

## The Attitudes towards the Fundamental Principles of Sikh Teachings at Punjab Community in Medan

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**Abstract:** In essence, there are seven factors determining the alteration of attitudes of Punjab community of which effects arouse the occurrence of the violation on the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings. Those factors would get interconnected each other. Further, those factors comprise education backgrounds, personal experiences, stakeholders, culture, mass media, educational and religion institutions, and also the emotionality. Those aforementioned factors are going to influence the individuals' attitudes covering three major components, namely cognitive, affective, and conative components, in which those three components are to support each other. In addition, those components of attitudes consist of two main poles, positive and negative attitudes, concerning on the violation of the fundamental Sikh teachings covering five rules and four prohibitions which are to be followed and obeyed by Punjab community in Medan.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Sikh Teachings

### Introduction

Indonesia is identical with the greatest sayings "*Bhineka Tunggal Ika*" (Unity in Diversity) which means that no matter how different we are, we are still in the same ways. People say, the set of those nice words that constitutes the nice sayings is attached in the eagle's grasp, and signifies the symbol of Indonesia, uttered by the great Minister Gajah Mada who is originally from Majapahit Kingdom and successfully united Indonesia in 13<sup>th</sup> century. However, it is partially contradictive with the reality. The sociologists argue that there is a gap that separates *das Sein* and *das Sollen* meaning that the expectation does not meet the reality (<http://www.fajarjun.com>).

There are several signals that communicate the fade of the essence of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. Firstly, there is a radicalization of ethnic prejudices, the paradigms that encourage people to think that one ethnic they are following is better than others (ethnocentrism), and the negative labeling on the particular ethnics (stereotype) throughout the community. The stereotype is initiated as the symbol of assessing or assuming one community from other communities. Therefore, this labeling does not fully represent the real characteristics of the assessed communities. Consequently, for instance, people tend to be shocked if they are finding out Batak people behave gently. Another example is that when we are finding out Javanese people who have Batak bosses; they show the tendency of being anxious to make little mistakes because they prejudice that their bosses will be furiously mad. Secondly, there is an increase of the conflicts occurring amongst the tribes particularly around and in the transition stage of the reformation era in 1998 (<http://www.fajarjun.com>).

Living amongst the multi-ethnics community will arouse the possibility for the members to observe the personalities or characteristics, the attitudes of members of other ethnics, or the peculiar things practiced by the members of other ethnics that might make them feel alienated. If the individuals are wrongly interpreting whatever they see or hear, they will be attracted to have a prejudice on other ethnics.

One out of the cultures or ethnics of which residence is in Medan is an Indian ethnic within which there is a minority tribe known as Punjab.

To allude the phenomenon occurring in Medan, there are so many members of Punjab community violating the rules and the fundamental principles of the religion teachings that are accepted within that community. In addition, psychological consideration related to this issue refers to how the Punjab community in Medan views the fundamental principles of the religion teachings they believe in during this time. The friction in terms of attitudes' value followed by the Punjab community is in line with the cultural influences and lifestyles which is viewed to significantly affect their individual ways of life.

The attitudes of Punjab's community on the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings are adopted from the three main components as Baron et. al. comment (cited in 1991) that cognitive component relates to the knowledge of point of views and beliefs that refer to the way how people are perceiving the attitude objects. In addition, affective component constitutes the attitude tendency if they tend to be positive or negative. Meanwhile, the conative component refers to the component that interconnects with the tendency to behave on the attitude objects. This component exhibits the attitudes' intensity in terms of identifying the quality of the people's tendency to behave or act on the attitude objects.

Those three aforementioned aspects are relatively the same each other, for instance; when we have a positive belief that one thing is good, surely, we are going to positively behave on it. However, this does not mean that every single behavior of us accurately mirrors how our attitudes are. The important thing is that it is necessary to trigger the strong positive attitudes so that it will provide us with the similar effects on our behaviors. In line with this attitude point of view, in Sikh teachings, the members are viewing the fundamental principles of the teachings in various ways. Therefore, attitudes constitute the organization of beliefs, feelings, and tendency that are relatively stable on anything or anyone referring to the attitude objects.

Essentially, humans' attitudes are developing along the time. Individuals will naturally strengthen the positive attitudes on everything satisfying them much and growing up the negative attitudes on everything blocking them to achieve what they want (Amit, 2004). Moreover, it is identically the same as the attitudes on fundamental principles of Sikh teachings. There are five rules and four prohibitions that need to be obeyed by the followers of Sikh teachings. According to the phenomenon occurring in the reality investigated through observation and interview with a couple of Punjab community members conducted by the researcher, to obey the rules is problematic for them as they tend to violate the agreed rules. Therefore, this phenomenon encourages the researcher to compose the paper talking about the attitudes on the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings at Punjab community in Medan.

According to the previous explanation, this paper, therefore, is going to strive to investigate the three major components, namely: cognitive, affective, and conative components, and also the possible factors that might influence the attitudes' alteration on the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings at Punjab community in Medan.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***The Definition of Attitude***

To all psychologists, the attention focus on the attitudes is obtained from different individuals' perspectives. There have been a number of researchers and theories proposed for providing the limitation in the defining process that later will contribute to enlarge a number of formulations. However, the conceptual comprehension on the attitudes is allowed to help the individuals out to apprehend its relation to any fields in terms of analysis on humans' life.

Gerungan (1986) explains that attitudes are possible to define as the wills to react on everything which is directed to the particular objects. The attitudes are also to be viewed as the response patterns referring to the tendency of thinking or acting through the particular ways. Moreover, Bird (in Mar'at, 1984) argues that attitudes constitute everything that relates to the ways how people are adapting with people based on the aspect of the selected environment or of their own behaviors.

Krech and Crutchfield (in Ahmadi, 1999) comment that attitudes are the stable organization from the motivation process, perception, and observation on the aspects of humans' life. Meanwhile, according to Harvey and Smith (in Ahmadi, 1999), attitudes refer to the readiness to unfailingly respond to the positive and negative objects as well as situations.

### **Attitudes' Components**

Baron et.al. (in Walgito 1991) state that attitudes cover three major components that are getting intertwined each other, they are:

1. Cognitive component that relates to the knowledge, point of views, and beliefs in terms of how people are perceiving the attitude objects;
2. Affective component constituting the component that deals with the feeling of excitement to the attitude objects. The excitement feeling refers to positivity, while anxiety works on negativity. This component engages with the attitudes' direction either they go positively or negatively;
3. Conative component referring to the component that is interconnected with the tendency of reacting on the attitude objects. In addition, this component exhibits the attitude intensity to pose the quality of the people's tendency to react or behave on the attitude objects.

### **The Factors Affecting the Attitude Building**

According to Ahmadi (1999), the occurrence of attitudes is affected by the stimulants. The attitude building is influenced by the societal environment and the culture, such as; colleagues, norms, religions, and local wisdoms. These drive differences to occur in terms of individual attitudes of one person to other ones since the attitudes will not be constructed if there is not any interaction between humans and the particular objects.

Azwar (1992), otherwise, argues that individuals are reacting by means of constructing the pattern of particular attitudes on the psychological objects they are facing. Moreover, there are a couple of factors that modify the attitude building, namely:

- a. The Level of Education  
How people are constructing their individual attitudes are influenced by the level of their education since the education covers any explanatory experiences, point of views, and the adaptation process encouraging the people to be highly developed.
- b. Personal Experience  
The response and the essence that are experienced by the individuals will be one out of several factors that influences the attitude building. Consequently, every single individual is to have the experiences which are related to their psychological objects.
- c. The Interference of the Stakeholders  
Someone who is very specially important for us must influence our attitude building.
- d. Cultural Influence  
The culture within which we are living has unconsciously provided us with the attitude effects on the particular problems. Therefore, it is the culture that is coloring the individuals' experiences.
- e. Mass Media  
In terms of broadcasting the information as their main responsibility, the mass media are to facilitate the attitude building through giving the cognitive foundation. Besides, they are supposed to have a contribution in terms of opinion establishment.
- f. Education and Religion Institutions  
The fundamental understanding and definition about the nature of individual morality cannot be separated from the education and religion teachings.
- g. Emotionality Factor  
Somehow, the attitudes manifest the state representing the emotionality that is functioned as the media for bridging the frustration constituting the self-defending mechanism.

### **Sikh Religion**

The religion which Punjab community believes in is regularly known as Sikh in which this religion is essentially derived from the Hinduism and Islamic teachings led by 10 Gurus comprising Guru Nanak, the first Guru, and Guru Gobind Singh, the last one.

According to Guru Nanak, the teachings of Sikh are naturally adapted from *sabda* (sayings). *Sabda* refers to what is uttered by the God Almighty. Those who are able to comprehend the *sabdas* are viewed as the holy individuals owning the virtuous power and reach the greatest position amongst their communities. Therefore, Guru Nanak suggests the individuals to be in a unity with the *sabdas* in search of apprehending the mystery on today's life and afterlife. After people unite themselves with the *sabdas*, they are able to claim that any truth, heroism, essential knowledge, and purely spiritual soul are entailing them. In addition, they are to practice all the *sabdas* so that they are allowed to guide other people into the brightness, arouse their awareness of universal humanity, and be freed from the sorrow and misery, as they are to be freed from the reincarnation stage going to the everlasting peace.

In Sikh teachings, as guru Guru Gobind Singh states, there is a formulation regarding to the rules Sikh followers should obey, they are:

1. *Kesh* : the long-haired condition that is prohibited to be cut and needs to be covered by *serban* (veil)
2. *Kangha* : the mini comb used for cleaning the hair which must be attached on the head all the time
3. *Kirpan* : a sword-like or small knife that should be slipped in the waist
4. *Kara* : a bracelet made from the gold and steel which is particularly worn in the right hand
5. *Kachehra* : a short that must be worn all the time

Excluding those five rules above, there are still four prohibitions that should be withdrawn within the Sikh teachings, they are:

1. Not distracting the hair around the body;
2. The necks of the animals intended for food should be totally decapitated/separated from their heads;
3. Not playing a fire with other undeserved women or men;
4. Not consuming the tobacco (smoking) or drinking any addicted beverage that cause losing mind.

During its development in which the Punjab community are spread out to any countries in the world, including Indonesia especially in Medan, their population is relatively small which might arise various attitudes of other communities. The terms of attitudes in this respect alludes to both cultural and religion teachings that are brought up by Guru Gobind Singh, Sikh teachings. In addition, within the Punjab community, there are various things related to any rules and concepts that are essentially comprised in Sikh teachings.

### **Discussion**

Sikh religion owns the Holy scripture as what other religions posses which is developed throughout the world and known as Grantsahib. There are couple pivotal principles in Sikh teachings, namely: God to be worshiped, the level of Guru, Holy Scripture, Gudwara (Holy place to worship), Sikh Celebration Day, community, peaceful and harmful ways, and Sikh members interconnected with others members of which religions are different.

Sikh that is believed and followed by the Punjab community possesses five main rules and four prohibitions that must be obeyed and be implemented in the daily life. Those are that men and women are prohibited to cut the hair, the comb which is used for cleaning the hair, a sword-like or little knife to readily be used all the time, a steeled bracelet worn in the right hand, and wearing the short all the time. Meanwhile, those four prohibitions constitute, preventing to modify the hair growing up around the body, eating the animal of which necks are not totally separated/decapitated from the heads, playing a fire with the undeserved men or women, smoking and drinking the addicted-causing beverage.

The five main rules and four prohibitions are coloring the life of Punjab community who have followed Sikh teachings along this time. However, those rules and prohibitions, nowadays, are no longer well articulated and practiced due to the journey of Sikh followers resided in Medan. In addition, due to the socialization process that occurs when they are interacting each other and the heterogeneity entailing in Medan, the community of Punjab tends to disregard those rules and prohibitions, far from the essence of Sikh teachings.

In fact, there are several factors entailing the attitudes alteration of Punjab community on the fundamental rules of Sikh teachings violation. In addition, there is an opinion coming from Azwar that might be the framework to argue that there are seven factors that can be used to determine the positive attitudes of individuals, both on other individuals or on the attitude objects. Those factors signify education level, personal experiences, stakeholders' interference, culture, mass media, education and religion institutions, and emotionality.

Moreover, the education factor that influences the Punjab community can be the base for determining their attitudes in violating the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings they believe in. The members of Punjab community currently residing in Medan are actually entailed by the sufficiently satisfying education background. Some of them have graduated from senior high school. In addition, there are some who are the alumni of the undergraduate degree programs. However, what leaves a wonder is that apart from their good education backgrounds, they are keeping violating the principles of Sikh teachings. This condition indicates that formal educations they have accomplished have altered their point of views on the five rules and four prohibitions that label them as the followers practicing Sikh teachings. Through the education they have acquired, the community of Punjab is to get the experiences, comprehensions, point of views, and adaptation processes on their environmental condition within which they are residing as well as interacting.

The attitudes of Punjab community on five rules and four prohibitions constituting the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings are also affected by the personal experiences which are gained and directly felt from the good treatment of other communities. According to Azwar (1992), the responses and statements that are experienced by the individuals are the factors that influence the attitudes building. Therefore, the individuals need to experience anything regarding to their psychological objects. In accordance with the five rules and four prohibitions that must be obeyed by the Sikh followers, many of them are perceiving that those rules and prohibitions are no longer accepted compared to the era they are living today. Therefore, it can be simply stated that when they are performing all rules and leaving the prohibitions, there is not any significant benefit they acquire and even they are, based on other communities' point of views, sometimes labeled by other communities as the member of the relatively weird ethnic or religion. Therefore, with all of the personal experiences, they are creeping along to no longer be not afraid of violating the rules and prohibitions of Sikh teachings.

The attitude building process on violating the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings is also affected by the interference of the stakeholders. As the consequence of mingling with people of other ethnics, people are allowed to alter the point of views of Sikh followers apart from the characteristics of attitudes and point of views that are perceived as the ultimate principles. In addition, the individuals are to be affected by the stakeholders who are able to open their worlds wider to access and experience new things in their life. That is why the individuals are possible to change their attitudes and point of views when they are getting close with the stakeholders within the mingling stage. Further, the Sikh followers are getting afraid of being unaccepted by the stakeholders of the environment at which they are living.

Moreover, the local culture at which they are living significantly contributes to alter the attitudes and point of views on the five rules and four prohibitions within Sikh teachings. It is in accordance with Azwar (1992) who argues that the culture in an area we are living at has unconsciously attached the influence to alter our attitudes on particular issues. Therefore, it is culture which colors the personal experiences. This means that Medan, one out of the biggest cities in Indonesia with various tribes, cultures, and religions, is possible to be the area for changing the individuals' attitudes as well as point of views. The interaction process that occurs in Medan engaging Punjab community with other communities has opened

and broadened the point of views of the members of Punjab community in terms of the weaknesses and the strengths entailing the ethnics and religions. Consequently, the members of Punjab community who have violated the five rules and the four prohibitions of Sikh teachings cannot be addressed as the adherent followers of Sikh teachings. However, apart from that violation, they keep thinking that they belong to Sikh, particularly Khalsa community.

The attitudes of Punjab community on the fundamental principle violation of Sikh teachings cannot be separated from the mass media. The intensity of getting the information about the religion which they keep believing in during this time is also allowed to alter their point of views due to the fact that Sikh teachings are rarely broadcasted in the mass media. This condition triggers their worry of being the followers of the religion that is less known and lack of acknowledgement of other communities due to the rare expose in various mass media. Ironically, its existence is still neglected in Indonesia.

Another factor that might give impact to the attitudes alteration of Punjab community on the fundamental principle violation on Sikh teachings is the existence of educational and religion teachings, Azwar (1992). It seems that the educational and religion institutions projected to educate Sikh individuals cannot fully help them to comprehend the teachings of Sikh. This condition provokes the Punjab community to be easily affected to violate the five rules and four prohibitions they should practice to meet the essence of being Sikh.

Lastly, the factor that affects the attitude alteration of Punjab community in violating the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings comes from the individual emotionality. Azwar (1992) explains that somehow the attitudes manifest the statement that is supported by the emotionality of which function is to bridge the frustration or to circulate the self-defending process. This means that Punjab community of which comprehension on Sikh teachings is still lacking will be easily influenced by means of emotionality that will later drive them to break the rules having been agreed upon. Therefore, most members of Punjab community tend to possess the unstable emotionality which affects them to violate the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings.

## **Conclusion**

In accordance with the previous explanations, it can be summated that there are essentially seven factors that give the impacts to the attitudes alteration of Punjab community in which those factors are arousing their tendency to violate the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings. In addition, those factors will relate each other. These are to determine the individual attitudes constituting three major components that support each other, namely: cognitive, affective, and conative components. The cognitive component constitutes everything that is believed by the attitude owners. In addition, affective component constitutes the component of the feelings that alludes the emotionality; while the conative component manifests the tendency to behave or react based on how the objects are alike.

Moreover, the attitudes towards the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings are divided into two major respects, namely; positive and negative attitudes. The positive attitudes refer to the condition of agreeing or accepting any violation on the teachings of Sikh while negative attitudes signify the condition of not agreeing, not accepting, and rejecting the violation of fundamental principle of Sikh teachings.

Alluding to the aforementioned explanation in the preceding section, this paper is supposed to be developed in the form of scientific research in which it will be designed to put the described and investigated things related to the attitudes of Punjab community on Sikh teachings, the fundamental principles of Sikh teachings, the cultural values of Punjab community, the personalities and traits of Punjab community, and so on. Moreover, it is also possible to design a cross-cultural research that relates to the religion, culture, or local wisdom of Punjab community compared to the other ethnics or tribes, especially in Medan and generally in North Sumatera.

Furthermore, it is also suggested to all Gurdwara keepers in Medan or other area in North Sumatera to upgrade the spirit for expanding the teachings of Sikh. It can be also possible to conduct weekly activity in a month excluding the routine activity, religious activity, celebration of Sikh great days, wedding party, and any other activities which are possible to be conducted at Gurdwara. In addition, it can

be initiated by establishing some groups for discussion comprising adults and teenagers within the Punjab community. Further, the meeting is allowed to be conducted at home alternately through holding the social or religion activities that should be attended by the masters of Sikh or those who are knowledgeable, especially in comprehending Sikh teachings.

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