revealed potential overlap involving two Respectful Mind indicators. RES5 loaded 0.694 on Respectful Mind but 0.712 on BK Services, while RES7 loaded 0.584 on Respectful Mind but 0.621 on BK Services. Because both indicators showed relatively weak loadings on their intended construct and higher loadings on BK Services, RES5 and RES7 were excluded during measurement-model refinement. This refinement was intended to improve the empirical distinction between Respectful Mind and BK Services while preserving the conceptual coherence of the constructs.

Following indicator refinement, discriminant validity was examined using HTMT values across all construct pairs. The resulting values are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Construct Pair	**HTMT***	**Assessment**
PAI Learning – BK Services	0.71	Below threshold
PAI Learning – Respectful Mind	0.68	Below threshold
PAI Learning – Religious Tolerance	0.76	Below threshold
BK Services – Respectful Mind	0.79	Below threshold
BK Services – Religious Tolerance	0.73	Below threshold
Respectful Mind – Religious Tolerance	0.86	Below threshold

Note: HTMT values below the commonly applied threshold of 0.90 indicate adequate discriminant validity.

The HTMT values ranged from 0.68 to 0.86, with the highest value observed between *Respectful Mind* and Religious Tolerance (0.86). All values remained below 0.90, indicating that the constructs were sufficiently distinguishable within the refined measurement model. The relatively higher HTMT value between *Respectful Mind* and Religious Tolerance is theoretically understandable because both constructs concern responses to differences and interpersonal engagement. Nevertheless, the value remained below the applied threshold, providing evidence that the two constructs retained sufficient empirical distinction.

Structural Model Assessment and Direct Relationships

1. Direct Relationships and Hypothesis Testing

After the measurement model had been assessed and refined, the structural model was examined to evaluate the hypothesized relationships among PAI learning, BK services, respectful mind, and religious tolerance. Because the study employed a cross-sectional survey design, the estimated path

coefficients are interpreted as statistical relationships rather than evidence of causal effects.

The structural model included five direct relationships: PAI learning -- respectful mind, BK services -- respectful mind, PAI learning -- religious tolerance, BK services -- religious tolerance, and respectful mind -- religious tolerance. Standardized path coefficients (β), bootstrapped t-statistics, p-values, and f^2 effect sizes were used to evaluate the proposed relationships. Figure 3 presents the standardized path coefficients, while the hypothesis-testing results are summarized in Table 5.

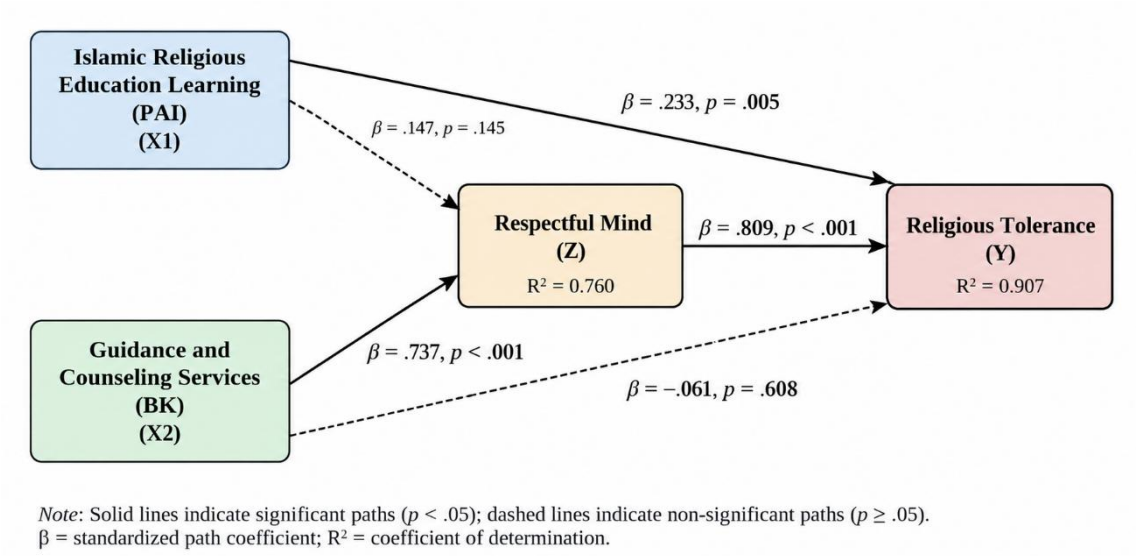


Figure 3. Structural Model with Standardized Path Coefficients

Table 5. Direct Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypo-thesis	Direct relationship	β	t-value	p-value	f^2	Decision
H1	PAI Learning → Respectful Mind	0.147	1.460	.145	0.017	Not supported
H2	BK Services → Respectful Mind	0.737	6.942	< .001	0.429	Supported
H3	PAI Learning → Religious Tolerance	0.233	2.805	.005	0.109	Supported
H4	BK Services → Religious Tolerance	−0.061	0.514	.608	0.005	Not supported
H5	Respectful Mind → Religious Tolerance	0.809	12.756	< .001	1.691	Supported

Note: β = standardized path coefficient; f^2 = effect size. Hypotheses were considered supported when p < .05. The coefficients represent statistical relationships and are not interpreted as causal effects because of the cross-sectional design.

2. Interpretation of the Direct Relationships

H1: PAI Learning and Respectful Mind

PAI learning showed a positive but non-significant relationship with *respectful mind* (β = 0.147, t = 1.460, p = .145; f^2 = 0.017). Thus, H1 was not supported. The very small effect size indicates that PAI learning made only a limited contribution to the explained variance of *respectful mind* in the model. This finding suggests that PAI learning, as measured in this study, was not sufficiently associated with students' respectful orientation toward differences. One possible explanation is that the development of respectful interpersonal attitudes may depend not only on religious learning content but also on the way learning is experienced and connected with students' social interactions.

H2: BK Services and Respectful Mind

BK services showed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with *respectful mind* (β = 0.737, t = 6.942, p < .001; f^2 = 0.429). H2 was therefore supported. The relatively large effect size indicates a substantial contribution of BK services to *respectful mind* within the estimated model. This relationship is consistent with the interpersonal orientation of guidance and counseling, which emphasizes self-understanding, understanding others, communication, empathy, and constructive management of interpersonal differences. The finding is also consistent with previous research examining counseling-based approaches in relation to the development of a *respectful mind* (Lestari et al., 2023).

H3: PAI Learning and Religious Tolerance

PAI learning had a positive and statistically significant relationship with religious tolerance (β = 0.233, t = 2.805, p = .005; f^2 = 0.109). H3 was therefore supported. The effect size indicates a meaningful contribution of PAI learning to religious tolerance within the structural model. This result is consistent with previous research emphasizing the role of Islamic religious education in developing understanding and constructive responses to religious differences (Fahmi et al., 2021; Rahmat & Yahya, 2022). Nevertheless, the cross-sectional design means that this result should be interpreted as a statistical association rather than evidence that PAI learning causes greater religious tolerance.

H4: BK Services and Religious Tolerance

The direct relationship between BK services and religious tolerance was negative and statistically non-significant (β = −0.061, t = 0.514, p = .608; f^2 = 0.005). H4 was therefore not supported. The very small effect size indicates that

the direct contribution of BK services to religious tolerance was limited in the estimated model. The negative coefficient should not be interpreted as evidence that BK services diminish religious tolerance. Rather, it indicates a weak negative estimated direct association that was not statistically distinguishable from zero. Importantly, the contrast between this non-significant direct relationship and the strong BK–*respectful mind* relationship provides a basis for examining the specific indirect effect through *respectful mind*.

H5: Respectful Mind and Religious Tolerance

Respectful mind demonstrated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with religious tolerance ($\beta = 0.809$, $t = 12.756$, $p < .001$; $f^2 = 1.691$). H5 was therefore supported. The very large effect size indicates a substantial contribution of *respectful mind* to the explained variance of religious tolerance within the structural model. The finding is conceptually consistent with Gardner's (2006) view of *respectful mind* as involving recognition of differences, understanding of others, and constructive interaction across differences. In the context of religious diversity, these capacities are closely related to the ability to engage respectfully with individuals who hold different beliefs.

3. Synthesis of the Direct Relationships

Taken together, the direct-path results reveal differentiated relationships across the model. PAI learning was significantly associated with religious tolerance but not with respectful mind, whereas BK services were significantly associated with respectful mind but not directly with religious tolerance. Meanwhile, respectful mind showed a strong positive relationship with religious tolerance.

This pattern is important because it suggests that the relationships between educational experiences and religious tolerance may operate through different pathways. In particular, the strong relationship between BK services and respectful mind, combined with the strong relationship between respectful mind and religious tolerance, provides a substantive basis for examining whether respectful mind functions as an intervening mechanism. The specific indirect effects are therefore examined in the following section.

4. Explanatory Power of the Structural Model

The structural model produced an R^2 value of 0.760 for respectful mind and 0.907 for religious tolerance. Thus, PAI learning and BK services jointly explain 76.0% of the variance in respectful mind, while PAI learning, BK services, and respectful mind jointly explain 90.7% of the variance in religious tolerance within the estimated model.

The relatively high explanatory power for religious tolerance should be interpreted cautiously. R^2 represents the proportion of variance explained by the predictors included in the estimated model and does not by itself establish causal relationships. Its interpretation should therefore be considered together with the path coefficients, effect sizes, measurement-model quality, and cross-sectional nature of the study.

Specific Indirect Effects and Mediation Analysis

The structural model further examined whether *respectful mind* functioned as an intervening construct in the relationships between PAI learning, BK services, and religious tolerance. Two specific indirect relationships were therefore assessed: PAI learning -- *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance (H6) and BK services -- *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance (H7). The indirect relationships were evaluated by considering the product of the relevant path coefficients, while statistical significance should be determined through the bootstrapping procedure.

Based on the estimated direct path coefficients, the indirect relationship between PAI learning and religious tolerance through *respectful mind* was approximately 0.119 (0.147 × 0.809). The corresponding indirect relationship between BK services and religious tolerance through *respectful mind* was approximately 0.596 (0.737 × 0.809). These estimates indicate different patterns in the two proposed mediation pathways. The PAI pathway is relatively small because the relationship between PAI learning and *respectful mind* was weak and statistically non-significant, whereas the BK pathway is substantially larger. After all, both the BK–*respectful mind* and *respectful mind*–religious tolerance relationships were strong.

Table 6. Specific Indirect Effects through Respectful Mind

Hypothesis	Specific Indirect Relationship	Indirect β*	Interpretation
H6	PAI Learning → *Respectful Mind* → Religious Tolerance	0.119	Indirect relationship
H7	BK Services → *Respectful Mind* → Religious Tolerance	0.596	Indirect relationship

Note: *Indirect β represents the product of the relevant standardized direct-path coefficients (PAI → Respectful Mind × Respectful Mind → Religious Tolerance; BK → Respectful Mind × Respectful Mind → Religious Tolerance). Statistical significance of the indirect effects should be established using bootstrapped confidence intervals and *p*-values.

1. H6: PAI Learning, Respectful Mind, and Religious Tolerance

The estimated indirect relationship between PAI learning and religious tolerance through *respectful mind* was 0.119. Although PAI learning showed a significant direct relationship with religious tolerance (β = 0.233, p = .005), its relationship with *respectful mind* was not statistically significant (β = 0.147, p = .145). This pattern indicates that the pathway from PAI learning to religious tolerance through *respectful mind* is relatively weak within the estimated model. Accordingly, the mediating role of *respectful mind* in the relationship between PAI learning and religious tolerance should be determined from the bootstrapped specific indirect effect rather than inferred solely from the direct-path results.

The result also suggests that the relationship between PAI learning and religious tolerance may not necessarily operate through the interpersonal *respectful mind* construct examined in this study. PAI learning was directly associated with religious tolerance, whereas its association with *respectful mind* was not statistically significant. This distinction is important because it indicates that religious learning and interpersonal dispositions may represent different pathways in the formation of students' tolerance-related attitudes.

2. H7: BK Services, Respectful Mind, and Religious Tolerance

The estimated indirect relationship between BK services and religious tolerance through *respectful mind* was 0.596. This relatively large indirect coefficient reflects the strong relationship between BK services and *respectful mind* (β = 0.737) and the strong relationship between *respectful mind* and religious tolerance (β = 0.809). In contrast, the direct relationship between BK services and religious tolerance was very small and statistically non-significant (β = −0.061, p = .608).

This pattern provides a substantive basis for considering *respectful mind* as a potential pathway linking BK services with religious tolerance. However, the presence of a large product of path coefficients does not by itself establish statistical mediation. The final mediation conclusion should therefore be based on the bootstrapped specific indirect effect, including its confidence interval and p-value. If the indirect effect is statistically significant while the direct BK–religious tolerance relationship remains non-significant, the result would indicate that the relationship between BK services and religious tolerance is primarily expressed through *respectful mind* within the estimated model.

3. Synthesis of the Mediation Findings

Taken together, the indirect-path analysis highlights an important distinction between the two educational factors. PAI learning showed a

significant direct relationship with religious tolerance but only a weak relationship with *respectful mind*. BK services, in contrast, showed a strong relationship with *respectful mind* but no significant direct relationship with religious tolerance. Because *respectful mind* was strongly associated with religious tolerance, it represents a theoretically and empirically relevant intervening construct in the model.

The mediation analysis therefore extends the direct-effect findings by showing that the relationship between educational experiences and religious tolerance may involve different pathways. For PAI learning, the evidence points more directly toward its association with religious tolerance, whereas for BK services, the proposed pathway through *respectful mind* is substantially more prominent. The final determination of H6 and H7, however, should rely on the bootstrapped specific indirect effects rather than on the product of path coefficients alone.

Discussion of the Direct Relationships

1. Relationship between BK Services and *Respectful Mind*

The strongest direct relationship involving BK services was observed in relation to students' *respectful mind* ($\beta = .737$, $p < .001$; $f^2 = .429$). This finding indicates that students who reported more positive experiences with BK services also tended to report higher levels of *respectful mind*. Given the cross-sectional design, however, this result should be interpreted as a statistical association rather than evidence that BK services cause the development of *respectful mind*.

The finding is theoretically consistent with Gardner's (2006) concept of *respectful mind*, which emphasizes the capacity to recognize differences, understand others, and interact constructively with people who hold different perspectives. These interpersonal capacities are closely related to the broader purposes of guidance and counseling, particularly the development of self-understanding, interpersonal awareness, communication, and constructive responses to differences. In this sense, the relatively strong association between BK services and *respectful mind* is theoretically plausible because both are concerned with how students understand themselves and relate to others.

The finding is also consistent with Lestari et al. (2023), who reported that cognitive behavioral counseling combined with bibliocounseling was effective in improving students' *respectful mind*. Although their study involved a different educational context and research design, the two studies point to a similar connection between counseling-oriented experiences and students'

capacity to engage constructively with difference. The present study extends this perspective by examining BK services within a structural model that also includes religious tolerance.

The relatively large f^2 value further indicates that BK services make a substantial contribution to the explained variance in *respectful mind* within the present model. Nevertheless, this result should not be interpreted as evidence that all forms of BK services are equally effective. The present study did not distinguish among counseling techniques, service intensity, counselor competence, or the specific interpersonal experiences provided through BK services.

2. Relationship between BK Services and Religious Tolerance

In contrast to its relationship with *respectful mind*, BK services did not show a statistically significant direct relationship with religious tolerance ($\beta = -.061$, $p = .608$; $f^2 = .005$). The coefficient was small and negative, but its nonsignificance indicates that the present data do not provide sufficient evidence of a meaningful direct association between BK services and religious tolerance. The negative sign should therefore not be interpreted as evidence that BK services reduce students' religious tolerance.

This finding is consistent with the broader understanding that religious tolerance is shaped by multiple individual, social, and educational factors rather than by a single educational service. Muhid (2020), for example, found that religious tolerance among university students was associated with religious orientation and personality characteristics, particularly agreeableness and openness. This suggests that the development of tolerance may involve a combination of personal dispositions and educational experiences. From this perspective, the absence of a significant direct BK -- religious tolerance relationship does not necessarily imply that BK services are irrelevant to tolerance; rather, their association may be more closely related to interpersonal capacities that are broader than religious tolerance itself.

The pattern becomes particularly meaningful when the BK -- *respectful mind* relationship is considered alongside the strong *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance relationship observed in the present model. BK services were strongly associated with *respectful mind*, whereas their direct relationship with religious tolerance was not statistically significant. This pattern provides a theoretical basis for considering *respectful mind* as a possible pathway linking interpersonal development and religious tolerance. However, such an interpretation should remain tentative until the specific indirect-effect analysis establishes whether the proposed mediation is statistically supported.

This distinction also helps clarify the role of BK services within the present model. Guidance and counseling may address students' personal, social, and interpersonal development without necessarily targeting religious tolerance as a specific educational outcome. Religious tolerance may require additional learning experiences that directly address religious diversity, beliefs, attitudes, and interaction across religious differences.

3. Relationship between PAI Learning and *Respectful Mind*

PAI learning showed a positive but statistically nonsignificant relationship with *respectful mind* ($\beta = .147$, $p = .145$; $f^2 = .017$). This result indicates that, within the present model, students' perceptions of PAI learning were not sufficiently associated with variation in *respectful mind*. The small effect size also suggests that PAI learning made only a limited contribution to explaining differences in *respectful mind* in this sample.

The finding does not necessarily contradict the broader role of PAI in promoting respect, peaceful coexistence, religious moderation, and tolerance. Helmawati et al. (2024), for example, highlighted the importance of improving the quality of PAI learning and strengthening religious moderation in higher education. Similarly, Rahmat and Yahya (2022) demonstrated that an inclusive Islamic education teaching-material model was effective in strengthening religious tolerance among Indonesian students. Their findings are important because they suggest that the educational content and pedagogical approach through which Islamic education is delivered may influence its contribution to students' attitudes toward diversity.

The nonsignificant PAI -- *respectful mind* relationship in the present study may therefore indicate that participation in or positive perceptions of general PAI learning do not automatically translate into the broader interpersonal capacity represented by *respectful mind*. Developing such a capacity may require learning experiences that go beyond the transmission of religious knowledge and explicitly engage students in dialogue, reflection, perspective-taking, discussion of differences, and the application of religious values in real social situations. Recent research on PAI in higher education similarly emphasizes the importance of dialogical learning, critical engagement with religious issues, and inclusive communication in developing students' inclusive attitudes.

At the same time, this interpretation should remain cautious because the present study did not specifically assess teaching methods, instructional materials, classroom interaction, lecturer behavior, or the extent to which PAI learning incorporated opportunities for dialogue and perspective-taking. The

nonsignificant relationship may therefore reflect the general nature of the PAI construct measured in this study rather than the absence of a possible relationship between forms of PAI pedagogy and *respectful mind*.

4. Relationship between PAI Learning and Religious Tolerance

PAI learning showed a positive and statistically significant relationship with religious tolerance (β = .233, p = .005), although the effect size was relatively modest (f^2 = .109). This indicates that students with more positive perceptions of PAI learning tended to report higher levels of religious tolerance. Given the cross-sectional design, this finding should be interpreted as a statistical association rather than a causal effect.

The finding supports the view that PAI can provide an important educational context for developing religious understanding, moderation, and peaceful engagement with diversity. Helmawati et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of PAI quality and religious moderation programs in higher education, while Rahmat and Yahya (2022) found that inclusive Islamic education materials were more effective in strengthening religious tolerance among Indonesian students. Similarly, Rahmat, Firdaus, and Yahya (2019) demonstrated that a Qur'an-based religious education model incorporating understanding of other religions, shared values, and inclusive attitudes could strengthen students' religious tolerance. These findings suggest that PAI may be particularly relevant to tolerance when religious learning goes beyond knowledge transmission and provides opportunities for inclusive and reflective engagement with religious differences.

The finding is also consistent with the Maluku context, where Pelupessy et al. (2022) reported a significant relationship between religious intellectual humility in the learning process and students' tolerance behavior. Although intellectual humility differs conceptually from PAI learning, both point to the importance of reflective engagement with religious differences. The modest effect size in the present study also indicates that religious tolerance is not explained by PAI learning alone but may be associated with other personal and educational factors, including religious orientation and personality characteristics (Muhid, 2020). Notably, PAI learning was significantly related to religious tolerance but not to *respectful mind*, suggesting that its relationship with tolerance may operate through processes other than the broader interpersonal orientation captured by *respectful mind*. The proposed indirect pathway nevertheless requires separate examination through the specific indirect-effect analysis.

5. Relationship between Respectful Mind and Religious Tolerance

The strongest direct relationship in the structural model was found between *respectful mind* and religious tolerance ($\beta = .809$, $p < .001$; $f^2 = 1.691$). Students who reported higher levels of *respectful mind* also tended to report higher levels of religious tolerance. The magnitude of the effect indicates that *respectful mind* was particularly strongly associated with religious tolerance within the estimated model.

This finding is consistent with Gardner's (2006) conception of *respectful mind* as an orientation toward recognizing, appreciating, and interacting constructively with people who differ from oneself. In the context of religious diversity, the capacity to acknowledge differences, consider alternative perspectives, and maintain constructive relationships provide a relevant interpersonal foundation for tolerance. The finding also complements Muhid's (2020) evidence that religious tolerance is associated with individual characteristics such as religious orientation, agreeableness, and openness. The present study extends this perspective by highlighting *respectful mind* as an interpersonal construct that is strongly associated with students' religious tolerance.

The strength of this relationship should nevertheless be interpreted cautiously because both constructs were measured through the same cross-sectional self-report survey. The coefficient therefore does not establish that *respectful mind* causes religious tolerance. Rather, it demonstrates a strong empirical association that warrants further investigation through longitudinal, experimental, or multi-source research. Within the present model, the finding is particularly relevant because *respectful mind* is strongly related to BK services while also showing a strong relationship with religious tolerance, providing a basis for examining its potential role as an intervening construct.

Synthesis of the Direct Relationships

Taken together, the five direct relationships reveal a differentiated pattern. PAI learning was significantly related to religious tolerance but not to *respectful mind*, whereas BK services were strongly related to *respectful mind* but not directly to religious tolerance. At the same time, *respectful mind* showed the strongest direct relationship with religious tolerance. Thus, the two educational contexts appear to occupy different positions within the proposed structural model.

This pattern is theoretically plausible given their different educational orientations. PAI provides a formal context for religious understanding, value

formation, and engagement with religious teachings, whereas BK services are more directly concerned with students' personal, social, and interpersonal development. The findings therefore suggest that PAI learning is more closely associated with the religious-tolerance outcome, while BK services are more closely associated with the interpersonal orientation represented by *respectful mind*. The strong relationship between *respectful mind* and tolerance further indicates that interpersonal processes may be relevant to understanding religious tolerance among university students.

Importantly, the direct relationships alone do not establish mediation. The combination of a strong BK -- *respectful mind* relationship and a strong *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance relationship, alongside the nonsignificant BK -- religious tolerance path, provides a rationale for testing whether *respectful mind* represents an indirect pathway. The PAI pattern requires a different interpretation because PAI learning was significantly related to religious tolerance but not to *respectful mind*. Accordingly, the specific indirect effects of PAI learning -- *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance and BK services -- *respectful mind* -- religious tolerance must be examined statistically before any mediation conclusion is drawn.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, Guidance and Counseling (BK) services, *respectful mind*, and religious tolerance among university students in North Maluku. The findings reveal differentiated relationship patterns across the proposed model. BK services showed a strong positive relationship with students' *respectful mind*, but no statistically significant direct relationship with religious tolerance. In contrast, PAI learning was positively associated with religious tolerance, but its relationship with *respectful mind* was not statistically significant. *Respectful mind* demonstrated the strongest direct relationship with religious tolerance among the constructs examined.

Taken together, the findings suggest that PAI learning and BK services may occupy complementary positions in relation to students' religious tolerance. PAI learning appears more directly connected with the specific attitudinal dimension of religious tolerance, whereas BK services are more closely associated with the broader interpersonal capacity represented by *respectful mind*. The strong relationship between *respectful mind* and religious tolerance further highlights the relevance of students' ability to recognize, understand, and engage respectfully with differences in a religiously diverse higher-education environment.

The study contributes to research on religious tolerance in higher education by bringing PAI learning, BK services, and Gardner's concept of *respectful mind* together within a single structural model. Practically, the findings support the consideration of complementary educational approaches in which religious learning is accompanied by interpersonal and counseling-oriented experiences that encourage perspective-taking, respectful interaction, and constructive engagement with diversity. Such an approach may provide a broader basis for universities seeking to strengthen students' capacity to live with religious differences.

The findings should be interpreted within the context of the study and should not be generalized beyond similar populations and settings without further evidence. The cross-sectional design also limits interpretation to statistical relationships and does not establish temporal or causal relationships among the variables. In addition, the study did not examine other factors that may contribute to students' religious tolerance. Future research could therefore use longitudinal or experimental designs and incorporate additional individual, pedagogical, and contextual factors to further explain the development of religious tolerance among university students.

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