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Religion and Inclusive Society: Attitudes towards the Poor among Muslim and Christian Students in Surabaya

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Abstract

This study explores attitudes towards the poor among Christian and Muslim secondary school students in Indonesia. Are there significant differences between Muslims and Christians with regard to these attitudes and, if any, how could they be explained? The authors argue that there is little reason to expect differences based on religious affiliation alone, because both Christianity and Islam pay special attention to poverty alleviation and economic justice in teachings and moral guidelines. However, specific religious beliefs and practices could still result in different attitudes towards the poor among Muslims and Christians. This study investigates to what extent beliefs such as attitudes towards religious plurality, fundamentalism, religious salience and religious practices are related with attitudes towards the poor. The potential differential effects of non-religious factors like socio-economic status, social dominance orientation, bonding and bridging social capital, compassion and school activities are also taken into account.

Keywords

attitudes towards poverty – poverty attribution – Indonesia – interreligious relations

1 Introduction

Building inclusive societies is not only about bridging differences between religious traditions, but also relates to the inclusion of people of different socioeconomic strata. While social segregation along religious lines is clearly visible in Indonesia, at least equally important are socioeconomic dividing lines. Religious communication may play an important role in bridging the gap between 'the haves' and 'the have nots' in so far it reflects on social justice. But there is also another important reason why social inequality is a matter of concern for religious groups. People's socioeconomic situation is partly caused or perpetuated by diverse cultural factors. Religion, too, plays a significant role in the dialectic between the spiritual and the material world. In his classical collected religio-sociological studies, Weber (1920¹/1978) explores the influence of religion on economic behaviour. Even in modern urbanised societies, like Surabaya in Indonesia, there are still systematic differences in socioeconomic status between religious subpopulations, e.g. Muslims and Christians. Cultural and religious factors contribute to socioeconomic disadvantage of groups as they also influence people's training curves and their careers. Attention for problems related to poverty and overcoming socio-economic division is crucial for establishing inclusive, stable and peaceful societies. Religious communities in Indonesia can play a crucial role in this issue, not only because economic differences occur along religious dividing lines, but also because religious traditions contain a treasure of reflections and guiding lines on dealing with poverty.

This study explores attitudes towards the poor among Indonesian secondary school students. By attitudes, we refer to both perceptions about and feelings towards the poor. Perceptions about the poor mainly refer to the characteristics people attribute to the poor. These positive and negative perceptions, like e.g. 'hardworking', 'responsible', 'lazy' and 'uneducated', refer mainly to the cognitive dimensions in attitudes. Feelings towards the poor concern the positive and negative affective responses when people are confronted with the poor, when you hold them in high regard or on the contrary feel uncomfortable with them. In this study, we adopt the definition of the bureau of statistics of Indonesia and refer to the 'poor' as those people who lack basic needs; like sufficient food, housing, education and health care. In September 2017, there were 26.58 million of the Indonesian people living in poverty. This figure is equal to 10.12% of the population of the country (*Badan Pusat Statistik*, 2018). Therefore, poverty remains an important social problem in the archipelago.

Against this background, this study addresses the following three research questions: (1) What are the perceptions about and feelings towards the poor among Indonesian students? (2) Are there significant differences between

Muslims and Christians with regard to perceptions about and feelings towards the poor? and (3) If there are significant differences between Muslims and Christians in this regard, how can we explain these?

To answer these questions, we conducted a survey on attitudes towards the poor among Muslim and Christian secondary school students in the city of Surabaya. We choose this research population for the following reasons. Surabaya in Eastern Java province is the second largest city in Indonesia. According to the latest population data, there were 2,885,555 inhabitants in an area that encompasses 327 km² (*Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Surabaya*, 2018). It is a relatively well-developed and prosperous city that is a centre of government, business, industry and education. The United Nations gave this “green and clean city” the Sustainable City and Human Settlements Award. Still, there are 164.360 citizens living in poverty in this relatively prosperous city (*Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Surabaya*, 2018). The inequality between rich and poor is, for instance, clearly observable in their housing. While there are many people living in luxurious houses and apartments, pro-poor shelter projects are necessary to provide basic housing for the poor. However, the latter is not offered to those without citizen identity cards (KTP), resulting in more suffering among Surabaya's poor immigrants (Das, 2017, p. 17).

Among the aforementioned 2.8 million inhabitants of Surabaya, there are 68,614 secondary school students (*Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Timur*, 2017). We focus on secondary school students because they are the future generation, are in their formative years in which ideas on social inequality are developed and because this generation still has relatively frequent contact with peers belonging to different socio-economic groups in their schools. Within a few years, a number of these secondary school students will play important roles in society. Such roles require a sense of social responsibility and this age category is particularly relevant for developing a sense of concern for social inequality. Moreover, students have in their schools relatively frequent contact with peers belonging to different socio-economic strata, which may not be the case anymore in later stages in life.

We further decide to focus on Muslim and Christian secondary school students, based on the following considerations. First of all, religions have a say about poverty and the poor. Islam and Christianity share a common concern for justice for the poor (Hodge, 2012; Krawchuk, 2016; Mich, 2016), which can stimulate civic engagement in favour of the poor (Mylek & Nel, 2010). Secondly, Muslims and Christians constitute the largest religious groups in Surabaya. According to official statistics of 2014 (the latest data available on religious

belonging), Surabaya had 2,833,924 inhabitants, with 2,432,502 (85.83%) people identifying as Muslim, 266,608 as Protestant (9.40%) and 116,703 as Catholic (4.11%).¹

This article is structured as follows. First, we will discuss our theoretical framework, after which we account for our research design and present our empirical results. We close our paper with a brief discussion of our most important results in the light of inclusive religious education.

2 Theoretical Framework

Attitudes refer to mental predisposition which are expressed by evaluating an object (e.g. an idea, person or social group) with a degree of favour or disfavour. Attitudes can therefore be considered as networks of cognitive notions and their affective evaluations (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Next to cognitive and affective elements, a behavioural component often is also part in theoretical definitions of attitudes. Yet, the relation between the cognitive and affective components and observable behaviour is complex, in the sense that behaviour cannot simply be inferred directly from affective appraisal of contents (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In this study we focus on the cognitive and affective components of attitudes towards the poor. Just like other attitudes, attitudes towards the poor of individual respondents are the result of personal evaluations of past experiences, which, in turn, are influenced by a person's (moral) socialization and deep-seated personality characteristics.

There have been a number of studies on attitudes towards the poor and the factors that influence them. Most studies on this particular issue are conducted in the United States. Henry et al. (2004) have focused on the impact of stereotypes on attitudes towards the poor. Low et al. (2016) elaborated how socio-political ideologies predict attitudes towards the poor. Other studies have focused on the impact of religion and ethnicity on attitudes towards the poor (Hunt, 1996; Wilson, 1999; Hunt, 2002; Brown, 2016). Because the latter studies took place in Western contexts, they have mainly dealt with the partial and differential influence of Christian beliefs, sometimes distinguishing between Protestants and Catholics on attitudes towards poverty. Since religious identification often intersects with ethnic belonging, some studies also paid attention to similarities and differences with regard to attitudes towards

1 <https://surabayakota.bps.go.id/statictable/2016/01/21/496/banyaknya-pemeluk-agama-menujut-jenisnya-2008-2014.html>, accessed 1 July 2018.

poverty among African Americans, Latino Americans and White Americans. We are unaware of a previous study on attitudes towards the poor in Indonesia. Our study on predictors of attitudes towards the poor is therefore explorative.

In what follows we elaborate on some key religious and non-religious factors that are likely to influence attitudes towards poverty. Apart from religious affiliation or religious self-definition (2.1), we consider religious beliefs and practices like attitudes towards religious plurality, religious fundamentalism, religious salience and practices and witnessing faith (2.2), next to non-religious factors like income, social dominance orientation, bonding and bridging social capital, and compassion (2.3).

2.1 *Religious Affiliation*

As mentioned already, we focus on Muslim and Christian students; the latter consisting of Protestants and Catholics. But why would we pay attention to religion in the first place?

Islamic teaching contributes to poverty alleviation by means of *zakat*, the religiously inspired obligation to donate to the poor. There is a considerable number of *zakat* organizations in Indonesia, both run by private Islamic NGO's and by the Indonesian government. The 2001 presidential Decree No. 8 even institutionalised an official national *zakat* agency (*Badan Amil Zakat Nasional*). Thus *zakat* donation does not only reflect a religious obligation of the Muslims in Indonesia, it is supported and strengthened by civil authority. Islamic charity institutions have gradually become more professional and transparent in their management and wider in their scope (Latief, 2016). Muslims no longer deal with traditional forms of charity as disaster relief and protecting from malnutrition only, but also address more structural causes of poverty. They are engaged in social change and empowerment of the people, such as supporting scholarship programs, establishment of Islamic banks based on *Shari'a* law. The Indonesian Muslims participate at international level by supporting economical emancipation of fellow Muslims in other countries. The efforts to make people sensitive to the poor are also undertaken in a systematic way: through mass media, live *dakwah* (predication), voluntary acts of charity by artists, politicians, government officials, etc. Especially since the beginning of the 1990's there is more awareness for poverty from an Islamic perspective.

Christians likewise pay special attention to the poor. One of the Christian foundations for the concern towards the poor can be found in the biblical text of Matthew 25:35-36, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and

you came to me.” Although they have less political and social influence than Muslims, both Protestant and Catholic Churches promote a preferential option for the poor in their teachings and social activist programmes. The Protestant Churches perform social services to help the poor. In Indonesia, there are also Christian social organizations which address poverty eradication, such as Yakkum foundation for public health and ‘Gerakan Kemanusiaan Indonesia’ (Sakai, 2012, p. 381). Likewise, the Catholic Church seeks to promote sensitivity for the poor through educational programmes, public health institutions and social services through a diversity of religiously inspired NGOs such as Catholic Relief Service (CRS).

Consequently, based on religious affiliation alone, there are no reasons to expect a significant difference between Muslims and Christians with regard to their attitudes towards the poor. In general, both Muslims and Christians stimulate poverty alleviation and strive for more economic justice. However, differences in specific religious beliefs and practices could still result in different attitudes towards the poor between Muslims and Christians. Therefore, this study investigates to what extent more specific beliefs (2.2), such as attitudes towards religious plurality, fundamentalism, religious salience and religious practices and witnessing faith, are related with attitudes towards the poor. Apart from these more specific religious differences, several non-religious factors (2.3), like socio-economic status, social dominance orientation, bonding and bridging social capital and compassion, may also cause differences in the attitudes towards the poor between Muslims and Christians. Finally, because our research population consists of secondary school students, we also consider the possible influence of school activities (2.4).

2.2 *Religious Beliefs and Practices*

While from a more general point of view one might expect little differences between Muslims and Christians in their attitudes towards the poor, it is still conceivable that specific religious beliefs of Muslims and Christians shape their attitudes towards the poor in diverse ways. More specifically, we consider it possible that their scope of solidarity with the poor is affected differently by attitudes towards religious plurality (2.2.1), religious fundamentalism (2.2.2) and religious salience and practices (2.2.3).

2.2.1 Attitudes towards Religious Plurality

Attitudes towards religious plurality concern the appreciation of other people's religion in light of the own truth claims. This appreciation can take the form of a monistic, a pluralistic or a relativistic perspective. Monism entails

either exclusive claim that one's own religion offers absolute salvation or inclusive claims that other traditions contain only partial truth in light of the own tradition. Believers with a monistic perspective are likely to especially identify strongly with their co-religionists. Pluralism, in contrast, emphasizes the common values shared by different religions (Anthony, Hermans, & Sterkens, 2005, pp. 157-162).² The implication of attitudes towards religious plurality on attitudes towards the poor can be explained as follows.

First, we expect monism to be differently related with positive attitudes towards the poor for Muslims and Christians. We expect Muslim students with relatively higher levels of monism to express more positive attitudes towards the poor because the poor are seen as their co-religionists. We assume that in our research location most poor are Muslims, not only because there are simply more Muslims than Christians in Surabaya, but also because Christian students in the schools under study are relatively better off than Muslims. In contrast, Christian students with relatively higher levels of monism could display more negative attitudes towards the poor because these poor are generally considered to belong to the out-group.

Second, we expect pluralism to be positively related with attitudes towards the poor without difference between Muslims and Christians. Both Muslims and Christians with these views emphasize values like peace, love, unity and justice (Anthony et. al., 2015, p. 159), and thus are not expected to differ in their attitudes towards the poor.

Hence, our hypotheses read: monism is positively related with positive attitudes towards the poor among Muslims, but negatively related with positive attitudes towards the poor among Christians (*Hypothesis 1a*); and pluralism is positively related with positive attitudes towards the poor among both Muslims and Christians (*Hypothesis 1b*).

2.2.2 Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism refers to a specific way of interpreting sacred texts, namely in a literal way as opposed to a hermeneutic approach. Those who interpret the sacred texts literally hold that the truth of the religious teaching can be found directly in the sacred texts because they contain evident and inerant teachings about God and humanity. Fundamentalism is therefore a non-hermeneutic and intra-textual disposition towards the text that a tradition

² Relativism claims that all religions are of equal value and significance regardless of their common elements and differences. More can be said of different forms of these models. Anticipating on the empirical results that follow, we limit ourselves to a very general distinction of monism and pluralism.

holds as sacred (Williamson et al. 2010; Hood et al. 2005). This definition is somewhat different than the concept of religious fundamentalism as defined by Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992, 118): “the belief that there is one set of religious teachings that clearly contains the fundamental, basic, intrinsic, essential, inerrant truth”. The latter has been reported to correlate positively with prejudice (Idem, 124), while mixed and contradictory evidence is found concerning the effects on aggression: sometimes related, sometimes unrelated and sometimes even related to agreeableness as one of the big five personality characteristics (Saroglou et al. 2015). Specifically in Indonesia, intra-textual fundamentalism is found to be related to contact avoidance and support for residential segregation (Pamungkas 2016, 248) and support for demonstrations, as well as to more manifest forms of out-group derogation like support for harm to persons and properties (Subagya 2015, 183ff). It has also been found that fundamentalism is likely to be related to exclusionary reactions (Sterkens & Anthony 2008). Although fundamentalism is in theory considered to give poor foundation for intergroup trust (Uslaner 2003), considering Holy Scripture as the word of God is found to be positively related with different forms of trust among Indonesian respondents, although no causal relationship could be found (Hadiwitanto 2016, 184-203). The latter finding could be explained when considering Holy Scripture as the word of God is an expression of genuine religious commitment. Such an explanation is confirmed by Blogowska and Saroglou (2011) which found that religious fundamentalism, due to underlying religiosity, predicts prosociality that is limited to proximal rather than distal targets. However it should be noted that this limited prosociality of people scoring high on religious fundamentalism was in contrast with their self-perceptions of being universally altruistic. In sum, intra-textual fundamentalism has been found to be related with intergroup attitudes. It is therefore worth investigating whether it is relevant for attitudes towards the poor. The following considerations can be made with regard to the relation between Islamic and Christian fundamentalism and attitudes towards the poor.

From an Islamic, literal reading of the Qur’an, poverty may be seen as a test from God. The scriptural basis for this interpretation can be found in the Qur’an when it says: “Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives and the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere—Who say, when afflicted with calamity: ‘To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return.’ They are those whom (descend) blessings from Allah, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance” (Qur’an 2:155-157; cf. Allheedan, 2016). Elsewhere the Qur’an makes clear that wealth is a blessing and poverty may be a test: “Allah has favoured some of you above others in worldly gifts. But those more favoured will not restore any part

of their worldly gifts to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal sharers in them. Will they then deny the favour of Allah?" (Qur'an 16:72).

From a Christian literal reading of the Bible, poverty can have many causes, like natural disaster, fire or loss of family. But it may also be the result of sinful behaviour. While the Bible is generally compassionate for the poor and demands solidarity with distressed, poverty may also be related to human injustice, moral transgression and even caused by the poor themselves through their weaknesses (Prov 6:9-11, Thess 3:6). While a literal understanding of the Qur'an supports the conviction that poverty is not due to human agency but rather a matter of fate or destiny, the Bible does not exclude the attribution of poverty to human agency. It is also worth noticing that previous empirical work in Indonesia has shown that Muslims agree significantly more with intra-textual fundamentalism than Christians (e.g. Pamungkas 2016, 247ff).

Hence, our second hypotheses read: religious fundamentalism is positively related with positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 2a*), and more strongly so among Muslims than Christians (*Hypothesis 2b*).

2.2.3 Religious Salience and Practices

Religious salience is the extent of an individual's awareness about his or her religious identification, including the importance of this identity in daily life and in decision-making. Religious salience refers to the importance an individual attaches to his/her religious belonging, to religious values and to his or her religious beliefs. Religious salience shapes individual's religious experiences and decision making. Individuals with higher degrees of religious salience are more likely to conform to the rules and regulations prescribed by their religious tradition (Gibbs et al. 1973, 35ff). Thus, individuals for whom religion is important tend to abide more to the moral prescriptions of their religion, including contributing to the alleviation of poverty.

Religious practices refer in our study to congregational attendance (i.e. Mosque or Church visit), prayer frequency and reading holy scriptures (i.e. Koran or Bible reading). Many studies have documented the importance of religious congregational attendance in regard to volunteering and charity donations. While national culture plays a role in explaining volunteering as a moderator of the relationship between religious attendance and volunteering (Luria et al. 2017), cross-national comparisons show little difference in the relationship between congregational attendance and charity donations. Church attendance and to a lesser extent prayer frequency are robustly related to intentions to donate (Bremner et al., 2011; Reitsma, Scheepers & te Grotenhuis 2006). This relation seems to work in two ways. Church and mosque attenders

are more frequently confronted with beliefs and corresponding norms of benevolence with regard to people in need. Additionally, church attendance can be seen as an indicator of integration, and the more people are integrated, the more they will comply to the norms of the group.

Altogether it is plausible to expect that religious salience and religious practices (i.e. prayer and reading Holy Scriptures) are predictors of positive attitudes towards the poor. Indonesian Muslims show higher levels of religious identification than Christians, as shown in religious practices like prayer and reading scriptures, religious friendships, and membership and participation in religious organizations (Pamungkas 2016, 213ff). Relatively higher religious salience is also clear in following guidelines in a more strict way. Due to these differences in religious salience between Muslims and Christians, one may also expect to find differences in attitudes towards the poor. That is to say, because Muslims attach more importance to religion, they will also display higher levels of solidarity with the poor as described by their religious tradition.

Consequently, our hypotheses read: Religious salience and religious practices induce positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 3a*); and because of higher scores on religious salience and religious practices, Muslim students display more positive attitudes towards the poor than Christian students (*Hypothesis 3b*).

2.2.4 Witnessing Faith

Witnessing faith refers here the diaconal task of religious communities to serve society in order to contribute to the alleviation of material and spiritual needs, both individual and collective. Concern for the lot of the disadvantaged and the marginalised in society is inherent in the nature and task of religious traditions and their institutions. Faith is not merely concerned with pious religious practices, but it is also concerned with justice and advancing humanity (Antonello, 1984, p. 791; Maloney, 1995). We have therefore operationalised the concept of ‘witnessing faith’ in a very specific way, namely as the extent to which the respondent believes that his/her religiosity has something to do with his/her service for the poor and with addressing social issues in society. Such a definition is obviously both applicable to Muslims and Christians.

For Muslims, concern for the poor in sharing one’s wealth is considered as one of the five pillars of Islam: “Worship none save Allah (only), and be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and the needy, and speak kindly to mankind; and establish worship and pay the poor-due” (Qur’an, 2: 83). Muslims are supposed to practice solidarity in order to become good Muslims. One could even say that the sacred duty of showing solidarity with the poor is even

strictly codified in Islam by considering *zakat* as a form of tax system, since it is not limited to privileged classes or pious persons (Kochuyt, 2009, pp. 99-102). Because wealth is also considered as a gift of Allah, it implies the obligation to be generous towards others (Qur'an, 9: 69).

For Christians, Biblical grounds for solidarity with the poor can be found in many passages in both the Old and the New Testament. "The book of the covenant (Ex. 20, 22-23, 33), the laws in Deuteronomy (Deut. 12-26), and the ethics of the holiness laws in Leviticus (Lev. 17-26) approach the social problem of poverty respectively from the angles of liberation, solidarity and holiness, imitating the example of YHWH himself. [...] When the church neglects to show concern for the poor and the causes of poverty it negates a large part of its Old Testament heritage" (Sterkens 2001, 219). In the New Testament the option for the poor is evident in, for example, the beatitudes (Lk 6, 20-21) and the parables that clarify that wealth is an obstacle to entering the kingdom of God (Lk 12, 16-21; 16, 19-31). The early Christians are also described as living in material solidarity with each other (Acts 4, 34-35). Jesus himself has emphasized that he came to serve the poor. He said, "The Lord has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18). Referring to the idea concerning service to the poor as Christian ideal, Christians seek to practice their faith by means of humanitarian services to the poor and by upholding social justice. Because, "if good deeds do not go with it, faith is quite dead" (James 2:17). However, in Indonesian history Christian faith-based service to the poor intersected with the period of colonization in which proselytization to Christianity took place (Bradley, 2005, p. 342; Ferris, 2011, p. 608). As a result, Muslims may conceive Christian faith-based service to the poor as an effort to convert them to Christianity (Sakai, 2012, p. 382) or may otherwise be approached with suspicion. One can also find the idea among Muslims that their poor co-religionists' faith may be endangered by unbelief, '*kufir*', after faith-based humanitarian service by Christians (Farooq, 2008, p. 4).

We therefore expect: Witnessing faith induces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 4a*) among both Muslims and Christians (*Hypothesis 4b*).

2.3 Non-Religious Factors

Next to the aforementioned religious beliefs and practices, we also consider the following non-religious factors: income (2.3.1), social dominance orientation (2.3.2), bonding and bridging social capital (2.3.3), and compassion (2.3.4).

2.3.1 Income

Attitudes towards the poor can also be affected by someone's socio-economic status. Socio-economic status is usually measured by looking at income as well as education, which determine the position of the individual within the hierarchical structure of society. In this way, income results in social stratification and in the creation of socio-economic groups.

In the Indonesian context and in Java particularly, Muslims and Christians also differ on the basis of their socio-economic background and especially income. Christians are better-off than Muslims (Sakai, 2012, p. 382; Pamungkas, 2015, pp. 233-234). This is confirmed in the data of the income levels of the parents of our respondents: parents of Christian students have considerable higher income levels than the parents of Muslim students (Table 1). Differences in income levels therefore develop along religious dividing lines. Parallel identifications with religious groups and socio-economic groups may reinforce each other, which may result in stereotyping (Vassilou et al., 1972). Because the relation between religious belonging and income level, we expect Muslims to have more positive feelings towards the poor. After all, poverty is more prevalent among Muslims in Surabaya.

Following this line of thought, our fifth hypotheses read: Higher income reduces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 5a*); and because of lower income of their parents, Muslim students display more positive attitudes towards the poor than Christian students (*Hypothesis 5b*).

TABLE 1 Net monthly family income among Muslim and Christian respondents

		Valid percent	
		Muslims	Christians
Valid	Less than Rp 500.000	3,0	2,9
	Rp 500.000—Rp 999.999	9,9	6,6
	Rp 1.000.000—Rp 1.999.999	12,2	12,2
	Rp 2.000.000—Rp 2.999.999	22,8	15,8
	Rp 3.000.000—Rp 3.999.999	15,2	14,9
	Rp 4.000.000—Rp 4.999.999	11,0	8,5
	Rp 5.000.000—Rp 5.999.999	7,6	9,0
	At least or more than Rp 6.000.000	18,3	30,2
Total	100	100	
Number of respondents	263	590	

2.3.2 Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance orientation (SDO) refers to a personality characteristic which reflects the tendency to accept and perpetuate hierarchical relationships between groups in society (Sidanius and Pratto 1999, p. 48). The basic assumption of social dominance theory is that there is a general human predisposition to maintain social hierarchy between groups. Individuals with high SDO accept and even desire domination of higher status groups over lower status groups, particularly when the own group is dominant or strives to be dominant.

We have seen already that Christians have on average higher incomes than Muslims when living in the same area (Sakai, 2012; Pamungkas 2015). This may be a reason to expect that Christians would be more concerned with maintaining social standing and superiority, subsequently having higher levels of SDO. Several studies suggest that group membership influences support for SDO depending on the group status: people construct attitudes towards group dominance and social depending on the in-group interests that arise from the competition between groups (Levin, Henry, Pratto, & Sidanius, 2003). However, it could also be that majority members have higher levels of SDO than minority members, especially when majority members feel threatened by minority members regarding their economic (profit) or political (power) interests. Moreover, religious identification, which is stronger among Muslims than among Christians, is found to be negatively related to SDO (Kanas, Scheepers & Sterkens 2016). In sum, there are reasons to expect that Christians would have higher levels of SDO (i.e. high status, lower levels of religious identification); and reasons to expect that Muslims would have higher levels of SDO (majority group).

Our sixth hypothesis sounds: Social dominance orientation reduces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 6a*); and depending on intergroup differences on the levels of SDO, this will result in less positive attitudes towards the poor among Christian or Muslims (*Hypothesis 6b*).

2.3.3 Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Social capital refers to social relationships between people as members of community, based on trust, norms of reciprocity and civic engagement (Putnam, 1993). This social relationship includes bonding (or exclusive) and bridging (or inclusive) ties (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital is characterized by strong social ties with similar others. This means that solidarity takes place in homogenous groups whose members are already emotionally linked, like for instance within the family, among close friends or between group members who share the same culture and belief. On the contrary, bridging social capital refers to

solidarity with dissimilar others in a wider link, in between-group connections (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Harpham, Grant & Thomas, 2002; Lancee, 2010).

Similar and dissimilar others are often determined on the basis of demographic criteria such as race, ethnicity or socio-economic status, etc. But similar and dissimilar others can also be established on the basis of faith, such as we can find in several Southern Asian countries (Candland, 2000). Taking the Indonesian context into consideration, we are seeking now to establish similar and dissimilar others for Muslim and Christian respondents on the basis of faith as social capital.

As far as bonding social capital is concerned, we argue that both Muslims and Christians share the same tendency. Bonding social capital for them means strong solidarity with those who are close and similar to them: family, friends, and relatives. Thus, we do not expect to find difference between Muslim and Christian students in terms of tendency to bonding social capital. But when it comes to bridging social capital in the context of solidarity with the poor, there is difference among them. Actually, for Muslims, bridging social capital can be social ties with others who do not share the same religious belief; these "others" may refer to their out-group, including Christians. The same is true for Christians. For them, the dissimilar others may mean other out-group such as Muslims. But, due to religious group size, it is less likely that Muslims have less opportunities to manifest their solidarity with the poor belonging to religious outgroups, such as Christians. Reversely, as for Christians, they are more likely to have social ties with religiously dissimilar others, including Muslims. From this consideration, we argue that Christians may have higher levels bridging social capital than Muslims and that Muslims are more likely to tend to bonding social capital because of their group size. Among themselves, Muslims can develop NGOs, community development programmes and other forms of civic engagement for the sake of solidarity with the poor. By any means we expect that bridging social capital may result in stronger effect on attitudes towards the poor among Christians than among Muslims.

Based on this line of thought, we postulate our seventh hypotheses as follows: bridging social capital induces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 7a*); and this effect is bigger among Christians than among Muslims (*Hypothesis 7b*).

2.3.4 Empathy

Empathy or compassion refers to capacity of an individual to place him or herself in the situation of the other (Davis, 1980). Empathy has cognitive and affective aspects. The cognitive aspect of empathy refers to the ability of an individual to adopt the viewpoint of other people, also called 'perspective

taking'. The affective aspect consists of 'empathic concern' and 'emotional contagion' (Stiff et al., 1988). Empathic concern refers to the care that someone has for the welfare of others. This empathic concern can be seen, for example, in a person who, observing other people in distress, feels pity for them. Emotional contagion refers to the emotional response which is triggered by observing other people's emotions. In our study, we focus on the affective aspect of empathy.

Differences in empathy exist among individuals. They can be related to individual and cultural factors. Individual factors include gender differences, personality types, age and role orientation. Cultural factors refer to cultural values like placing individual needs above those of the community (individualism) or placing community needs above those of the individual (collectivism), which are both potential factors to shape human interpersonal relationship and emotional functioning (Duan et al., 2008, p. 60). Religion as a cultural phenomenon may therefore also contribute to levels of empathy, to the extent religious traditions stress community needs. Differences in emotional empathy can also be explained by socio-economic factors. Several studies have shown significant correlation between socio-economic status and empathy: lower socio-economic status is related with lower empathy (Funk et al., 2004, p. 23). For example, children raised in poor families are more vulnerable and at risk to be affected by violence, which may affect their emotional functioning (Margolin, 2005). Based on social learning theory, Jolliffe et al. (2004, p. 470) similarly demonstrate that low socio-economic status may lead to low empathy. However, a study of Nefdt (2013, p. 20) in South African context has found a contrary finding: improvement of socio-economic status increases reduces scores on empathy.

Many previous studies have shown clear evidence that empathy relates to helping behaviour (e.g. Davis, 1983), although empathy has stronger effects when help is shown with similar others, i.e. those belonging to the same group (Stürmer et al. 2006). We therefore think that empathy will indeed positively relate with positive attitudes towards the poor for both Muslims and Christians, but that actual effects may be different depending on the religious group they belong to. The latter may be based on two arguments: dissimilar levels in empathy among Muslims and Christians leads to differences in attitudes towards the poor; or similar levels in empathy among Muslims and Christians have different sizes of effect on attitudes towards the poor among Muslims and Christians. (a) In favour of the first argument one could argue that Muslims may have higher levels of empathy because it is easier for them to identify with underprivileged fellow-believers. But in opposite direction one may expect that higher socio-economic status is related with higher levels of empathy due to better and safer conditions during developmental years, as

observed in earlier studies (Jolliffe 2004; Margolin 2005). The latter is particularly relevant for our group of secondary school respondents, and would mean that Christian students from richer families are likely to have higher empathy levels. Weighing this contradictory mechanisms we expect little difference in the level of empathy between Muslims and Christians. (b) But the second argument may be more likely: empathy has more effect on positive attitudes towards the poor among Muslims than among Christians. Previous studies showed that empathy has stronger effects when the helping attitudes refer to similar others (Stürmer et al 2006). Muslims may identify stronger with the poor, and therefore the effect of empathy on attitudes towards the poor is bigger than among Christians. Following these lines of thought, we postulate our eight hypotheses as follows:

Empathy induces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 8a*), and the size of effect is somewhat stronger among Muslims than among Christians (*Hypothesis 8b*)

2.4 *School Activities*

A final factor we consider concerns the activities students undertake at schools. Students attending schools established and governed by the religious order of the Lazarists (Congregation of the Mission, CM) are obliged to take part in extra-curricular social service activities among the sick, elderly and orphans or otherwise economically disadvantaged people. Following the spirituality of Vincent de Paul (1581-1660), these schools aim to provide students with a sense of a solidarity with the poor. Since, as we explain more in detail below, most of the Christian students in our sample attend these Catholic schools, we assume that these Christian students have also developed more positive attitudes towards the poor, together with the minority of Muslim students who attend the Catholic schools. However, it is also possible that public schools and Islamic schools organize similar activities, or respondents do voluntary work on their own initiative. We have therefore asked whether students have participated in the past twelve months in voluntary activities of youth Red Cross / Red Crescent or other forms of social service, whether they did donations for orphans, made visits to the poor, or were in any other way engaged in social activities (open category). The overall participation in social activities was calculated in an index cumulating the aforementioned indicators. Our ninth hypothesis reads:

Participation in (extra-curricular) activities directed at solidarity with the poor induces positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 9a*); and because students in Catholic schools have participated more often in extra-curricular activities, they are more likely than others to have positive attitudes towards the poor (*Hypothesis 9b*).

3 Research Design

In this section, we describe our samples and data collection and the measurement for independent and dependent variables and the method to deal with our survey.

3.1 *Sampling and Data Collection*

The students participating in the study came from six secondary schools in Surabaya. These secondary schools were selected based on diversity in religious affiliation (two state schools, one Islamic school and three Catholic schools) and similarities in status and level. The state secondary schools have mainly Muslim students and only a small proportion of non-Muslim students (i.e. Christians, Confucian, Hindu). The total population from the two public secondary schools is 2,136 students. From that number, 1,977 (92.55%) are Muslim, 121 (5.60%) are Protestant, 30 (1.40%) are Catholic. (There are also 6 Hindu students and 2 Buddhist students in these schools). Islamic schools have Muslim students only. Our participating Islamic school has 583 Muslim students. The student population in the three Catholic schools is composed of mainly Christians (Catholics and Protestants), besides students from other religious backgrounds. The total number of the students in the three Catholic schools is 2,713. From that number, there are 1,291 (47.58%) Catholics, 715 (26.35%) Protestants, 141 (5.19%) Buddhists, only 38 (1.40%) Muslims and 2 (0.07%) Hindu students. Students participated on a voluntary basis after a general request of the headmaster to all students of the three highest classes of secondary school. Students filled in the questionnaire at home and brought it back to school.

The survey was conducted in Surabaya between April and June 2017. The sample consists of 1,038 students who participated on a voluntary basis, reflecting a total population of 5,432 students. The sample consists of 328 Muslim students, 658 Christian students (349 Catholics and 309 Protestants) between 14 to 20 years old. The dominant age ranged from 15 to 18 years old (95.47%). The gender distribution has shown that 44.2% of our respondents were male, 54.6% were female while 1.2% were missing.

3.2 *Measurements of the Independent Variables*

In the present study, we employ three independent variables which may affect the students' attitudes towards the poor. These independent variables include religious beliefs and practices, non-religious factors and school activities.

In measuring religious beliefs and practices, we employed attitudes towards religious plurality, religious fundamentalism, and religious salience and

practices and witnessing faith. The measurement for attitudes towards religious plurality was taken from Anthony et al. (2005) and Sterkens et al. (2014). The questions concerning religious plurality are measured with levels of agreement with statements like 'Compared with other religions, my religion offers the surest way to liberation/salvation', 'Other religions do not provide as deep a God-experience as my religion' and 'The truth about God is found only in my religion' for monism; and 'Different aspects of God are revealed in different religious traditions', 'Differences between religions are a basis for mutual enrichment' and 'Differences between religions provide more knowledge of God' for pluralism.

To measure religious fundamentalism, we employ a combination of the measurement of Altemeyer & Hunsberger (2004), Duriez et al. (2005) and Williamson et al. (2010) as was previously combined by Sterkens et al. (2014) and Subagya (2015) in the Indonesian context. Religious fundamentalism is measured with questions like: 'Everything in the Sacred Writings is absolutely true without question', 'The Sacred Writings should never be doubted, even when scientific or historical evidence outright disagrees with it', 'I think that the Sacred Writings should be taken literally, as they are written'.

As for religious salience and religious practices, we borrow the measurement from Sterkens et al. (2014). Religious salience is measured with five questions like "My religious identity is very important to me" and "I see myself as a committed member of my religious group". Congregational attendance refers to the questions "How often do you attend religious services in mosques, churches, temples or other places of worship?". Prayer and reading holy scriptures is a composite measure of "How often do you pray?" and "How often do you read or recite the Holy Scriptures [Qur'an, Bible, Vedas or Tripitaka]?"

Concerning witnessing faith, we employ our own measurement. Witnessing faith is measured with questions, such as 'I give witness to my faith when I do justice', 'I live my faith by words and action in serving the poor', 'The more religious you become, the more concerned with justice you will be', etc.

To explain non-religious factors which shape perceptions about and feelings towards the poor, we refer to income, social dominance orientation, bonding and bridging social capital and compassion.

Income is taken from the estimate of the monthly net family income as given by the parents of the student respondents.

Social Dominance Orientation is measured through questions like 'In getting what you want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against other groups', 'It is OK if some groups have more chances in life than the other'.

For bonding and bridging social capital we employ our own measurement. Bonding and bridging social capital are measured with following questions.

'I have a religious community on which I can rely when I have a serious problem'. 'I have at least one close friend of the same religion' and 'I borrow things and exchange favour with my friends of the same religious community'. Meanwhile, questions such as 'I participate in inter-religious meetings whenever I am invited', 'I like to give support to people with a different religion than mine' and 'I learn to be more tolerant by collaborating with people with different religions than mine' are employed to measure bridging social capital.

Compassion is measured by the classic items of Davis (1983) like "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me", 'When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward him/her', 'Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal', etc.

School activities refer to the extra-curricular social activities organized by schools to stimulate solidarity with others. In this regard, we ask our respondents with the following question: 'Did you participate in the past 12 months in some of the social activities listed below? If you did participate, please indicate whether this was a voluntary or a compulsory participation'. We provide our respondents with several social activities such as 'Youth Red Cross', 'Social Service', 'Donations for orphans', etc.

3.3 *Measurements of the Dependent Variables*

For attitudes towards the poor we have used earlier validated measurements that distinguish between perceptions about the poor and feelings towards the poor (Cozzareli, Wilkinson & Tagler 2001).

For perceptions about the poor, respondents are requested to indicate the extent of agreement with a thirteen positive and thirteen negative characteristics that describe the poor, e.g., friendly, loving and responsible (positive perceptions) and angry, violent and addicted (negative perceptions). The extent of agreement was indicated on a 5-point Likert scale from total disagreement (1) to total agreement (5).

For feelings towards the poor, we have asked respondents about their positive and negative feelings with regard to the poor. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with items that asked to what extent they generally like or dislike poor people, whether they have generally positive or negative feelings towards them, feel uncomfortable with them or hold them in high regard. The extent of agreement was indicated on a 5-point Likert scale from total disagreement (1) to total agreement (5).

3.4 *Data Analysis*

To answer our first question concerning the students' perception about and feelings towards the poor, we conducted a factor analysis, using principal axis

factoring (PAF) with Oblimin rotation. The criteria in the factor analysis were: eigenvalue >1 ; the score of the communality (h^2) should be $>.20$ and if items loaded high on two factors, the difference in factor loading should be $>.15$. We conducted a factor analysis for our entire sample of Muslim and Christian students, because we assumed that the structure of the perceptions about and feelings towards the poor is the same for both groups.

With regard to our second question concerning possible differences in the perception and feelings towards the poor between Muslim and Christian students, we employed independent sample t-test based.

Finally, in view of our third research question and to test our hypotheses, we tried to explain possible differences between Muslim and Christian students with the help of multiple regression analysis.

4 Empirical Results

Referring to our research questions, we present the following analysis which deals with the results of our study.

4.1 *Attitudes towards the Poor among Indonesian Students*

Factor analysis on the thirteen positive and thirteen negative characteristics concerning the perceptions about the poor resulted in two measurements: positive perceptions about the poor and negative perceptions about the poor (Table 2). Positive perceptions about the poor (seven items) has a reliability of Cronbach's alpha .844. Our respondents (Muslims and Christians together) have an average score of 3.35 on the 5-point Likert scale with standard deviation of .523. Negative perceptions about the poor (eight items; alpha .817) has an average score of 2.55, with standard deviation .543.

Factor analysis on the three positive feelings and three negative feelings towards the poor resulted in a single scale, which we labelled 'positive feelings towards the poor' after inverting the scores on the negative items (Table 3). The reliability of the scale is .796, with an average score of 3.94 and standard deviation .540.

Overall we can conclude that there is a clear difference between positive perceptions about the poor and negative perceptions about the poor as expected, as shown in the result of the factor analysis. The positive and negative feelings towards the poor result in one single scale, in which negative feelings are simply the opposite of the positive feelings. The scales are reliable and the consensus is relatively great, as shown in the relatively low standard deviations.

TABLE 2 Factor analysis (Paf, Varimax rotation), commonalities (h^2), percentage of explained variance, and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of perceptions about the poor

Items	F1	F2	h^2
20. The poor are: Mentally ill	.686	.096	.394
12. The poor are: Immoral	.685	-.069	.536
14. The poor are: Angry	.666	.027	.420
18. The poor are: Violent	.647	-.032	.447
24. The poor are: Abusive	.544	-.075	.356
26. The poor are: Alcoholic	.536	-.012	.296
10. The poor are: Unpleasant	.502	-.209	.272
16. The poor are: Weak	.481	-.014	.241
13. The poor are: Friendly	-.022	.722	.542
17. The poor are: Loving	.068	.721	.460
15. The poor are: Responsible	.014	.703	.481
25. The poor are: Humble	.012	.682	.454
19. The poor are: Nice	.010	.665	.433
21. The poor are: Moral	-.172	.588	.509
11. The poor are: Strong	-.065	.471	.266
Cronbach's Alpha	.817	.844	
Number of valid cases	1003	1010	
Total variance explained	48.38%		

Scale: 1= Totally disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither disagree nor agree; 4=Agree; 5= Totally agree
 F1 = Negative perceptions about the poor; F2 = Positive perceptions about the poor

4.2 *Differences between Muslim and Christian Students on Attitudes towards the Poor*

T-tests show small but some significant differences between Muslims and Christians in their attitudes towards the poor. The very small size of the differences in combination with the relatively small sample and necessary reluctance on interpretation because of differences in size of the two groups are in line with our hypothesis that there are no reasons to expect differences between Muslims and Christians based on religious belonging alone. On the other hand, the differences we found on positive perceptions and positive feelings towards the poor are statistically significant (Table 4).

TABLE 3 Factor analysis (Paf, Varimax rotation), commonalities (h^2), percentage of explained variance, and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of feelings towards the poor

Items	F1	h^2
2. I do not like poor people very much	.731	.534
4. Poor people make me feel uncomfortable.	.700	.491
6. I have negative feelings towards the poor	.650	.423
1. My feelings towards poor people are generally positive.	-.574	.330
3. I hold poor people in high regard.	-.589	.347
5. I generally like poor people.	-.523	.274
Cronbach's Alpha	.796	
Number of valid cases	1019	
Total variance explained	49.69%	

Scale: 1= Totally disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neither disagree nor agree; 4=Agree; 5= Totally agree
 F1 = Positive feelings towards the poor

TABLE 4 Differences in perceptions about the poor between Muslim and Christian students

	N	Mean	s.d.	(t-value)
<i>Positive perceptions about the poor</i>				
Muslims	322	3.426	.545	2.776**
Christians	661	3.328	.503	2.776**
<i>Negative perceptions about the poor</i>				
Muslims	320	2.508	.563	-1.720
Christians	661	2.571	.526	-1.720
<i>Positive feelings towards the poor</i>				
Muslims	328	4.000	.488	2.030*
Christians	663	3.930	.550	2.030*

Scale: 1= Totally disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neither disagree nor agree; 4=Agree; 5= Totally agree.
 T-values are significant at $p < .00$ (**) or $p < .05$ (*) level. Positive perceptions: p-value .006 (Levene's test for equality F-value 1.497; Sig. .221). Negative perceptions p-value .086 (Levene's test for equality F-value .186; Sig. .667). Positive feelings p-value .043 (Levene's test for equality F-value .4776; Sig. .029).

Positive perceptions about the poor can count on relatively low levels of agreement among both Muslims (3.43) and Christians (3.33), a small difference on a five-point Likert scale that is nevertheless statistically significant. Muslim students have more positive perceptions about the poor than Christians.

Negative perceptions about the poor results in similar results for Muslims (2.51) and Christians (2.57) without significant difference.

Positive feelings towards the poor show a small and low significant difference between Muslim (4.00) and Christian students (3.93). Compared to Christian students, Muslim students have more positive feelings towards the poor.

4.3 *Explanations for the Attitudes towards the Poor among Muslim and Christian Students*

We have seen that our Muslim students show significantly more positive attitudes towards the poor than Christian students. Our third research questions pertains the question how we can account for these differences. To answer this question, we will look for significant correlations between the attitudes towards the poor and the religious and the non-religious characteristics of our respondents (4.3.1) and will give potential causal explanations for this difference with the help of regression analysis (4.3.2).

4.3.1 Bivariate Analyses (Correlations)

How do attitudes towards the poor relate to religious and non-religious characteristics of the Muslims and Christian students participating in our study? To answer this question we present the correlations between our three attitudes towards the poor (positive perceptions, negative perceptions and positive feelings) and religious and non-religious factors that constitute our theoretical framework (Table 5). Overall the correlations are quite low, but nevertheless provide food for thought.

Firstly, we will look at the positive perceptions about the poor among Muslim students. For Muslim respondents, congregational attendance (-.122) surprisingly relates negatively with positive perceptions about the poor, while witnessing faith (.158) goes together with more positive perceptions. Income (-.134) also relates negatively with positive perceptions about the poor, while bridging social capital (.154) and compassion (.181) are positively related with positive perceptions about the poor. Participation in extra-curricular school activities that aim to fuel solidarity with the sick, elderly and orphans or otherwise economically disadvantaged people (.135) are also positively related with having positive perceptions about the poor.

TABLE 5 Correlation between positive perceptions about the poor, negative perceptions about the poor, positive feelings towards the poor and religious beliefs and practices, non-religious factors and school factors among Muslim and Christian students.

	Positive perceptions about the poor		Negative perceptions about the poor		Positive feelings towards the poor	
	Muslims	Christians	Muslims	Christians	Muslims	Christians
Religious beliefs and practices						
• Attitudes towards religious plurality:						
- Monism	.016	-.065	-.062	.151**	.083	-.082*
- Pluralism	-.008	.165**	.123*	-.164**	.050	.236**
• Religious fundamentalism						
• Religious salience	.046	.083*	-.100	-.081*	.265**	.265**
• Congregational attendance	-.122*	.065	.053	.014	.042	.104**
• Prayer and reading Holy Scriptures	-.024	.005	-.024	.017	-.020	.121**
• Witnessing faith	.158**	.167**	-.082	-.201**	.341**	.356**
Non-religious factors						
• Income	-.134*	-.045	.174**	-.023	-.021	-.068
• Social dominance orientation	-.075	-.055	.170**	.159**	-.187**	-.129**
• Bonding social capital	.003	.139**	-.034	-.021	.154**	.158**
• Bridging social capital	.154**	.165**	-.134*	-.228**	.194**	.322**
• Empathy	.181**	.181**	-.070	-.230**	.303**	.354**
School activities						
Activities	.135*	.166**	-.008	-.109**	.049	.157**

Low correlation = $r < .30$; Moderate = $.30 \leq r \leq .40$; Strong = $.40 \leq r \leq .50$; Very strong = $r \geq .50$

As for Christian students, religious factors which are positively related to having positive perceptions about the poor include pluralism (.165), religious fundamentalism (.158), religious salience (.083) and witnessing faith (.167). While non-religious factors that are positively related to having positive perceptions about the poor include bonding social capital (.139), bridging social capital (.165) and compassion (.181). Also school activities (.166) are positively related with more positive perceptions about the poor.

Secondly, concerning negative perceptions about the poor among Muslim respondents, pluralism (.123) is positively related with more negative perceptions about the poor, while religious fundamentalism (-.114) has a weak negative correlation with having negative perceptions about the poor. Non-religious factors that go together with negative perceptions about the poor are income (.174) and social dominance (.170). Having a higher income and a stronger social dominance orientation are related with more negative perceptions about the poor. As one could expect, bridging social capital (-.134) is negatively related with having negative perceptions about the poor.

Among Christian students, monism (.151) is positively related with having negative perceptions about the poor, while pluralism (-.164), religious fundamentalism (-.099), religious salience (-.081) and witnessing faith (-.201) are negatively related with having negative perceptions about the poor. School activities (-.109) also relate negatively with negative perceptions about the poor.

Thirdly, we look at positive feelings towards the poor. Among Muslim respondents, relatively higher scores on religious fundamentalism (.271), religious salience (.265) and witnessing faith (.341) go together with more positive feelings towards the poor. Social dominance (-.187) relates negatively with having positive feelings towards the poor, while bonding social capital (.154), bridging social capital (.194) and empathy (.303) are positively related with having positive feelings towards the poor.

Among Christians, lower scores on monism (-.082) go together with more positive feelings towards the poor, while relatively higher scores on pluralism (.236), religious fundamentalism (.252), religious salience (.265), congregational attendance (.104), prayer and reading Holy Scriptures (.121) and witnessing faith (.356) relate with positive feelings towards the poor. As regards the non-religious factors, SDO (-.129) relates negatively with having positive feelings towards the poor. As expected, bonding social capital (.158), bridging social capital (.322) and compassion (.354) are found to be positively related with having positive feelings towards the poor. Finally, Participation in school activities that aim to increase solidarity with the poor (.157) are indeed positively related with having positive feelings towards the poor.

4.3.2 Multivariate Analyses (Regression)

Following our bivariate analyses, which showed that several religious and non-religious factors are related to attitudes towards the poor, we now look for the most decisive factors with the help of regression analysis. For each dependent variable we conducted separated analyses for Muslim and Christian students and in this way tested hypotheses 1a to 9a. Independent variables were included in the regression model if they showed a significant correlation of at least .15 with the concerning dependent variable among Muslims and/or Christian students (cf. Table 5). When this was the case these variables were included as independent variables in the analysis for each religious group as to make a comparison of the mechanisms in the two religious groups possible and thus to test hypotheses 1b to 9b. Table 6 presents the regression analyses for positive perceptions about the poor, negative perceptions about the poor and positive feelings towards the poor among Muslim and Christian respondents.

4.3.2.1 *Positive Perceptions about the Poor*

We start our analysis with Muslim students. School activities (β .136) is the only predictor that contributes significantly to the total explained variance of 5,2%: Muslim students who have participated in these activities are more likely to have positive perceptions about the poor.

Among Christian students, positive perceptions about the poor are induced by pluralism (β .113), religious fundamentalism (β .104) and school activities (β .104). The positive contributions of pluralism and religious fundamentalism seem to contradict each other, but is understandable when the first is seen as openness towards others and the latter is seen as an indicator of genuine involvement with religion and its prescriptions in holy texts. The total explained variance of positive perceptions about the poor among Christian respondents is 7.4%.

4.3.2.2 *Negative Perceptions about the Poor*

As for negative perceptions about the poor among Muslims, income (β .198) induces negative perceptions, while bridging social capital (β -.172) reduces negative perceptions about the poor, which is in line with *hypothesis 5a* and *7a* respectively. This means that Muslims who come from relative affluent families are more likely to have negative perceptions about the poor, while support for solidarity with dissimilar others (particularly those with other beliefs) reduces negative perceptions about the poor. The total explained variance is 6.0%.

Among Christians, religious factors which contribute to negative perceptions about the poor include monism (β .100) and witnessing faith (β -.137),

TABLE 6 Regression analyses for positive perceptions about the poor, negative perceptions about the poor and positive feelings towards the poor among Muslim and Christian students.

	Positive perceptions about the poor		Negative perceptions about the poor		Positive feelings towards the poor	
	Muslims	Christians	Muslims	Christians	Muslims	Christians
Religious beliefs and practices						
• Attitudes towards religious plurality:						
- Monism	—	—	-.092	.100*	—	—
- Pluralism	-.045	.113**	.126	-.011	.025	.091*
• Religious fundamentalism	.008	.104*	—	—	.179**	.096*
• Religious salience	—	—	—	—	.139*	.124**
• Prayer and reading Holy Scriptures	—	—	—	—	—	—
• Witnessing faith	.082	.050	-.017	-.137**	.167*	.128**
Non-religious factors						
• Income	—	—	.198**	-.016	—	—
• Social dominance orientation	—	—	.085	.109**	-.157**	-.095**
• Bonding social capital	—	—	—	—	-.008	-.017
• Bridging social capital	.096	.058	-.172*	-.138**	-.012	.138**
• Empathy	.117	.058	.071	-.080	.179**	.149**
School activities						
Activities	.136*	.104**	—	—	.050	.067
R ²	.072	.083	.087	.116	.221	.242
Adjusted R ²	.052	.074	.060	.105	.195	.231

Standardized regression coefficients (β) are significant at $p < .01$ (**) or $p < .05$ (*) level

respectively a corroboration of *hypothesis 1a* and *hypotheses 4a* and *4b*. Social dominance (β .109) contributes to negative perceptions about the poor, confirming *hypotheses 6a* and *6b*. Bridging social capital (β -.138) reduces negative perceptions about the poor. Moreover, the effect is somewhat stronger among Christians than among Muslims, confirming *hypotheses 7a* and *7b*. The total explained variance is 10.5%.

4.3.2.3 *Positive Feelings towards the Poor*

Among Muslim students, positive feelings towards the poor are induced by religious fundamentalism (β .179), religious salience (β .139) and witnessing faith (β .167). This is respectively in line with our *hypotheses 2a*, *3a* and *4a*. Non-religious predictors include social dominance (β -.157) and empathy (β .179), with the former reducing and the latter inducing positive feelings towards the poor. Again, this is a corroboration of our *hypotheses 6a* and *8a*. The total explained variance of positive feelings towards the poor among Muslims reaches 19.5%.

Among Christians students, positive feelings towards the poor are induced by pluralism (β .091), religious fundamentalism (β .096), religious salience (β .124) and witnessing faith (β .128). This is respectively according to our *hypotheses 1b*, *2a*, *3a* and *4a*. We do not find confirmation of our expectation (*1a*) that monism reduces the positive feelings towards the poor. The second parts of hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 on religious fundamentalism, religious salience and witnessing faith relate to the differential effects of these variables for Muslims and Christians. The differential effects relate either to the size of the actual effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (i.e. differences in β between Muslims and Christians, while the score on the independent variable can be similar), either to the intergroup differences in the levels of the concerning independent variables (i.e. differences in scores on the independent variables between Muslims and Christians). We do indeed find confirmation of *hypothesis 2b* because the effect size of religious fundamentalism is lower for Christians than for Muslims. We also find the effect of religious salience to be stronger among Muslims than among Christians, and that the score on religious salience is somewhat greater among Muslims (4.40) than among Christians (4.33), but this small difference is statistically not significant (no clear support for *hypothesis 3b*, but neither falsified). With regard to witnessing faith, we did expect that it would induce positive attitudes among both Muslims and Christians without further qualification on the size of the effect, which we indeed find confirmed in both groups (*hypothesis 4b*). Non-religious factors which predict positive feelings towards the poor include

social dominance orientation (β -.095), bridging social capital (β .138) and empathy (β .149). These findings once again corroborate our *hypotheses 6a, 7a* and *8a*. Looking at the second parts of these hypotheses on the possible differential effect of these variables for Muslims and Christians, we find no differences on social dominance levels between Muslims (2.96) and Christians (2.94), giving us no support for *hypothesis 6b*. We do find (again) confirmation for *hypothesis 7b* in the observation that there is a positive effect of bridging social capital on positive feelings towards the poor among Christians, while this effect is missing among Muslims. And finally we find corroboration for *hypotheses 8b* in the finding that the size effect of empathy is somewhat bigger among Muslims than among Christians.

5 Conclusion

In this study we addressed the following three interrelated research questions: (1) What are the perceptions about and feelings towards the poor among Indonesian students? (2) Are there significant differences between Muslims and Christians with regard to perceptions about and feelings towards the poor? and (3) If there are significant differences between Muslims and Christians in this regard, how can we explain these? In this final section we will summarize our most important results and offer a brief reflection on our results from the perspective of inclusive religious education.

As regards our first research question, the students participating in our study generally tend to perceive the poor more in a positive than in a negative way, they reject negative stereotypes of the poor and also they display rather positive feelings towards the poor. Nevertheless, on a five-point Likert scale from total disagreement (1) to total agreement (5), the average agreement with positive perceptions (3.35) is not very strong. When the religious affiliation of these students is taken into account, which is the topic of our second research question, there are some differences between Muslim and Christian students. In general, Muslim students have more positive perceptions of the poor and also display more positive feelings towards the poor. Differences which have to do with the differential effects of various religious as well as non-religious factors. When it comes to the difference between Muslim and Christian students regarding the positive perception of the poor, especially extra-curricular school activities aiming to promote solidarity with the poor appear to have a stronger effect on Muslim than on Christian students in this regard. Furthermore, while religious factors do not seem to affect the positive perception of the poor among Muslim students, the appreciation of the equal value of religious

traditions, i.e. pluralism, as well as a literal understanding of scripture have a relatively strong effect on the positive perception of the poor among Christian students. When it comes to the difference concerning the positive feelings Muslim and Christian students have towards the poor, taking sacred writings literally, the importance of religion in one's life and giving witness to one's faith by striving for social justice are important factors among both groups, but they have a stronger effect on the feelings towards the poor among Muslims. In sum, our study shows that attitudes towards the poor among Indonesian students do indeed—though slightly—differ between religious groups as a result of the differential impact of religious and non-religious factors. However, correlations are relatively low, as well as the total explained variance in the regression analyses. We therefore should not overestimate our findings.

Overall, the results underscore the importance as well as the limitations of religious communication in combatting social segregation and injustice. For, next to certain religious factors people's attitudes towards poverty and the poor are also influenced by various non-religious factors that cannot be easily dealt with or addressed in religious communication. On the other hand, the clear effects of the attitudes towards religious plurality, fundamentalism, religious salience and giving witness to one's faith also illustrate the possible impact of religious communities. By discussing these religious topics in religious communities or in religious education classes and by relating these topics to the issue of poverty, it is far from idealistic to assume that this may affect students' attitudes towards the poor. Especially when students are in their formative years, like the students participating in this study, and are in the middle of constructing their personal worldview and values system. In this regard, it is important not to overestimate, but neither to underestimate the impact of religious communication, either in formal education or in local communities like churches and mosques. Furthermore, our results also show that creating opportunities for students to really practice solidarity and to come into contact with the poor can be a powerful instrument in combatting prejudices against the poor. Therefore, these specific 'school activities', which are common in Vincentian schools, deserve to become an integral part of the religious education curricula in schools throughout Indonesia. Based on our theoretical insights and empirical results we propose to develop an approach to religious education, which combines the discussion of religious topics in class with the actual practice of solidarity. When it comes to bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, theory and practice should go hand in hand if religious education is to become inclusive religious education. This, we believe, is the major lesson religious educationalists may learn from our empirical study.

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