



## Acculturation of Religious Rituals for Chinese Muslim Minorities in West Sumatra

Awiskarni<sup>1</sup>, Harmonedi<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Zalnur<sup>3</sup>, Abdul Basit<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

Correspondence: awiskarni@uinib.ac.id

**Abstrak:** This study aims to explore the acculturation and assimilation processes that ethnic Chinese in West Sumatra undergo upon converting to Islam, that the conversion does not lead to an outright abandonment of traditions. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive analysis approach, this research underscores how religious conversion fundamentally alters an individual's worldview and behavior. Converts to Islam are encouraged to earnestly learn and adhere to Sharia and Islamic teachings, initiating their spiritual journey with religious observances and distancing themselves from practices associated with their former beliefs. However, the conversion process is significantly influenced by one's environment, which plays a pivotal role in shaping the assimilation and acculturation experience of ethnic Chinese Muslims. This environment encompasses both familial and social contexts. The family environment, where individuals are connected by kinship—whether as children, spouses, or other familial roles—is marked by intensive interaction and communication. Yet, this close-knit communication does not necessarily guarantee a seamless conversion to another faith. Beyond the family, the surrounding social environment, including the workplace, extended family, and broader societal interactions, also impacts the conversion journey. Within these spheres, various factors either facilitate or hinder the process of embracing Islam for ethnic Chinese individuals. This study delves into these dynamics, examining the multifaceted influences on religious conversion and the subsequent negotiation between maintaining cultural heritage and adopting new religious identities. Through this analysis, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between religion, culture, and identity among ethnic Chinese Muslims in West Sumatra.

**Keywords:** *ethnic Chinese; Muslim minorities; acculturation; religious rituals.*

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### Introduction

Ethnic Chinese Muslims in West Sumatra have a long history in the journey of the Indonesian nation. There has been a blending in various aspects of life, such as adaptation to the natural environment, economic system, culture, and religion. Social blending for immigrant ethnic groups has a strong relationship with various variables from the perspectives of functional and structural theory. In the realm of religion, their presence has colored and synergized in religious activities. The arrival of the Chinese had no intention of settling and dominating or colonizing; it was purely for trade, allowing them to be well-received by the local community. This harmonious relationship eventually continued with the presence of Chinese individuals who, in the following years, stayed longer, even residing and assimilating in West Sumatra. In the religious domain, the Chinese community can no longer be defined merely as adherents of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Major religions such as Catholicism, Protestantism, and even Islam have taken important positions as considerations and balances of religion and belief among the Chinese. This

could be considered an important cultural deviation because, in the classical Confucian religious view, the cultural difference between Abrahamic religions and Confucianism is vast.

The conversion of Chinese individuals to Islam in West Sumatra and their religious concepts is not merely a matter of socio-cultural assimilation but more significantly, religious assimilation. Particularly notable is the number of Chinese people embracing Islam and the prevalence of internal religious moderation movements they undertake through acculturation and blending in all aspects of life. This movement is, of course, a process of cultural assimilation between the local Islamic traditions (Minangkabau-West Sumatra) and the culture or traditions of the Chinese people of West Sumatra. Chinese or Ethnic Chinese Muslims are a minority group among the Chinese communities in Indonesia. Various writings on the Chinese in general and specifically Muslims have been extensively studied, focusing on the dynamics of internal ethnic interactions and with other ethnicities (Gintari, Rivaie, and Supriadi 2013; Maulana 2011; Huda 2010). Nonetheless, the Chinese Muslim community, as a minority group, continues to exist among other Chinese communities. Social relationships or interactions proceed as usual. Studies on acculturation and religious moderation for the Chinese minority in West Sumatra should indeed be directed openly, not merely examining the internal ethnicity of these Chinese Muslims but striving to minimize the barriers of religious awareness among ethnic groups. The barriers between Ethnic Chinese and Indigenous people are still very strong, even among Muslims of different ethnicities.

Based on this description, researchers attempt to systematically study how the acculturation efforts of ethnic Chinese Muslims in West Sumatra aim to find and realize a meeting point between cultures, community groups, etc. Thus, the study on the religious moderation of ethnic Chinese is one form of study that should be academically examined concerning the acculturation of religious rituals with all forms of heterogeneity and elements of plurality, including the Minangkabau society, in cities like Padang, Bukittinggi, Padang Panjang, Payakumbuh, and others in West Sumatra. The common perception that the Chinese ethnic group justifies any means still occurs. This perception is one reason for the various disparities and riots that arise for various reasons, ultimately victimizing the Chinese. Ethnic Chinese are so despised and often become the target of mob lynching in various riots in our country. According to Tjamboek Berdoeri (2014) in his book "Indonesia Dalem Api dan Bara," under the guise of nationalism (independence), ethnic Chinese become victims, easy targets of looting and murder. Violence, terror, verbal abuse, and hatred towards Chinese people still occur frequently. One victim of political identity was Basuki Tjahaya Purnama, alias Ahok, who was imprisoned on the pretext of religious defamation concerning Surah Al-Maidah. Issues like these can also be triggered by the failure of Chinese individuals to blend and merge in social interactions with the local indigenous population. However, many ethnic Chinese have successfully blended in, socialized well with the local community, and assimilated as if they were indigenous, which is accepted by the native society. One of the successful cases of blending and integration occurred in West Sumatra (Doni Nofra 2016, 62).

Studying Muslim Chinese in West Sumatra is a fascinating subject, particularly in light of two Chinese symbols in West Sumatra. The first is the existence of the Pondok area, largely inhabited by the Chinese community. The second is the presence of a place of worship (Klenteng) for the Chinese community in West Sumatra. Stereotypes of the

Chinese often describe them as being somewhat reserved, arrogant, egotistic, superior, and materialistic, yet sometimes they display friendly, generous, hardworking, persistent, and speculative tendencies, but also a propensity for lavish spending and partying. These characteristics seem to alternate unpredictably, appearing as if they stand alone, making it difficult for those unfamiliar with the Chinese to grasp their nature and easily spot the negative aspects. While some may view these traits as exploitation of the surrounding (social) environment, they spontaneously emerge from an unconscious cultural root, stemming from a singular cultural background with specific meanings that can be understood. Indeed, this diversity of traits and attitudes distinguishes the Chinese ethnic characteristics from others.

The stereotypes mentioned above are interrelated and rooted in a singular cultural system of belief. Among the Chinese, the belief system and traditions widely adopted include Confucianism, which for centuries was a compulsory subject in Chinese public schools in ancient times. This long period of internalization has left a mark on the Chinese ethnic group across generations.

### **Literature Reviews**

The term "Acculturation" originates from the English word 'acculturate,' meaning to adjust oneself to new cultural customs or foreign habits (Shadily, 1976: 7). According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), "acculturation" is the mixing of two or more cultures that meet and influence each other, or the process of foreign cultural influence entering a society, where parts selectively absorb few or many elements of that foreign culture. Based on the aforementioned definition, the context of Islam's introduction to the Nusantara (Indonesia) and its subsequent development has seen cultural interactions that mutually influence and shape religious ritual practices. However, in this interaction process, the strong underlying customs of Chinese Muslims have led to a form of fusion between the original (Chinese) culture and Islamic ritual culture. This fusion is then termed the acculturation of religious rituals.

Acculturation is a social process that arises when a group of people with a specific culture encounters elements from a foreign culture in such a way that these foreign cultural elements are gradually accepted and integrated into their own culture without causing the loss of their original culture.

A ritual is a technique (way, method, practice) to sanctify a custom. Rituals create and maintain myths, as well as social and religious customs. They can be personal or communal, taking forms such as prayers, dances, dramas, and utterances like "amen." Rituals are an integral part of formal religion, encompassing religious practices including worship and the actions people take to fulfill their religious duties. One of the most ancient rituals is pilgrimage (visiting graves, Hajj, etc.), purification ceremonies, initiations (e.g., becoming a member, pregnancy at seven months, reaching the age of reason, etc.), while more modern forms include prayers, responsive readings, etc. Initially, rituals often have a social nature, which then becomes economic and eventually evolves into sacred religious ceremonies.

All religions contain rituals, prayers, praises, sins, and piety, though the emphasis on these values may vary. In sociological analysis, rituals are considered to play a crucial role in maintaining institutions, communities, and religious identities. Participation in

collective religious rituals acts as a form of socialization that unconsciously instills values of solidarity and categories of knowledge and experience.

Ritual, or worship, is the essence of every religion. In Islam, ritual means devotion to Allah SWT. Broadly speaking, Islamic rituals encompass all human activities, including daily worldly activities, if conducted with an inner attitude and the intention of devotion to Him. This is the essence of Allah's decree that humans and jinn were created solely to worship Him (Q.S.51:56).

Based on this reference, the fundamental duty of humans and jinn is essentially to serve Him. For humans, this duty to serve God does not change their function as social beings in this world, where social interactions among humans always occur. Thus, the orientation towards the afterlife and social interactions with fellow humans must always remain within the framework of ritual. This implies that a balance between ritual and social worship is essential.

However, in the current modern civilization, there is a noticeable imbalance in humans' actualization of their role as 'abid (servants) and their social function in the world. A discrepancy often occurs between worldly affairs and rituals, leading to frequent reminders for people not to forget the afterlife in the pursuit of worldly matters. A common occurrence today is the imbalance between fulfilling worldly duties and obligations towards the afterlife. Indeed, there must be a balanced formula between the two. A popular reference related to this issue is: "Work for your world as if you will live forever and work for your afterlife as if you will die tomorrow."

## Methods

This study is qualitative descriptive research focusing on the concept of acculturation in religious rituals among the Muslim Chinese minority in West Sumatra. It explores the state of the recipient community before acculturation began, how Chinese individuals introduced foreign cultural elements, the recipient community's response to the influence of foreign cultural elements, and the reactions of individuals affected by these foreign cultural elements. Through a similar approach, the emergence of acculturation and assimilation will be investigated (Koentjaraningrat 2013).

Muslim Chinese residing in West Sumatra constitute the population for this study, while the sample is intended to be comprehensive, thus seeking diversity in terms of region, profession, and age. Data were obtained from religious figures, including Muslim scholars from academia, the leadership of Islamic community organizations (ORMAS), and the Muslim Chinese community. Additionally, secondary data in the form of documents, archives, various events that have occurred, and the conditions of Muslim Chinese in West Sumatra, as well as the social structure of informants, were analyzed as data sources in this study. The data collection instrument is a tool used by researchers to gather research data, with the researcher themselves acting as the instrument in this study.

Data for this study were collected using two techniques: observation and in-depth interviews (Indepth interview). This data collection method was chosen to encourage respondents or informants to be more open in providing information (Gorman & Clayton 1997, 45). To manage the questions, an Interview guide will be created. The in-depth Interviews in this study will utilize a life history or sociological autobiography format, allowing the researcher to capture significant experiences and the lives of informants and to understand how informants interpret these experiences (Taylor & Bogdan 1984).

## Result and Discussion

### Early Arrival of the Chinese in West Sumatra

The presence of the Chinese can be traced throughout the Nusantara. Their widespread distribution has not solely maintained them as a homogenous and original ethnic group. The process of acculturation that has occurred over hundreds of years has given birth to unique characteristics of the Chinese in each region, one of which is in West Sumatra. Starting as traders, the Chinese gradually began to integrate with the Minangkabau community's life in West Sumatra.

The presence of the Chinese in West Sumatra can be traced back to the 17th century. At that time, West Sumatra, under VOC administration, began to rapidly develop as a trading area. The bustling trading activities attracted foreigners, including Europeans, Arabs, Indians, and also Chinese.

Initially, the Chinese who came were dependent on nature, waiting for the monsoon cycle every 6 months. After this cycle turned back to the Asian mainland, some chose to return to their home country. However, many also chose to settle along the West Sumatran coast. "They interacted and became part of the community, many also intermarried and converted to Islam (Erniwati 2006).

The Chinese in West Sumatra have settled for eight generations. Over time, they began to settle by the riversides, eventually spreading inland. This process allowed the West Sumatran Chinese to form a unique local identity. They began to adopt local values derived from the Minangkabau people, who are the majority in West Sumatra.

Coincidentally, the Chinese and the Minangkabau people have similarities in socio-cultural backgrounds. In addition to having a collective society, they also have a tradition of migration in search of a better life. They also share three similar values, namely in the ethos of trading, situational and pragmatic characteristics, and flexibility in adapting. The similarity of values and flexibility has fostered a good relationship between the two groups. In addition, the similar trading ethos of the Chinese and Minangkabau has created a mutual and beneficial trading symbiosis. Similar socio-cultural backgrounds can support the effectiveness of communication and relatively harmonious relations. The shared fate between the Chinese and the Minangkabau also keeps their relationship far from conflict (Rini 2019).

Along the way, the life of the Chinese in West Sumatra has gone through many ups and downs. Policies enacted from the Dutch government to the New Order era required them to adapt flexibly. In 1835, the settlement of the Chinese began to be localized to one area through the *wijkenstelsel* policy by the Dutch. This area later became known as *Kampung Pondok*, which still exists as a Chinatown in Padang. Colonial stratification policies further separated the Chinese and local communities.

These policies produced a distinctive Chinese identity. *Kampung Pondok* became the center of Chinese activities, reflected in the existence of *See Hien Kiong Temple*, *Tanah Kongsu Market*, and various association organizations. Over time, only two major

associations have survived to this day, namely the Himpunan Tjinta Teman/Hok Tek Tong (HTT) and Himpunan Bersatu Teguh/Heng Beng Tong (HBT).

However, this cultural formation was eventually reset due to the assimilation and acculturation policies of the New Order. The Chinese adapted again, and gradually the heritage of Chinese language and culture began to blend with local culture. It can be said that the Chinese have taken a long and sacrificial road to survive.

The assimilation policy created cultural hybridity. One form of this hybridity is seen in the emergence of specific kinship calls in Padang Chinese, like *cidang* (*cici gadang*) to call an older woman. Additionally, hybrid foods such as *gulai* and *udang balado* appeared. The way of speaking of Padang Chinese also became like the Minang people, loud and firm.

This interaction process also gave birth to a branch of the Minang language known as Minang Pondok. In Minang Pondok, the pronunciation of Minang vocabulary follows the Chinese dialect, like *aia* (water) becoming *aek*, and *batuak* (cough) becoming *batok*. "The Minang Pondok language becomes the red thread that unites the entire social construction of the Chinese in the city of Padang.

After the end of the New Order, Chinese culture began to be celebrated openly in West Sumatra. However, the Chinese in West Sumatra face new challenges, such as racial issues and the rise of identity politics rhetoric. Hard work from all parties, both the Chinese and Minang communities, is required to maintain and care for this harmony achievement.

### **Acculturation of Chinese Ethnic Muslims Blending in Minangkabau Cultural Diversity in West Sumatra**

The ethnic Chinese community in West Sumatra is predominantly found and settled in the cities of Padang, Bukittinggi, Payakumbuh, and Padang Panjang. These areas are chosen for their status as trade centers. The majority of the ethnic Chinese are traders, dealing in various goods according to their expertise, including electronic equipment, ice snacks, running workshops, gold shops, grocery stores, wholesalers, etc. Interestingly, although most of the ethnic Chinese practice non-Muslim religions, the Chinese ethnicity still sells halal food for consumption by the Muslim community in West Sumatra.

The Minangkabau community welcomes the arrival of the ethnic Chinese in West Sumatra as it does not disrupt the life cycle of the local Minangkabau ethnicity. Most of the ethnic Chinese are engaged in trade. Although the ethnic Chinese in West Sumatra are immigrants, they do not feel alienated in their place of sojourn, following any activities around their residence. For instance, if the local ethnicity hosts an event or celebration, the ethnic Chinese in West Sumatra participate in the events organized by the local community there, having integrated despite cultural differences.

The majority of the Minangkabau community in West Sumatra practices Islam, adhering to the grand philosophy of "Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah" (Customs based on Shari'a, Shari'a based on the Quran). This philosophy is deeply ingrained in the Minangkabau community, significantly influencing their religious behavior and upholding traditional values.

According to H. Erwin (an ethnic Chinese Muslim), the ethnic Chinese Muslim community highly respects religious values and teachings. They diligently perform religious rituals and social interactions in daily life. Ethnic Chinese Muslims engage in Islamic religious rituals with deep understanding and integration among the local community. They pray in congregations at mosques, assist others, and organize events or celebrations

according to Islamic law. Ethnic Chinese Muslims have blended and experienced cultural acculturation because they tend to adopt the cultural customs of the predominantly Muslim Minangkabau community. In rituals for weddings, deaths, and births, ethnic Chinese Muslims tend to use Minangkabau traditional culture and uphold Islamic values.

### **Motivation of Acculturation and Blending of Religious Attitudes of Ethnic Chinese Muslim Minority in West Sumatra**

In West Sumatra, the activities of Muslim Chinese within Islamic organizations do not visibly reflect specific Chinese Muslim practices. However, as a whole, they maintain participation and select their religious understanding within Islamic organizations, with some following the worship methods of NU, Muhammadiyah, and Tarbiyah Islamiyyah. According to Muslim Chinese, all Islamic organizations are fundamentally good and have a clear legal basis, yet the role and experience, as well as the choice of each individual in worship, vary. Some Muslim Chinese in the city of Padang are also involved in the Indonesian Chinese Muslim Association, now called PITI (Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia). PITI was established to unite Indonesian Muslims with Chinese descent Muslims and ethnic Chinese Muslims, fostering unity and blending among them.

Since its establishment, PITI's membership and management have been open and democratic, not limited exclusively to Muslims of Chinese descent but also mingling with Indonesian Muslims. If the body of humanity is likened to an organization, then "the face is that of Chinese descent Muslims", and the other body parts are Indonesian Muslims. Should the members agree to use the Chinese ethnic name in this organization's name again, it would solely be a strategy for preaching and highlighting the organization's uniqueness, with a priority target for preaching directed towards the Chinese ethnic group.

The Islam of a person cannot be determined by their age, as someone of mature age may not find guidance to Islam if certain factors are not met. However, it's not uncommon for younger individuals to find their way to Islam due to various reasons such as life challenges or curiosity about Islam.

One indication of someone's conversion to Islam is the recitation of the two declarations of faith as the beginning of their Muslim faith, as this recitation validates someone's embrace of Islam, fundamentally acknowledging Allah SWT as God and Muhammad SAW as His messenger, without any coercion and purely based on personal conviction. This is regardless of whether a person was born into a Muslim family.

The age at which informants first converted to Islam varied. Of nine informants, three were born into Islam through their parents. The Islamic faith of these three informants' parents came through marriages between Muslim and non-Muslim ethnic Chinese. The other six informants embraced Islam at different ages, with three doing so due to the Islamic environment and their parents' advice.

One informant's conversion was influenced by Muslim friends, feeling comfort, peace, and a change for the better in their life. Some informants came from non-Muslim families and converted through marriage, adopting their spouse's religion.

The conversion to Islam among ethnic Chinese can be categorized into two types: those born into Islam and those who convert in adulthood. This diversity in conversion experiences shows the various ways ethnic Chinese come to know Islam, with information sources guiding individuals to embrace Islam at different times.

Research encounters revealed that blending is a positive step towards building social harmony. One respondent, H. Herwin (Chairman of PITI), stressed the need to interact and integrate with the indigenous community as fellow citizens of Indonesia. Hailing from Payakumbuh and having converted to Islam since 1980, he has become accustomed to mingling with the local Muslim community in social activities, communal work, or mutual aid.

Research findings indicate that Muslim Chinese in the city of Padang primarily engage in trading. For example, H. Herwin (Chairman of PITI Padang), aged 58, and his siblings have followed in his footsteps in embracing Islam. H. Erwin explained that H. Muslim Nur claimed to have converted to Islam at the age of 17 and has since integrated with traders outside of West Sumatra in Padang through social gatherings, religious studies, congregational prayers, Islamic holidays celebrations like Isra' Mi'raj, Eid gatherings, large-scale preaching events, and more.

## Discussion

The inclination to blend more positively comes from the ethnic Chinese Muslims. They support the integration efforts carried out by the government. The blending that occurs spontaneously, especially through language, has a significant impact on the personal lives of ethnic Chinese Muslims who commonly speak Minang. This phenomenon is clearly distinct from the usual habits of the Chinese, who are very loyal to their language and their community. For ethnic Chinese Muslims, there's generally a relaxation with their ancestral culture, adopting an inclusive (open) attitude and willing to integrate with the indigenous community. Ethnic Chinese Muslims who can speak Minang appear to behave like the people of Padang and do not limit themselves in socializing with anyone. Meanwhile, ethnic Chinese who are reluctant to speak Minang or Indonesian usually stay within the Chinese communities in the city of Padang. Ethnic Chinese Muslims living among indigenous villages often interact with the indigenous people. Most of them can speak Minang, and therefore, their attitude is very friendly towards the indigenous people. If an ethnic Chinese frequently socializes and befriends indigenous people, they will become close more quickly when communicated with. Conversely, if there are ethnic Chinese who rarely communicate with the people of Padang, they are still very suspicious of ethnicities outside their own. This phenomenon can be observed in that exclusive ethnic Chinese, besides finding it difficult to express their identity, also take a long time to open up to other ethnicities. In other words, ethnic Chinese Muslims who unconsciously often interact with indigenous people become close more quickly and do not harbor suspicions towards other ethnicities. Whereas ethnic Chinese living in the city of Padang, who communicate daily only with their own ethnicity (Chinese) and whose men even drink coffee in Chinese-owned coffee shops, find it difficult to blend with the indigenous people.

The process of blending, interaction, and social solidarity between Muslim ethnic Chinese and indigenous citizens in the city of Padang is influenced by family factors and religious factors, thus forming a strong bond of solidarity among them. The role of the family is very influential in shaping the personality of ethnic Chinese Muslims. They have a social sensitivity towards their surroundings, especially towards family and neighbors, thus forming strong social solidarity.

Specifically for Muslim Chinese men, there is a change of name after converting to Islam. However, some still include their surname or clan name. This is due to their



responsibility as male descendants to continue their lineage as heirs, and they are still entitled to inheritance from their parents, of course, according to the parents' discretion, including the use of the surname for their children.

Nevertheless, the use of surnames does not affect the division of inheritance, as inheritance division now follows Islamic teachings. The connection with the Chinese community is still very close, both with family and other Chinese people, because they still consider themselves as Chinese. On one hand, Muslim Chinese are bound by tradition and kinship ties, but on the other hand, their attitude is adjusted to Islamic teachings, and they cultivate relationships with the Muslim community.

Based on observations and interviews during field research, the role of religion within ethnic Chinese families is a primary element because religion contains universal values encompassing education and moral development within the family. Ethnic Chinese households also use their homes as venues for traditional religious ceremonies, such as ancestor worship for family members and the larger family within one lineage. The belief patterns of the Chinese are generally influenced by three belief systems: Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. The motivation to embrace Islam is mostly not due to family factors but rather due to social interactions in their living environment. That is, religiosity and conviction towards Islam are the results of a long process, making their realization an implementation of a belief in the truth of religion.

Ethnic Chinese who have long embraced Islam generally enroll their children in Islamic schools or provide additional Islamic education for their children. They want their children to understand Islamic teachings. Consequently, their children socialize more with Muslims, though they also interact with their Chinese family members. Kinship ties for Muslim Chinese remain intact, and their identity as Chinese persists. Their lifestyle, residence, language, customs of respecting ancestors, all still reflect their Chinese identity.

Echoing Ust. Amin Cheng, H. Erwin also chose Islamic schools for his two children, like SDIT Iqra and SMPIT Iqra' in Padang, to ensure they blend with the indigenous people and receive maximal religious guidance.

As Muslims, ethnic Chinese do not limit their social interactions to other non-Muslim Chinese. Their Chinese friends highly respect them. Additionally, some of their family members have married Chinese, both women and men. The relationships formed among business colleagues are professional and also affect the relationships among the trader group. This means the trader group is very cohesive and shares information. Likewise, there are trader associations in Pasar Raya or Pondok where members visit each other, especially during Eid, weddings, and funerals of both Chinese and Padang residents. Business relations between local indigenous people and the Chinese ethnicity (including Muslim Chinese) have existed from the past to the present. All of this is because if the Minang people do not have business relations with the Chinese, then the Chinese would not thrive.

Blending through religious channels is also practiced by ethnic Chinese Muslims through religious studies, obligatory prayer congregations, Friday prayers, Eid prayers, Halal bi-halal, and more. In West Sumatra, many Chinese descent Ustads have emerged, including Amin Cen, H. Muslim Nur (deceased), who were active as preachers and khatibs in mosques. He served as a permanent khatib in several mosques across West Sumatra.

Indeed, religion can be one of the mediums to facilitate the blending process between ethnic Chinese and indigenous people. The integration of ethnic Chinese into

the Indonesian nation can be aided through Islamization by peace or awareness, not by force or pressure. This notion arises among some citizens of Indonesia who are Muslim. Their entry into Islam automatically makes them brothers in faith and can dissolve the barriers that previously hindered close social interactions. As we see today, many descendants want to embrace Islam, a clear proof that Islam does not make it difficult for anyone to convert. This indicates that Islam is no longer viewed as an inferior religion by the Chinese descendants, as among those who have converted to Islam are from various groups, including businessmen, intellectuals, and the younger generation of Chinese descent.

## Conclusion

The integration of ethnic Chinese Muslims can be achieved through various methods, including language, family connections, interactive cooperation, trade, marriage, organizations, and educational pathways. Integration is a socialization process carried out intentionally by ethnic Chinese Muslims in West Sumatra, particularly by the youth. Parents from the ethnic Chinese Muslim community are keen for their children to receive the best possible general and religious education. They tend to enroll their children in integrated Islamic model schools or religious schools. Notably, parents among the ethnic Chinese Muslims enroll their children in Islamic schools, including SDIT and SMPIT, some even attend madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools. Through the medium of education or schools, the process of integration with the indigenous people occurs naturally without any coercion. This is because schools serve as a meeting point for various ethnicities and a medium for students from different cultures or subcultures in West Sumatra to interact. The blending through education creates a more harmonious relationship among ethnic groups.

The relationship between the ethnic Chinese Muslim community and the Minangkabau society in the realization of Cultural Acculturation in West Sumatra can be seen from the interactive interactions between citizens that complement each other and occur daily between the ethnic Chinese Muslim community and the Minangkabau society living together. The process of cultural acculturation that is established through daily activities occurs in public places where people can meet informally and engage in more intensive interactions. Within this context, various ethnic groups can learn to communicate in ways that are more generally acceptable on one hand, and on the other hand, each ethnic group learns to accept the differences possessed by other groups, which can then blend together to realize cultural acculturation.

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