



# Experiences of interreligious encounter at religiously affiliated hospital: Striving to build amicable interreligious relationship through healthcare service in Yogyakarta context

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## **Abstract**

*This article aims to examine the interreligious encounter experiences of patients and their families who have diverse religious backgrounds and come to religiously affiliated hospitals (different from their religion). The main question raised is how this experience strengthens their recognition and respect toward other religions, so they are enabled to build amicable interreligious relations. This study is necessary especially in the context of Yogyakarta, which claims itself as 'City of Tolerance,' but unfortunately, this claim and image have faded because of many cases of intolerance in multiple social settings, such as school, campus, worship place, religious event, boarding house, even also cemetery. Meanwhile, in Yogyakarta, three major religiously affiliated hospitals have served Yogyakarta residents for tens to hundreds of years, namely Bethesda, Panti Rapih, and PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. Following Peter L. Berger, this paper argues that hospital can be seen as a unique social setting, in which pluralism as empirical experience truly happens because, in terms of attitude, the hospital is an institution that is in its service should practice no discrimination toward people from a different background (ethnicity or religiosity) related to service for humanity. Therefore hospital will be a place of encounter for people from various backgrounds and identities. Within the religiously affiliated hospital, pluralism is not only a formal philosophical concept but a social situation in which people with different ethnicities, religions, worldviews, and moralities live together peacefully and interact with each other amicably.*

**Keywords:** *interreligious encounter, religiously affiliated hospital, social setting, healthcare service, amicable interreligious relationship*

## **Introduction**

In Indonesia, diversity is a reality and also one of the main characteristics of Indonesian society, both on the outside (physical) in relation with the existence of hundreds of ethnic groups, and the inside (spiritual) related to the existence of many religions and religious groups. [1] Furthermore, diversity is also the ideology of the nation and state '*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*' or Unity in Diversity. [2] However in the context of diversity in Indonesia, religious identity is still seen as very important, and one of the main sources of the so-called 'problem of religious diversity is the strengthening of the expression of religious identity in the public space.[3] The problems that arise can be related not only to the relationship between a religious group with the state, or among religious communities (inter-religious groups) but also some of the fiercest and longest lasting conflicts involve intra-religious relations.[4]

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, Yogyakarta is one of the most ethnically diverse conurbations city that has become a melting pot of different religions, languages, cultures, and ethnic groups.[5] Yogyakarta has long been a safe house for various traditions, beliefs and ideas with a spectrum of ideology from right to left.[6] It also has a long history of the existence of major religious organizations like Muhammadiyah, which was founded

in 1912,[7] and study center of Islam, Christianity, Catholic and others that have great influence nationally.[8] Yogyakarta also inherits a Javanese culture from the Mataram kingdom, in which the acculturation between Javanese and Islamic cultures known as *Kejawen* became one of strong character in Yogyakarta.[9] Hence, it is interesting that even there are center of religious movement, for quite long time friction on a large scale almost never materializes in Yogyakarta.[10] The various socio-religious segments in Yogyakarta seem to have their respective places and side by side in a relatively harmonious situation, and make Yogyakarta is popular with the tagline "*Jogja Berhati Nyaman*" (Jogja is comfortable and peacefulhearted), which is used since 1992 to promote Yogyakarta as a pleasant and good place, not only to live but also to visit. [11] Even Yogyakarta also proclaim itself as a 'City of Tolerance' in 2011, an idea put forward by various elements of society and representatives of religious groups and adopted by Herry Zudianto, mayor from 2001 to 2011. [12] Zudianto explained that tolerance meant harmony, understanding and the willingness to accept, acknowledge and cooperate with each other.[13]

Unfortunately, in recent years, the good image of Yogyakarta seems to be fading. The 2014 Wahid Institute report, stated that Yogyakarta was the area with the second highest level

of violence or violations of religious freedom with 22 cases, after West Java with 51 cases. [14] In line with the Wahid Institute report, the National Human Rights Commission (KOMNAS HAM) of the Republic of Indonesia also believes that intolerance in Yogyakarta has crossed the threshold.[15] Even the Setara Institute in the report of Indonesian Tolerant City Index (Indeks Kota Toleran) 2020 placing Yogyakarta in 33rd place.[16] These reports potentially ruin the image of Yogyakarta as “*Jogja Berhati Nyaman*” and “City of Tolerance” and made Yogyakarta’s reputation for tolerance and harmony has come under great pressure.[17]

Meanwhile the case of intolerance in religious life in Yogyakarta occur in various social settings and are related to various issues. Social settings here mean place or event that engage individuals in everyday interactions that potentially expose them to a greater diversity than they would otherwise find at home among family members, friends, or neighbors.[18] For instance, at school, there was an attack on students of SMA Piri 1 Yogyakarta in 2011 and 2012 for being accused of promoting Ahmadiyah teachings.[19] Regarding campus life and students, there are cases of refusal by boarding house owners against students from certain regions or religions,[20] and the case of dropping billboards of student wearing hijab at Duta Wacana Christian University in 2016.[21] Regarding houses of worship

and religious events, in 2014 there was an action from Front Jihad Islam (FJI) against the establishment of the Jehovah’s Witness Christian Church, in Baciro, Yogyakarta City.[22] The issue of intolerance even occurs in the cemetery setting. In 2013, a group of veiled mobs damaged the tomb of the grandson of Sultan Hamengkubuwono VI on charges of *syirik*:[23] and in 2019 there was a case of destroying a cross on a number of gravestones at the tomb complex belonging to the Bethesda Hospital in Sleman, Yogyakarta.[24]

The fact that these cases of intolerance occur in various social settings raises a concern about the encounter of people with various religious backgrounds in social settings religiously affiliated hospital. In Yogyakarta, there are three majors religiously affiliate hospital that have served Yogyakarta residents for tens to hundreds of years. The first one is Bethesda Hospital. It was originally founded by J.G. Scheurer a doctor sent by *Nederlandse Zendingsvereniging* [25] and officially established on 20 May 1899.[26] This hospital is affiliated with Christianity (Protestant) under the management of the *Yayasan Kristen Untuk Kesehatan Umum (YAKKUM)* or Christian Foundation for Public Health.[27] The second hospital is PKU Muhammadiyah which was established on February 15, 1923. This hospital originally started from a small clinic initiate and founded by

K.H. Ahmad Dahlan as Chairman of the Muhammadiyah and his student, K.H. Sudjak.[28] The third hospital is Panti Rapih. This hospital was established on September 14, 1929.[29] This hospital is managed by the Panti Rapih Foundation. The Panti Rapih Foundation was founded by the Catholic Order Carolus Borromeus.[30]

Furthermore, it is clear that hospital is a place of encounter between health care providers, patients and their family.[31] Moreover in a public health care context, the hospital is a place that is formally open to all, regardless of social status and background, therefore the health care provider, patients and their family may have various background related to social and cultural, even also religious background.[32] It is align with joint document which is issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and World Health Organization entitled 'The Right to Health' it is stated that: "Health service, goods and facilities must be provided to all without any discrimination. Non-discrimination is a key principle in human rights and is crucial to the enjoyment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health." [33] Eventhough religiously affiliated hospital have a very strong religious identity, related with symbol, value, and services, but people who have various religious background seem to be able to put aside their religious identity when they come religiously

affiliated hospital. Therefore, hospitals have become spaces of encounter for complexity human diversity and also a social relational space.[34]

Align with that, in Bethesda hospital, for the period April-August 2020 the number of inpatient visits was 3,746. From that number, as many as 2,286 people or about 61% were Muslim; 854 people, or about 23% were Christian (Protestant); 552 people or about 15% were Catholic; and 54 people or about 1% of other three religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc.).[35] The similar condition happened in *Panti Rapih* (Catholic Hospital). In *Panti Rapih*, from January until August, there were 10,195 inpatient patients. From that number, 5,533 people or around 54% were Muslim; 3,192 people or around 31% were Catholic; 1,282 people or around 13% were Christian; 51 people or 0.5% were Hindu; 93 people or around 0.9% was Buddhist; and 42 people or around 0.4% were kept their religious identity confidentially.[36] However, the situation was quite different in PKU Muhammadiyah hospital. From January to August 2020 the number of inpatient patients here were 5,794. From that number 5,277 peoples all around 91.07% were Muslim; 47 peoples or around 0.81% were Christian; 99 peoples or around 1.70 % was Catholic; 5 peoples or around 0.86% were Hindu; 1 people or 0.017% was Buddhist and 365 people or around 6.29% keep their

religious identity confidentially.[37]

Concerning those data, this paper aims to examine the experiences of patients and their families who have different religious backgrounds who come to religiously affiliated hospitals (which are different from their religion), so they encounter the diversity of religion in a healthcare service context. The main question raised is, how is this experience strengthening their recognition and respect toward other religions so they are enabled to participate in building harmonious interreligious relations in their life? The narratives presented in this paper is part of my dissertation research. However, the narratives which are presented here are limited to 6 people from 4 religions (Islam, Catholicism, Buddhism and Hinduism) who come to religiously affiliated hospitals with different religious backgrounds. However, before presenting the patients' experience of interreligious encounter within religiously affiliated hospital, this paper will also explore the dilemma of prejudice and religious mission than unseparable with religiously affiliated hospital and then propose theoretical framework that overcoming that dilemma to bring patients' narrative into a goal to build amicable interreligious relation in Yogyakarta context through religiously affiliated hospital service.

## **Religiously Affiliated Hospital and the Dilemma of Prejudice**

Religious faith has long been connected with ideals of physical well-being,[38] thus it is not surprising that many of the current healthcare systems around the world can be traced to religious institutions.[39] Even today a high percentage (some say 40 percent) of health-care services around the world are founded and funded by faith-based organizations or initiatives.[40] All over the world religion play important role in healthcare service through hospital. Hospital that becomes special institution of religion in implementing their social responsibility toward society through healthcare service can be perceived as religiously affiliated hospital. [41] Hence the healthcare service within religiously affiliated hospital influenced by certain religious value. There is may be special spiritual formation/pastoral care department which available for the patient and the service of this department done in the spiritual way of the religion that affiliated to the hospital. And it is also possible that there are some religious symbols in the building or within the ward.

Meanwhile patient and their family who come to religiously affiliated hospital, may realize the religious affiliation of the hospital different from theirs, but the need for health services and the principle of non-discrimination in hospitals have made them come to religiously affiliated hospitals. It

is clear that identity, and religious convictions of patients and even the hospital are not to be left behind in the encounter. Thus, people from various religious background encounter in and with one social setting namely religiously affiliated hospital and have interreligious experience. Dilemma emerge because wherever humans assemble, we tend to distinguish ourselves into groups, on a wide range of ostensible differences related with ethnic, racial, national, gender, and class dimensions, even political parties and religious groups.[42] It is because human mind must think with the aid of categories as a basis for normal prejudice and people cannot possibly avoid this process. Furthermore, Gordon Allport in his book 'The Nature of Prejudice' (1954) argue that prejudice and bias may become one problem in intergroup relation within society and it became source of conflict, discrimination or disharmony within society.[43]

Align with that, another dilemma is related with the importance of religious identities in the context of Indonesia, potentially associated religiously affiliated hospital with more complicated issues such as religious missions, proselytization, especially Christianization. Indeed, in the 'old sense', mission in Christianity could be understood as a religious calling to proclaim biblical message, to provide social service for people

in need and to unify the churches in order to do Christianisation.[44] Concern about this issue illustrated and argued by Alwi Shihab, in his book entitled 'Membendung Arus: Respon Gerakan Muhammadiyah Terhadap Penetrasi Misi Kristen Di Indonesia' (Damping the Flow: The Response of the Muhammadiyah Movement to the Penetration of Christian Missions in Indonesia). Alwi Shihab firmly argues that Muhammadiyah is quite worried about the penetration of Christian missions in Indonesia through various public service institutions such as hospitals and educational institutions. Therefore, Muhammadiyah become the most active organization in stemming Christianization missions in various ways. This goal is sometimes achieved in a direct way, but more often in an indirect way, namely by providing and improving Islamic education and health facilities like PKU Muhammadiyah hospital. This indirect method is intended to compete with similar facilities that have been well established by Christian missionary institutions.[45]

### **Measuring Patients' Experience of Interreligious Encounter within Religiously Affiliated Hospital**

In order to overcome the dilemma in previous section, this section argue that all life is an encounter.[46] Human meeting each other are a reality that un-avoided when because humans have a social dimension.[47] Peter L. Berger

in his book entitled 'The Many Altar of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age' argue that encounter of human diversity is an important social event because it makes pluralism not only as a philosophical concept in the mind of philosopher but also as a human empirical experience of social situation in which people with different ethnicities, religion, worldviews, and moralities live together peacefully and interact with each other amicably.[48] Berger also argue that this empirical experience empower people to build pluralism. [49] Furthermore, according to Berger, to realize the amicable interaction and the peaceful live together between people with different ethnicities and religion there are two conditionals from anthropological term: commensality and connubium, eating together and/or marrying each other; put differently, we are referring to dinner conversation and/or pillow talk, meaning that the encounter in diversity, the mixing of diversity and continuous conversation, even hospitality are important aspects in creating these conditions.[50]

Interestingly, Berger's idea about pluralism as empirical fact also connected with another writion from him entitled 'The Hospital: On the Interface between Secularity and Religion'. In this writing, Berger argue that the phenomenon of pluralism as empirical experience is happen in one crucially important institution

which is hospital.[51] Hospital can be seen as a social setting, in which the pluralism as empirical experience is truly happen because in terms of attitude, hospital is an institution which is in its service should practice no discrimination toward people from different background (ethnicity or religiosity) related to service for humanity, therefore hospital will be a place of encounter for people from various background and identity.[52] Moreover, Berger argue that hospital is unique social setting because modernity is very strong in hospital, even Berger mentioned that hospital is 'temple of modernity'. He refers to the setting of hospital in which the latest sophisticated technology is used in order to support healthcare service toward patients. However, aspect of modernity and secularity in hospital is not at war with religion, but rather is the locale of peaceful interaction between its secular discourse and religious beliefs and practices. Berger argue that in hospital, modernity and secularity meet religious side of human, for example in the relation between the idea of spirituality and treatment of illness, religion and healing have been closely related throughout history and most religious people pray for healing, for themselves or those they care about.[53]

Align with that, according to Simon Mary Asese A Aihio Khai in his book entitled 'Fostering Interreligious Encounters in Pluralist Societies:

Hospitality and Friendship' actually when we take time to encounter others at the deepest layers of our humanity, we cannot but be transformed.[54] The transformation is marked with better recognition and better respect toward other because the act of generosity, hospitality and act of helping or taking care of others who are seen as temporarily or chronically unable to take care of their own needs. Helping can take various forms, from giving directions to a stranger on the street, taking care of a hospital patient, to teaching a student or donating to charity.[55] The encounter between people from various religious background and act of helping through religiously affiliated hospital may be seen as routine activity but from sociological perspective, routines might be regarded as the 'social glue' that holds together the regular flow of daily life.[56] In accordance with that, I argue that that the experience of interreligious encounter, getting health care as a form of hospitality and generosity within religiously affiliated hospital is able to transform the patients and their family understanding about other religion. What so called transformation here is the tear down of prejudices that may have previously existed in the patient's heart and mind or even this encounter may shape positive view of patients toward the religion that is affiliated with hospital, and create mutual sympathy and cooperation between people from

different religious group.[57]

Furthermore, identity, and religious convictions of patients and even the hospital actually are the basis of an interreligious dialogue and may even be deepened and intensified. If people with different religious identity are open toward a learning process from the other, good relation will be build and fruitfulness, because encounter actually closely related with dialogue. [58] Dialogue by definition means an encounter between persons "through the word." Thus, it is more than an exchange of information, although facts are part of it. But the personal dimension definitely stands in the foreground. With regard to dialogical personal encounters, experience shows that this relational dimension becomes the more intense the more the issues talked about are of existential importance to the persons involved. [59] Finally, all these experiences are intended to be an opportunity and capital to build interreligious dialogue and interreligious relations that are more peacefull amicable.

### **Patients' Narrative of Experiences of Interreligious Encounter**

#### ***Bethesda Hospital***

Informant 1 : Supriyadi (Interviewed 7 June 2021)

Gender : Male

Religion : Islam

Age : 52 years old

Education : Akademi Bahasa Asing, YIPK Yogyakarta



Occupation : Food vendors  
Address : Klitren, Kec.  
Gondokusuman, Kota  
Yogyakarta

I am originally from Kebumen, Central Java. I used to study at the Jogjakarta Foreign Language Academy. I graduated in 1992. Since 1998 I started work in Harmony Inn Hotel Jogja until last May 2020 before being laid off. In 2001 I married my wife who is originally from Jogja, we have three kids and we lived in a Klitren since then.

From 2012 until now, I have frequently received treatment and health checks at Bethesda Hospital. Initially, in 2012 I was hospitalized because of diabetes. My blood sugar level at that time was more than 300, so to this day, it needs to be maintained. There are several reasons and factors why I as a Muslim choose a hospital that is Bethesda which has a Christian (non-Islamic) affiliation: First, as far as I know, there are no teachings or rule in my religion (Islam), that is required me to seek treatment in an Islamic hospital or a doctor who is also a Muslim. On the other hand, no rule prohibits going to Christian hospitals. The second factor is trust. Long before I entered my wife's extended family, since they were children, they always went to the doctor at Bethesda hospital whose name was dr. Purnomo (dr. Pur) who are Christian. So, until now, our whole family, especially the children, always

go to Bethesda. The family's trust in Bethesda has been built, regardless of religion from the hospital and doctor. For us, the first and foremost what the sick need and want is healing. In Bethesda we found good service, the doctor can diagnose our health complaints correctly, give the right medicine and prove that we are cured therefore we choose it.

The third factor is culture. I need to explain this with a few examples: first, Bethesda had a principle or tagline, '*tolong dulu urusan belakang*,' (help first). It is different from other hospitals where we have to pay or deposit money first. The tagline '*tolong dulu urusan belakang*' applies to all patients, especially Klitren people. Hence, most (if not all) Klitren people already *kepincut* (attracted) and trust Bethesda hospital for their need of healthcare service. Second, we Klitren residents feel firsthand the privilege or convenience provided by Bethesda Hospital regarding visiting hours. Even though Bethesda is a hospital that is quite strict regarding visiting hours and must use a card, when we want to deliver something important, Klitren residents just need to show their ID cards and be allowed to enter. Third, before the pandemic, when the Klitren wanted to hold an event like independence celebration and we needed financial assistance, we would make a proposal to the Bethesda hospital, and Bethesda always provided

financial assistance. Fourth, until now there are many Klitren residents who work at Bethesda Hospital. I think they are quite wise, so they not only prioritize professional workers from outside the region, but they give space for the residents of Jogja, especially from Klitren to work together at Bethesda and provide health services to many people. With all these examples of good relationships, in the end, the Klitren people have formed an image and culture that if you seek treatment, go to Bethesda.

Regarding Bethesda's identity as a Christian hospital marked by the presence of symbols, such as the cross, pictures, Bible, and visits from the pastoral counseling department, I think each hospital already has its wisdom and policy about it, both Islamic hospitals and non-Islamic hospitals. It does not bother me and my family because we see it as a symbol only. Indeed, as data for hospitals, the patient's religious identity will be asked as a data. But of course, in the context of hospital services, the main principle is non-discrimination. I really feel that even though I am Muslim and I come to Christian hospitals like Bethesda, I have never been discriminated from those who are Christians. As a patient, our primary goal is to seek treatment, not a religious service or religious mission. As far as my experience goes, the Bethesda hospital understands their duties and responsibilities very well.

When patients come, their job is to provide the best health care, so there are no other missions for example to Christianize patients. If it is internal case, for instance there is a priest assigned by hospital to provide prayer assistance to Christian patients or during shift changes the nurses sing and pray, I think we also have no problem and we appreciate that.

Furthermore, in my experience, even though the majority of nurses and doctor at Bethesda are Christians, they never offer prayers to Muslim patients, but their concern for us Muslim patients delivered in the form of normative messages, for example by saying, 'Pray a lot, sir, have a lot of patience and enthusiasm for a speedy recovery.' In my opinion, this is a form of a religious message, but it is packaged in a more neutral and universal way because the nurses who are Christians know that we are Muslim patients. Messages like this may seem trivial but are very valuable for patients of different religions to strengthen them in the process of getting healing. The important thing is, it is delivered in the right way and portion, not flashy but elegant.

The prayer room is one more thing that I see as a form of cooperation and tolerance between religious communities that I really like at the Bethesda hospital. The shape is like a *Mushola*. Although it is not called a *Mushola*, the room is quite spacious and comfortable. Indeed, there are no

religious symbols, so the impression is more neutral as a public prayer room. However, when prayer time (sholat) arrives, the patient's family or visitors can use the room to pray. I have prayed there several times when accompanying sick family or visiting family or friends, and I feel very comfortable praying there. So for me, this is a form of special concern from Bethesda Hospital, which shows that mutual respect between religious communities exists. This is, of course, based on the awareness and appreciation that the majority of Bethesda hospital patients are actually non-Christians. Perhaps 70 percent of the inpatients at Bethesda are Muslim. Therefore, there is good wisdom and policy from the hospital. If they choose to be selfish, they may feel a loss to provide such a room because the room is quite spacious. Perhaps it can be used for other more profitable things from an economic point of view, for example, for additional inpatient rooms. But they do not act like that, so they provide the room as a form of tolerance and genuine respect for patients of other religions.

In line with that, I believe that diversity itself is God's will, and I think there is a verse in the Qur'an even though I can't refer to the verse directly. God's main goal is for humans to know each other and even help each other as an embodiment of God's omnipotence. For me, religious matters, even in the context of an encounter at

a hospital, are still a personal matter for each patient. Each patient and medical staff focuses on healing patients from their illness so that the priority is service, not religious identity. This religious identity, but of course, we all need to respect each other. However, I need to emphasize that the existence of the Bethesda hospital is a form of solidarity and the practice of helping people of different religions. Healing does come from God, but hospitals, medicines, doctors, nurses, are the means that become a way of healing for patients. So if God is willing to provide healing using facilities such as Bethesda hospital, which incidentally is a Christian hospital, with Christian doctors and nurses to Muslim patients like me, I think that is the prerogative and omnipotence of God. Finally, for me, with all the health services in the name of humanity carried out by Bethesda Hospital, they have played a role in making inter-religious relations more harmonious.

Informant 2: Veronica Mariah  
(Interviewed 15 March 2022)

Gender : Female  
Religion : Catholic  
Age : 55 years old  
Education : High School  
Occupation : Chef  
Address : Tegalrejo, Kota  
Yogyakarta

I am indebted to Bethesda hospital. Three years ago, my daughter-in-

law had to give birth by C-section at Bethesda hospital because there was a problem in her womb, so the baby had to be delivered before 9 months (premature), and the baby had to receive special treatment in incubator after birth. My daughter-in-law is Muslim, but she is treated very well at Bethesda and is not differentiated from other patients. But at that time, we faced serious problems related to financial issue. My daughter-in-law is from outside Java, and he also does not have Social Health Insurance Administration Body (BPJS) from government. I was very confused because the cost for the C-section and healthcare of approximately two weeks cost approximately Rp. 21,000,000.

In my confusion, I find out maybe there is a way to get a waiver of payment methods. I still want to pay the entire cost, but I have to pay in installments over a more extended period of time. Coincidentally I remember that I have a neighbor who works as a nurse at Bethesda hospital. From her (Gianti), I got info on how to get relief on how to pay off our 21 million rupiah debt. I was directed to go to the administration department at Bethesda hospital and meet Mr. Totok, head of the department. He was surprised of how I got to know him and the administration room because this is not the usual finance or cashier section for payments, but he received me well. I then told him about my situation, and I

begged to be given relief in the payment method, namely in installments.

Hearing my story, Mr. Totok explained that he from the hospital would try to help by finding donors from Jakarta. But he explained that this is also in the queue because many (hundreds) patients with conditions similar to ours and need help from the hospital. I was asked to commit to paying in installments every month according to my ability. I then agreed to pay Rp. 300,000. Pak Totok agreed to my application so that every month I finally made an installment of Rp. 300,000 to Bethesda hospital. In the 10th month, when I delivered my installment money, it meant that when I was still paying in installments of Rp. 3.000,000, I was then informed by the cashier that for the next month I don't have to come and pay in installments again. I was surprised and very moved. I asked the cashier, why do I not need to pay in installments again? They explained that there was already a donor who paid the remaining Rp. 19,000,000. I then went to meet Mr. Totok, and thanked him profusely and Bethesda hospital for helping our family. For me, what Bethesda hospital has done for us is very much in line with their motto 'tolong dulu, urusan belakang'. It's even more extraordinary for me, because the hospital knows that my daughter-in-law is Muslim, but they do not discriminate and even provide full service to the settlement of payments that at other

hospitals, we might not be able to get help like this. Bethesda Hospital has practiced love for others. I believe this creates a good impression on Bethesda Hospital as a Christian hospital and can build more harmonious inter-religious relations.

### ***Panti Rapih Hospital***

Informant 3: Fenita Huang (Interviewed 29 April 2021)

Gender : Female

Religion : Buddha (Maitreya)

Age : 35 years old

Education : Bachelor in Accounting, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta

Occupation : Teacher at Duta Bakti School Yogyakarta

Address : Caturtunggal, Kec. Depok, Kabupaten Sleman, DIY.

I come from Bangka Belitung to Jogja in 2007, to study at Atma Jaya, majoring in accounting. In 2014, I had symptoms of TB, so I had to be observed and hospitalized at the Panti Rapih. I was treated there for 15 days. In my experience, the Panti Rapih hospital has excellent service. Everyone is friendly and very helpful, from the administration, nurses to the doctors too, so while being treated at Panti Rapih I feel very comfortable.

When asked about meeting people of other religions, I can say that I have absolutely no problem. Within Panti Rapih hospital, seeing the religious symbols, such as the cross or the statues of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, there was also no problem for me, even at

that time I was also prayed for by the Catholic nuns, and I felt very happy because for me prayer is a blessing that support me to get well. In the teachings of our belief in Maitreya Buddha, we are always invited to see and believe that all humans and all religions come from the same source. All of us are a universal family. Therefore, we always respect other religion's symbols, prophets and figures because we believe that every religion teaches and do goodness for humans according to the teachings and beliefs of their respective religions. From this teaching, we all finally got used to living respectfully with people of different religions.

Regarding the experience of being treated at the Panti Rapih, I was also impressed that they already had a vegetarian menu for their patients. Indeed, there are still shortcomings and things that are not in accordance with our teachings, especially regarding the use of onions, because for them maybe the name vegetarian food as long as you do not eat meat means it is safe, but for us, the use of onions is not allowed. However, we can understand this shortcoming, so we can still supply food aid from friends. From the hospital, we can still accept boiled fruit or vegetables and rice. Then the experience of being treated at the Panti Rapih hospital for inter-religious relations in daily life certainly influences because I can also feel the love of my Catholic friends for me through the hospital.

Informant 4: Anton Margiansah  
(Interviewed 5 May 2021)  
Gender : Male  
Religion : Islam  
Age : 33 years old  
Education : Bachelor of Education,  
Universitas Negeri  
Surabaya  
Occupation : Supervisor Marketing Area  
Jogjakarta, PT. Chitose  
Internasional Tbk (CINT)  
Alamat : Cangkringan, Sleman,  
Yogyakarta

I have been to several hospitals in Yogyakarta because I get sick quite often, and because my mother is having a stroke and my father also has to undergo treatment because of cancer. Each hospital does have its specialization. From my experience accompanying my mother, I see that Bethesda Hospital is indeed good for dealing with stroke. Panti Rapih is actually very good for treating cancer. I saw that my father's health progress was quite good after going to Panti Rapih regularly. There is a significant change because the cancer stage has gone down. I have also been treated at Bethesda Hospital and examined for complaints of pinched nerves at the Jogjakarta International Hospital (JIH), but I am most happy and comfortable at Panti Rapih. At the end of March 2021, I was treated, I had an operation and was treated at the Panti Rapih hospital for a few days because of problems with my teeth and gums. I choose Panti Rapih hospital, because in my

experience, the examination, analysis, and action were fast and precise. The medicine given from the Panti Rapih hospital had a high dose, so the effect was immediately felt because the diagnosis was correct. Frankly, I have never been to PKU because I haven't been able to get treatment there.

Regarding the religious affiliation of the Panti Rapih hospital, I personally have no problem with it. For me, religion is actually a personal matter, a personal human affair with God. I also believe that all religions teach goodness. Hence, even there are religious symbols or religious activities at Panti Rapih, like a cross symbol in the inpatient room, statues in the courtyard, the name of the room is also Christian names, Christian songs playing at certain hours, and if that evening there are who go around to pray, but if we have filled out the form and declared ourselves Muslim they will not come and offer to pray for us, because they also really respect patients who are different from their religion. I think if we are sick, our concern is looking for medicine and healing, and I am not a fanatical Muslim therefore I go to Panti Rapih hospital that provide good healthcare service. Perhaps certain people are fanatical in Islam and do not want to be treated in a hospital that is not Islamic, and each person has right to choose. In my experience Panti Rapih hospital itself never discriminated patients because of their religious background. Moreover,

I think we also have to realize that no human can live alone, all need each other, it can be seen in the context of this religiously affiliated hospital.

Regarding how the experience of being treated in a religious hospital affected my recognition and appreciation of other religions, especially Christianity and Catholicism, and how it affected my life and attitude towards people of different religions, I would say that it definitely had an effect. At least, I came to know how Christianity do worship and prayers. I also know the shape of the cross, the appearance of Catholic nun and priest, etc. In my opinion, all of these, are only different ways of worshipping, but the goal remains the same, namely to pray to God. I myself in Islam, have my own way, praying with gestures, prostration, standing, raising hands, etc. Indeed, there may be suspicions from the Islamic side that health services from Christian hospitals are part of an effort to spread Christianity, but for myself, according to my experience so far at Panti Rapih and Bethesda, I have not found anything like that. They honor me as Muslim, and do not force me to pray in Christian way, or persuade me to convert my religion. At the end we must have positive thoughts and return to our main goal of seeking treatment and healing.

***PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta Hospital***

Informant 5: Ignatius Sutjipto

(Interviewed 15 March 2021)

Gender : Male  
Religion : Catholic  
Age : 66 years old  
Education : High School  
Occupation : TV Repairmant  
Address : Tegalrejo, Kota Yogyakarta

At the end of May 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was hospitalized at the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital. At that time, I had to undergo surgery because there was a problem with my prostate, which caused obstruction to the urinary tract, so that I was in excruciating pain. Initially, I had time to go to the Hermina hospital, but there only medicine was given to reduce aches and pains. Hermina asked me to wait for about a month to see the progress from the hospital while I continued to take the medicine they gave me. I did feel better for a while, but I still could not pee, so after a few days of taking medication, my situation got worse, and I could not stand the pain anymore. In the end, we decided to go to the Puskesmas Tegalrejo. The doctor at the Puskesmas said that according to his examination, I needed surgery. He then gave me five choices of hospital recommendations that could perform surgery for me according to the referral system flow from BPJS. One of the five hospitals is PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital, Yogyakarta. The doctor at the Puskesmas Tegalrejo told my family

and me that the urology specialist at the PKU Muhammadiyah hospital was good, his name was dr. Ahmad Zulfan Hendri, Sp.U. Because of the recommendation from the doctor at the Puskesmas, I finally chose the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital.

At first, I was a little hesitant too because I had never been treated at the PKU Muhammadiyah. There were also stories from some friends and neighbors that the service was not good, especially if we are not Muslims. However, it turned out that I had a very good experience. The service at the PKU Muhammadiyah hospital was very good. Starting from registration, of course they already knew that I was Catholic because the ID card clearly stated my baptismal name and religion, they still treat me well. The nurses to the doctors were very friendly and never discriminated me. I was treated in a second-class inpatient room, with four patients in one room, but the service was equally good for Muslim and non-Muslim patients. My surgery process went smoothly, and for about a week, I was hospitalized at the PKU Muhammadiyah hospital. During that week, I received excellent service from the doctors and nurses. Finally, the affairs in administrative matters were all smooth, and the hospital complicated nothing. All my surgery and treatment costs around 9 million rupiah. All costs are borne by the state because I am a Healthy Indonesia Card holder (KIS).

Regarding the religious affiliation of the PKU Muhammadiyah hospital, I have no problem with it, especially after getting a good impression while undergoing treatment there. In my opinion, as patients, our main interest is to get well. So even though there are religious symbols, songs with Islamic nuances, or verses from the Qur'an that are played and played on loudspeakers, as patients, my family and I can understand very well, because indeed the hospital is a hospital. Islam. For me, religion is a personal matter, so I do not feel disturbed and make a fuss about it. The point is that I, as a patient, really feel the goodness and benefits of PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta services. I, who felt sick and suffered for weeks, was able to recover through the help of doctors and nurses at the PKU Muhammadiyah hospital. So people's stories no longer influence me because I have experienced good service.

Informant 6: Heni Purwanti  
(Interviewed 20 August 2021)

Gender : Female  
Age : 50 years old  
Religion : Hindu  
Education : High School  
Occupation : Non-PNS Hindu  
Religious Extension for the  
Kulon Progo Regency area  
Address : Samigaluh, Kulon Progo

I had the experience of accompanying my husband to be treated at the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta



hospital. I do not remember the exact date, but last June 2020, my husband had an unusual stomachache. On the first night my husband had a stomach ache, we took him to the *Puskesmas*. The *Puskesmas* advised us to go to the Wates Regional General Hospital (*RSUD*), Kulon Progo. The doctor at the hospital stated that my husband had a urinary tract infection, so he did not need to be hospitalized but just took medicine and had an injection to relieve the pain. That night my husband felt better, so we ended up going home around 2 am. However, the next night, my husband felt pain in his stomach again, and this time it was more painful than the night before, so that night we took my husband to another hospital, namely Bakti Ningsih Hospital, in Klepu. This hospital did not accept and referred to a bigger hospital, namely the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping hospital. At PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping hospital, the diagnosis was the same as at Wates Hospital. They said my husband had a urinary tract infection, and my husband had another injection and was given pain medication. That night my husband felt even better and we were allowed to go home around 3 am. Unfortunately, the next night (third night), around 10 pm, my husband got sick again, worse than the previous day, because my husband was vomiting and was very weak on the third night. We brought him back to the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping

hospital, and this time my husband was required to be hospitalized for about 10 days. Unfortunately, even though the ultrasound and the X-ray has been done, the doctor has not determined what my husband's disease is exactly. In fact, during those 10 days, my husband kept vomiting and had diarrhea, so he was frail.

We are increasingly worried about my husband's condition. At the end, on the advice of doctors at the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping hospital, we took my husband to the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital. We left for the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital at around 6 pm. Upon arrival, the hospital immediately examined my husband's medical record from the examination results at the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping hospital. Interestingly, Internistat, the PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital, had not yet had the chance to meet my husband, but he said that tomorrow my husband would have to undergo surgery. Perhaps the decision was based on medical records and communication with doctors at the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping hospital.

When the doctor decided to surgery, I heard that, the doctor also did not know for sure yet what was my husband's illness. His diagnosis was that my husband had an intestinal infection, but the operation intended to see what exactly was causing my husband to have such severe and prolonged

stomach pains. However, we as a family fully believe in the doctor's decision to perform surgery on my husband. The important thing for us is that he is treated quickly because if it is delayed, it might worsen. We completely trust the hospitals and doctors, because we think that the doctor has been in school for many years, so he must understand and be responsible for the diagnosis and the decision. The next day, my husband was surgery on, the process took about two hours, and during the surgery it was found out that the cause of my husband's pain was appendicitis, but it turned out that his appendix had ruptured and had detached so that when the ultrasound photo was taken, it could no longer be seen. Thankfully, the surgery went smoothly, and my husband returned to the hospitalized room for a few days until he finally recovered and was able to go home.

We are very satisfied with the treatment and services at PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta Hospital. Even though we are Hindus, the hospital, (nurses and doctors) never discriminate us as patients based on religion. All are treated equally. Every morning, there is also an *ustadz* who visits all patients and provides reinforcements to increase the patient's spirit and pray for those willing to be prayed for. My husband was used BPJS and treated in class 1. In the hospitalized room, there were two patients, we were Hindu, and another patient was Muslim.

The *ustadz* visit the Muslim patients and then my husband. At first, he chatted with us first, asking about my husband's health situation and condition, where we come from, and our religion, and after knowing we were Hindus, all the conversations still went well. Then he asked whether we were willing to be prayed for or not, and we openly accepted prayers from him. We are glad that he prayed for us because we believe that prayer from anyone as long as it is delivered sincerely and sincerely, will surely reach God and have an impact on healing. Thus, regarding the religious identity of the hospital, which can be seen from the pictures, calligraphy of verses, chanting of prayers played through the loudspeaker, we accept and appreciate all of that because we are aware that it is an Islamic hospital and Islam. They have their own way of praying and worshiping and we honor it with a positive mind. Our main goal as patients and families is to seek healing, no matter where the hospital is, and regardless of religious identity.

The issue of religious diversity and inter-religious relations is actually familiar to me. I was originally a Muslim, but when I got married in 1992, I embrace Hinduism like my husband for the sake of the integrity of the household. My big family itself, a '*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*' family. My maternal grandparents are Muslim, wwho have four children, but the first and second are Christians, my mother

and her youngest sister are Muslims. My eldest son, who used to be Hindu after getting married, converted to Islam following his wife. My husband is used to it too. His older brother is also Muslim because he married a Muslim. So, in our family we are all taught to respect and appreciate each other, and all live in harmony. It doesn't matter what religion we embrace, the important thing is that we consistently serve God sincerely. And as far as I know, Hinduism itself taught to respect other religions.

### **Finding and Conclusion**

From the stories of the six informants, there are several important findings in this study. First, it is clear that whether religiously affiliated hospital is part of religious mission in implementing their social responsibility toward public health, the main reason for all patients to come to religiously affiliated hospital is to seek good healthcare service, medicine and cure and not to be proselytized.[60] It can be seen from all six informant's narratives. In addition, from Supriyadi's experience in Bethesda hospital, it is clear that trust factor is very important in influencing him and his family to choose Bethesda hospital for seeking healthcare service. Align with that, Anton Margiansyah explain that hospital specialization also become important factor in choosing Panti Rapih as a place to get healthcare service. Another patients like

Ignatius Sutjipto and Heni Purwanti for instance follow the referral system by BPJS therefore they choose PKU Muhammadiyah, but again the main goal is to get good healthcare service, medicine and cure.

Secondly, within religiously affiliated hospital and pluralism as empirical experience,[61] because all patients bring their own religious belief and faith and their dignity to the medical encounter, as doctors and other health-care professionals also bring their own beliefs to the medical encounter, therefore it forms interreligious encounter.[62] The interreligious encounter within religiously affiliated hospital recognized and acknowledge by the six informants. However, it is interesting that all of the informants can deal with it using various reason. Supriyadi argue that there is no teaching or rule in Islam which require him as Muslim to go to Islamic hospital and Muslim doctor to get healthcare service and there is no prohibition to go to Christian hospital and doctor. Regarding the religious symbol he see it only as symbol that did not bother him and his family. Fenita even thought in her religion (Maitreya Buddha) that all human come from the same source and all religion and prophet teach goodness, therefore she has respect toward every symbol in Panti Rapih hospital, even she also open toward interreligious prayer from Catholic nun in Panti Rapih. The similar

narrative come from Heni Purwanti, she also see every symbol and prayer in PKU Muhammadiyah hospital as a prayer that support her husband and other patients to be cured. Therefore she even openly accepted to be prayed by the ustadz in PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

Finally, the interreligious encounter within religiously affiliated hospital that followed by act of generosity and helping may transform the patients. The transformation marked by better recognition and better respect toward other religions[63] and the tear down of prejudices that may have previously existed in the patient's heart and mind or even shape positive view of patients toward the religion that is affiliated with hospital, and create amicable and harmonius relationship.[64] There are

three examples for this section; first, the collapse of Ignatius Sutjipto's bad prejudice against PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta hospital after he received good health services there. Second, the financial assistance that made Veronica Mariah feel indebted to the Bethesda hospital for helping her son-in-law who is Muslim, and Supriyadi's experience regarding the presence of a prayer room at Bethesda hospital which was felt to have had an extraordinary impact on the development of more harmonious interfaith relations. With all this narratives, it is clear that interreligious encounter within religiously affiliated hospital in Yogyakarta is impactful to in building amicable and harmonius interreligious relationship.[]

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