

Navigating “Second-Class” Citizenship: Minority Perceptions of the “Gospel City” Regulation in Manokwari

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Abstract

This article examines the implications of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City (*Penataan Manokwari sebagai Daerah Injil*) for the civil rights of religious minorities and explores how religion-related regional regulations can be formulated to strengthen national integration. Drawing on the theories of symbolic legislation, legal pluralism, and accommodative leadership, the study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach based on in-depth interviews with Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist religious leaders in Manokwari. The findings reveal a paradoxical relationship between symbolic law and social reality. At the symbolic level, many minority respondents perceive the regulation as privileging

a particular religious identity and raising concerns regarding equality, recognition, and religious freedom. However, its practical impact on the everyday lives of minority communities remains limited. This is largely because the most restrictive provisions contained in earlier drafts were removed, no implementing regulations were subsequently issued, and the regulation's effects have been moderated by local mechanisms of coexistence. The study highlights the importance of the *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu* philosophy, customary authority, and accommodative local leadership in sustaining interreligious harmony and mitigating the potential exclusionary effects of formal law. The article argues that the Manokwari case illustrates the limits of symbolic legislation in shaping social relations within a plural society. It concludes that the protection of minority rights and the strengthening of national integration are more likely to be achieved through inclusive, non-discriminatory, and substantively oriented regulations that accommodate legal and cultural diversity rather than through the formal affirmation of a single religious identity.

KEYWORDS *Civil Rights, Gospel City Regulation, Local Wisdom, Minority Groups, Religious Legislation*

Introduction

Regional autonomy has prompted several local governments to enact religiously-nuanced legislations. One prominent example is Manokwari Regency, which promulgated Manokwari Regency Regional Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah*, or *Perda*) No. 3 of 2018 concerning the Management of Manokwari as a Gospel Region. This regulation designates Manokwari as a 'Land of the Gospel,' serving as a formal recognition of the historical and Christian identity of Papua. As one of the oldest cities in West Papua, Manokwari possesses an extensive history regarding the spread of Christianity within the province. This historical trajectory traces back to the arrival of the first missionaries in Manokwari on February 5, 1855, specifically on Mansinam Island.¹ Christianity is considered to have become an integral part of the cultural and social identity of the Manokwari community.

¹ Binsar A. Hutabarat, "Perda Mamokwari Kota Injil: Makna dan Konsekuensi bagi Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia," *Societas Dei: Jurnal Agama Dan Masyarakat* 1, no. 2 (2015): 127–60, <http://www.societasdei.rcrs.org/index.php/SD/article/view/58/38>.

Nevertheless, Manokwari also serves as a home to diverse ethnic and religious groups. According to demographic data released by the Manokwari Regency Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), the population in 2023 comprised 76,038 Muslims, 113,039 Protestants, 12,059 Catholics, 382 Hindus, 210 Buddhists, and 2 individuals practicing other faiths.² These figures indicate that the minority population in Manokwari Regency accounts for 37.98% of the total population, or 76,632 individuals. These minority groups have contributed significantly to the region's social and economic development. For instance, research by Akmal and Abu Muslim highlights the contribution of the Bugis community in developing Islamic education within Manokwari.³

Several studies suggest that religiously-nuanced regional regulations may impact the existence of minority groups. Research conducted by Amal and Panggabean on Sharia-based bylaws in Indonesia indicates that such religious regulations can relegate minority groups to the status of second-class citizens.⁴ Similarly, a study by Azmi on the social construction of reality regarding Sharia bylaws in The Jakarta Post reveals negative sentiments and the perception that these regulations have the potential to foster discrimination against minorities.⁵ Conversely, other studies present different findings, suggesting that Sharia bylaws do not necessarily result in negative impacts on minority groups. Research by Bahiej, Makhrus, and Amilia,⁶ as well as a study by Rijal,⁷ demonstrate positive perceptions among minorities toward the implementation of Islamic Sharia in Aceh.

Although a substantial body of scholarship has explored the implications of Sharia-inspired regional regulations (*Perda Syariah*) for minority rights, the impact of the “Gospel City” regulation (*Perda Kota Injil*) on religious minorities remains largely understudied. This absence is striking, considering

² SST. Nur Lisa Syahbani, ed., *Kabupaten Manokwari Dalam Angka Manokwari Regency in Figures 2024* (Manokwari: Manokwari, Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten, 2024).

³ Akmal and Abu Muslim, “Peran Orang Bugis Mengembangkan Pendidikan Islam Di Kota Injil,” *Pusaka: Jurnal Khazanah Keagamaan* 7, no. 2 (November 2019): 169–88.

⁴ Taufik Adnan Amal and Samsu Rizal Panggabean, *Politik Syariat Islam dari Indonesia Hingga Nigeria*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Alvabet, 2004), <https://syifafauzii5.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/politik-syariat-islam.pdf>.

⁵ Alia Azmi, “Konstruksi Realitas Pemberlakuan Perda Syariah oleh Koran The Jakarta Post,” *Humanus* 11, no. 1 (2012): 18–36, <https://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/humanus/article/view/620/534>.

⁶ Ahmad Bahiej, Makhrus, and Fatma Amilia, “Respons Minoritas Non-Muslim Terhadap Pemberlakuan Qanun Aceh Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 Tentang Hukum Jinayat,” *Jurnal Ilmu Syari’ah Dan Hukum* 5, no. 1 (2017): 117–30.

⁷ Fakhrlul Rijal, “Persepsi Non Muslim terhadap Penerapan Syari’at Islam di Aceh,” *Kalam: Jurnal Agama Dan Sosial Humaniora* 8, no. 1 (2020): 22–35, <https://journal.lsamaaceh.com/index.php/kalam/article/view/87/78>.

that the drafting and enactment of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018, which formally institutionalizes Manokwari's identity as a Gospel City, prompted concerns about the potential marginalization of minority groups and the broader implications for equality and religious freedom.

Previous studies on the *Perda* Kota Injil have primarily focused on aspects beyond its impact on minorities. For instance, research conducted by Binsar A. Hutabarat focuses on the significance and consequences of the regulation for churches in Indonesia. In his article, "Perda Manokwari Kota Injil: Makna dan Konsekuensi Bagi Gereja-Gereja Di Indonesia" (The Manokwari Gospel City Regulation: Meaning and Consequences for Churches in Indonesia), Hutabarat analyzes the repercussions for the nation's ecclesiastical bodies. He argues that while the regulation is part of a strategy for Indonesian Christians, its presence may actually be detrimental to the mission of churches in Indonesia.⁸

Another study was conducted by Eko Ariwidodo, titled "Harmoni Relasi Islam-Kristen Pasca Diskursus Raperda Kota Injil Di Manokwari" (Harmony in Muslim-Christian Relations Following the Discourse on the Gospel City Draft Regulation in Manokwari). Ariwidodo's research examines misconceptions surrounding the Gospel City discourse and explores efforts to foster harmony between Islamic and Christian communities in Manokwari. However, this study was conducted prior to the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 3 of 2018, occurring while the regulation was still a debated Draft Regional Regulation (*Raperda*).⁹

This article examines the implications of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City for religious minority communities. It also seeks to identify principles for formulating religion-related regional regulations that are more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and consistent with the values of Pancasila, constitutional equality, and social justice. To achieve these objectives, the article addresses the following research questions: How do minority communities in Manokwari perceive Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2018 regarding the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel Region? What are the implications of the implementation of said regional regulation on the civil rights of minority

⁸ Binsar A. Hutabarat, "Perda Manokwari Kota Injil: Makna dan Konsekuensi Bagi Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia."

⁹ Eko Ariwidodo, *Harmoni Relasi Islam-Kristen Pasca Diskursus Raperda Kota Injil Di Manokwari* (Pamekasan: Duta Media Publishing, 2019).

groups in Manokwari Regency? What is the appropriate formulation for religiously-nuanced regional regulations to strengthen national integration within the context of regional autonomy?

To address these research questions, this article adopts a symbolic legislation framework informed by the works of Murray Edelman and Joseph R. Gusfield¹⁰. This perspective is particularly useful for examining laws whose significance extends beyond their formal legal effects and practical enforcement. Edelman argues that political actions, public policies, and legal enactments often serve symbolic functions by communicating values, reinforcing collective identities, and generating legitimacy among specific constituencies. From this perspective, the importance of a law does not necessarily depend on its effectiveness in regulating behavior. Rather, legislation may function as a symbolic expression of political commitments and collective aspirations, providing recognition and reassurance to particular social groups. Consequently, a law can remain politically meaningful even when its substantive impact on social practices is limited¹¹.

Gusfield complements this perspective by emphasizing the role of law in the politics of status and collective identity. According to Gusfield, legal norms frequently operate as symbols through which particular groups seek public recognition of their values, beliefs, and cultural authority. The significance of such legislation therefore lies not only in its capacity to regulate conduct but also in its ability to affirm a group's moral standing and historical identity within the broader social order. From this perspective, regulations may retain considerable political and cultural significance despite limited enforcement because their primary function is symbolic rather than instrumental. Symbolic legislation thus serves as a vehicle through which communities institutionalize collective memories and publicly affirm shared identities¹².

A study on the impact of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018 on minority groups is of paramount importance, particularly as the Regent of Manokwari, Hermus Indou, has expressed an intention to revise the "Gospel City" regulation. The rationale behind this revision is to better align the regulation with the regency's motto: *"Manokwari untuk Semua dan Semua"*

¹⁰ Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1964); Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*, 1963.

¹¹ Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*.

¹² Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*.

untuk Manokwari" (Manokwari for All and All for Manokwari).¹³ Local authorities may utilize the findings of this research to draft inclusive and non-discriminatory legal instruments that reflect this motto.

Consequently, this article is intended to produce constructive policy recommendations for the Manokwari Regency government. These recommendations may include strategic steps to ensure that the designation of Manokwari as a "Gospel City" does not compromise the rights and freedoms of minority groups. In other words, even within the existence of religiously-nuanced regulations, the local government can develop programs and initiatives that promote interfaith dialogue, raise awareness regarding the importance of tolerance and diversity, and ensure that public services remain accessible to all community groups without discrimination.

In a broader context, this article is expected to serve as a model for other regencies and cities in formulating regional policies that do not negate the civil rights of local minorities. As a nation characterized by high religious and cultural diversity, Indonesia faces unique challenges and opportunities in managing intergroup relations. This research aims to provide a guide for policymakers at both national and regional levels in creating inclusive and equitable policies for all segments of society.

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method.¹⁴ This approach was selected for its capacity to capture the complexity of the perspectives and experiences of minority groups regarding the implementation of Manokwari Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel Region. Qualitative research allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth exploration of the social phenomena under study¹⁵, thereby enabling a more holistic understanding of the policy's impact on minorities in Manokwari. Furthermore, the descriptive-analytical approach is utilized to provide a detailed portrayal and

¹³ Cholis Anwar, "Bupati Hermus Ingin Merevisi Perda Manokwari Kota Injil, Ini Alasannya," March 25, 2023; Fransiskus S. Weking, "Bupati Manokwari Buka Ruang Dialog Revisi Perda Kota Injil," Antara, June 12, 2023.

¹⁴ Zainuddin Ali, *Metode Penelitian Hukum* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2009); John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth., *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018); Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018).

¹⁵ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research," in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2005), 10–11; David Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, 4th ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2013); Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2014).

analysis of key informants' views and experiences. This method allows the researcher to identify emerging patterns, themes, and correlations within the collected data, providing a meaningful interpretation of the research findings.

The subjects of this research are minority groups in Manokwari Regency. Primary data sources were obtained directly from local key informants, including Islamic leaders from the Indonesian Ulema Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia), Nahdlatul Ulama, and Muhammadiyah, as well as Hindu and Buddhist community leaders in Manokwari Regency. These key informants were selected through purposive sampling,¹⁶ specifically by choosing individuals with relevant knowledge and experience concerning the research questions. Informants were selected based on their positions within religious organizations and their roles within the community, ensuring representative and comprehensive insights into the impact of the regulation. Meanwhile, secondary data were gathered from various relevant written documents, such as organizational reports, journal articles, books, statutory regulations, and other supporting sources. Secondary data serve to complement and enrich the primary data, providing a broader context for the research findings.

The Gospel City Regulation: An Overview

Manokwari Regency Regional Regulation (*Perda*) Number 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City represents a highly distinctive phenomenon of regional legislation within the discourse of regional autonomy in Indonesia. The presence of this regulation marks a legal experiment in which specific theological values are formally integrated into the structures of governance and the organization of public space. Philosophically, the formation of this *Perda* is inseparable from historical claims positioning Manokwari Regency as the "ground zero" of modern civilization in the Land of Papua. This is explicitly stated in the "Considering" (*Menimbang*) preamble, which recognizes the Gospel Preaching of February 5, 1855, on Mansinam Island as a primordial event that shaped the identity of the local community.

¹⁶ Charles Teddie and Abbas Tashakkori, *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009); Lawrence A. Palinkas et al., "Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research," *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 42, no. 5 (2015): 533–544; Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2002).

Within the local government's framework, this regulation is positioned as a preservation instrument to protect civilizational, cultural, and religious values from the disruptive impacts of globalization, which are perceived as threats to traditional social cohesion.

This theological-political ambition is normatively formulated in Article 3, which states that the primary objective of this regulation is to realize an orderly, fair, prosperous, and faithful community life for Christians in Manokwari through the actualization of Gospel values in various aspects of life. Although the article emphasizes the Christian community, there is a paradoxical claim that the regulation remains grounded in universal principles such as Love, Protection, National Spirit (Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia), and the principle of Non-discrimination. However, the inconsistency between these non-discrimination claims and the content of the operational articles serves as the starting point for a lengthy academic debate regarding the state's position in guaranteeing citizen equality amidst the dominance of a majority identity.

Substantively, this regulation grants an extensive mandate to the Regional Government. In Chapter III regarding Duties and Responsibilities, the Regional Government is required to formulate policies, develop programs, and provide specific budget allocations for the realization of the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel Region. The implications of this mandate include the responsibility to ensure the orderliness of worship and to facilitate the active participation of the Christian community. One of the most striking instruments for regulating public behavior is found in Article 10, Paragraph (1), which definitively prohibits Christians from engaging in business activities, project work, and similar productive activities on Sundays between 06:00 and 13:00 WIT. What makes this legally problematic is Article 10, Paragraph (2), which asserts that every person and/or legal entity domiciled in the region, regardless of their religious background, has an obligation to respect and honor these worship hours. This regulation creates a specific time zone that *de facto* mandates all civil elements to submit to the ritual rhythm of the majority.

A deeper analysis of Article 12, Paragraph (1), points (c) and (d), reveals how religious ideology has begun to intervene in the technical domains of public policy. This article instructs that the implementation of the arrangement include "religiously-nuanced regional development planning" and the "naming of public places and highways with religious nuances." Theoretically, in a

constitutional state (*Rechtsstaat*) based on Pancasila, public policy and physical development should remain neutral and serve as inclusive spaces for all citizens. However, by mandating development and public symbolism with specific religious nuances, this *Perda* has the potential to create visual and spatial exclusivity. This symbolic dominance not only alters the city's aesthetics but, sociologically, may sharpen the demarcation line between the majority group, whose identity is recognized by the state, and minority groups, whose identities are marginalized from the public sphere.

Further legal concerns arise from Article 14(2), which mandates that all individuals and legal entities refrain from engaging in activities that may impede or disturb Christian worship during Sunday services and Christian religious observances. This article is at the heart of the controversy as it directly restricts the civil liberties and economic rights of non-Christian residents. In constitutional law, the conversion of religious norms into coercive criminal law, as reinforced in Chapter IX with threats of 3 months' imprisonment or a fine of IDR 50,000,000.00, is considered a form of imposing one group's norms upon others. This restriction carries a risk of abuse of power in the field, where the economic or social activities of minorities could be suppressed in the name of "disturbing worship," even if such activities are conducted peacefully and do not violate any national laws.

Another crucial aspect in the human rights discussion is the regulation concerning places of worship and public services. Article 15 requires every individual or religious institution to obtain a permit from the Regional Government to build places of worship or supporting facilities. While licensing is a standard administrative procedure, Articles 15 and 16, which also encompass "educational facilities and public service facilities with religious nuances," raise concerns about additional bureaucratic hurdles. Given the regulation's orientation toward the "Arrangement of a Gospel Region," there are fears that it will be used subjectively to obstruct the establishment of social or educational institutions by minority groups to maintain religious homogeneity in Manokwari. This potentially creates a situation where the right to education and social services becomes contingent upon the alignment of one's religious identity with the regional vision.

Finally, the exclusivity of public participation regulated in Article 17, Paragraph (1), reinforces the impression that this *Perda* was designed with a majoritarian paradigm. The article specifically mentions that "Every Christian

may participate in the implementation of the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel Region." The emphasis on the participation of a specific group within a dedicated chapter on community participation implicitly nullifies the role of other religious groups in determining the direction of their own regional development. In a democratic system, public participation should not be restricted by sectarian barriers. By positioning Christians as the primary subjects of development, this regulation psycho-politically places other citizens as passive objects of the rules.

Overall, Manokwari Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2018 is a manifestation of local government efforts to provide legality for the cultural and religious identity of the majority. However, the integration of these values into regional legal products has resulted in side effects that threaten the principles of non-discrimination, civil liberty, and the neutrality of public space. Although based on a noble historical spirit to preserve tradition, the substance contained in Articles 12, 14, 15, 16, and 17 requires a profound re-evaluation. Without an inclusivity-oriented revision, this *Perda* will continue to be viewed as a legal instrument that facilitates the dominance of a specific group over the constitutional rights of other citizens, which ultimately threatens the fabric of harmony within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The Minority Communities' Perceptions of the "Gospel City" Regulation in Manokwari

Manokwari, widely promoted as the "Gospel City", possesses a profound and historical identity rooted in the initial arrival of Christian teachings in the Land of Papua¹⁷. As has been previously discussed, this identity was formally enshrined in Manokwari Regency Regional Regulation No. 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City (the Gospel *Perda*). However, within its multicultural society, questions have emerged regarding how this regulation is received and perceived by minority

¹⁷ Uwe Hummel, "Mansinam: Centre of Pilgrimage, Unity, and Polarisation in West Papua," *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 28, no. 1 (2012): 45–47; I Ngurah Suryawan, "Di Antara Ugatamee Dan Injil: Transformasi Teologi-Teologi Pribumi Di Tanah Papua," *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic and Social Studies* 2, no. 1 (2026): 65–67, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30983/islam_realitas.v2i1.182; Farno Billy Arthur Gerung and Rahman Mantu, "Religious Contestation between Christian and Muslim Community in the 'Gospel City' of Manokwari Papua," *Walisono: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 29, no. 2 (2021): 255–76, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.29.2.11847>.

communities, specifically Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists. Through in-depth interviews with local minority religious leaders, it was revealed that perceptions of this *Perda* are highly complex, encompassing historical, political, and social dimensions. Ultimately, these findings suggest that social cohesion in Manokwari relies more on long-standing traditions of tolerance than on formal legislation.

According to several local informants, the primary objective of establishing the Gospel *Perda* was to provide a distinct identity and symbolism for Manokwari. The historical background is crucial, rooted in the arrival of two Dutch missionaries on Mansinam Island, which marked the entry of Christianity into Papua (IM, Chair of the *Perda* Special Committee, Interview, May 21, 2025). Other figures added that the regulation was also driven by concerns among the Christian community regarding the large-scale influx of Muslim migrants through transmigration programs. Furthermore, the Sharia-based regulations in Aceh were cited as an inspiration for the proponents of the Gospel *Perda* in Manokwari (SP, Muslim Activist, Interview, May 21, 2025; BS, Chair of MUI Manokwari, Interview, May 21, 2025).

However, the initial draft of the regulation, formulated in 2006, was far more stringent and alarming for minority communities. That draft contained several discriminatory clauses, such as a ban on Muslim women wearing the hijab in public spaces, restrictions on the volume of the call to prayer (*azan*), and a total prohibition of public activities on Sundays during Christian worship hours. This initial content sparked fierce opposition from the Muslim community, escalating into a national issue and causing the regulation to remain dormant for years. Despite not being enacted at the time, the stigma that "Manokwari is the Gospel City" became embedded in the public consciousness. Pressure from certain groups, particularly ministers from outside Papua, continually resurfaced during legislative sessions, religious commemorations, and local elections (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

In 2018, the Gospel Regulation was finally enacted, but with a substance significantly different from the original draft. Its passage was the result of complex political compromises between the executive and legislative branches. The Vice Regent of Manokwari, HM, explained that the issue was not perceived by the executive as warranting immediate priority within the government's agenda. The government needed to maintain positive relations with the local Muslim community (HM, Interview, May 22, 2025). However, intense political

pressure forced the government to facilitate the deliberation, provided that all prohibitory clauses affecting the Muslim community were removed (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

As a result of this compromise, the revised Gospel Regulation no longer imposes restrictions on the hijab, permits the call to prayer (azan), and confines limitations on commercial activities to the period before 1:00 PM on Sundays. IM, a legislator and Muslim figure, stated that while the Perda was a product of compromise, it left both sides dissatisfied. The Christian community felt let down as they did not achieve their desired outcomes, such as a total Sunday shutdown or restrictions on mosque construction. Conversely, the Muslim community remained dissatisfied, feeling discriminated against by the very title of the regulation, despite its non-discriminatory content (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

These perceptions indicate that while the content was amended, the name and symbolism continue to cause discomfort. The regulation is viewed as a product of external pressure rather than an initiative of the OAP. The Chair of MUI Manokwari, BS, mentioned that the idea was proposed by migrants who incited the OAP to support it (BS, Interview, May 21, 2025). This suggests that religious friction does not originate from the Manokwari community itself but from external provocations that view Muslim-Christian competition as a motive to restrict the social, political, and economic space of Muslims (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

Perceptions among non-Muslim minority communities, such as Hindus and Buddhists, tend to be more positive or, at least, unbothered. Hindu leaders, Mr. WY and Mr. GD, stated they did not feel their activities were restricted by the Gospel Perda (WY, Interview, May 22, 2025; GD, Interview, May 22, 2025). In fact, they support the regulation, believing that the sacred identity of the "Gospel City" could help eradicate social problems, such as the culture of alcohol consumption that often triggers criminal acts (WY, Interview, May 22, 2025). The *Perda*, despite its religious name, is seen as an indirect tool to suppress the circulation of alcohol, aligning with the objectives of the separate Alcohol Regulation already enacted in Manokwari (GD, Interview, May 22, 2025).

Romo Pandito SR, a Buddhist leader, also affirmed that his community feels untroubled by the regulation (SR, Interview, May 22, 2025). He noted that the

Buddhist community has lived harmoniously without conflict and feels the local government is deeply committed to religious diversity. He cited how the conversion of temple land from government property was facilitated without traditional (*adat*) complications. He argued that any past conflicts or discrimination in Manokwari were typically personal in nature, rather than based on race or religion, emphasizing that the Manokwari community, especially the indigenous Papuans (OAP), is exceptionally welcoming and open to newcomers (SR, Interview, May 22, 2025).

One of the most significant findings from the interviews is that tolerance in Manokwari does not depend on formal law but on deeply rooted cultural philosophies. Several informants, including AM from PCNU and MS from PWNU West Papua, highlighted the philosophy of "*Satu Tungku Tiga Batu*" (One Stove, Three Stones), a tradition originating in Fakfak that has spread across West Papua (AM, Interview, May 21, 2025; MS, Interview, May 23, 2025). This philosophy symbolizes unity and harmony, where people of different religions live within one "house" (social framework). MS provided an example of interfaith families maintaining separate utensils at home and even the practice of eating pork outside the house to avoid offending Muslim family members (MS, Interview, May 23, 2025).

The Chair of MUI Manokwari, BS, further illustrated how tolerance in Papua has reached the level of traditional custom (*adat*). He described Christian and Muslim villages sharing a single house for joint events, where each religious community brings their own equipment for their respective traditions (BS, Interview, May 21, 2025). Similarly, MS stated that tolerance in Papua has been practiced long before the term "religious moderation" became popular. He often advises the Muslim community in Manokwari to respect the OAP as the rightful owners of the land and to always seek traditional permission when building houses of worship (MS, Interview, May 23, 2025).

The role of the local government in maintaining this tolerance was also emphasized. Vice Regent HM explained that he and Regent Hermus Indou, as leaders elected with the support of the Muslim community, must be adept at preserving harmony. He explained that the Gospel Perda has remained largely dormant in practice, reflecting a deliberate policy choice aimed at preserving social cohesion and avoiding potential conflict among religious communities. Regent Hermus appears to practice accommodative governance by simultaneously affirming the legitimacy of the Gospel Perda in response to

Christian constituencies and limiting its practical effect through the absence of implementing regulations, thereby managing potential tensions between religious groups (HM, Interview, May 22, 2025). This approach shows that local leaders prioritize social stability over the enforcement of potentially divisive regulations.

Interviews with minority religious leaders suggest that Manokwari Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2018 functions primarily as a symbolic instrument rather than a substantively operative legal framework. The dominant perception among minority communities is that this *Perda* does not significantly impact their daily lives. Although the name itself may evoke feelings of discrimination, its content, a product of political compromise, and the absence of implementing regulations render it ineffective and non-binding.

The deep-seated tolerance in Manokwari, symbolized by the “*Satu Tungku Tiga Batu*” philosophy, serves as a social safety net far stronger than any formal law. Conflicts generally stem from external provocation rather than from the local population, who are accustomed to peaceful coexistence. Ultimately, this *Perda* is a political formality serving the symbolic aspirations of certain parties, lacking the power to disrupt the robust social harmony already established in Manokwari. Stability in the region remains contingent upon local wisdom and a leadership committed to pluralism, which successfully mitigates the potential divisions that a religiously-nuanced regulation might otherwise bring.

The Implications of the Gospel City Regulation on the Minority’s Civil Rights

Having examined the historical, political, and legal context of the Gospel City Regulation, the next question concerns its implications for the civil rights of religious minorities in Manokwari. While the regulation was formally enacted to commemorate the historical significance of Christianity in Papua, its impact on minority communities remains a matter of critical inquiry. Based on in-depth interviews with nine minority religious leaders, this study finds that the regulation produces dual and often contrasting implications. Formally and symbolically, the regulation has the potential to create perceptions of unequal citizenship and exclusion among religious minorities. In practice, however, its

effects are moderated by local traditions of coexistence, political accommodation, and the absence of implementing regulations.

The Gospel Perda is best understood as a form of symbolic legislation.¹⁸ In this view, law functions not merely as a regulatory instrument but also as a symbolic medium through which political authorities and social groups articulate collective identities, institutionalize shared values, and seek public recognition for particular historical narratives. IM, a member of the regional legislature (DPRD) and Chairman of Muhammadiyah Manokwari, emphasized that the primary purpose of this regulation is “symbolic/identity-based,” relating to the historical arrival of Christian teachings on Mansinam Island (IM, Interview, May 21, 2025). SP, another local Islamic figure, revealed that the regulation is essentially a political compromise created to satisfy the aspirations of certain groups—specifically clergy and religious leaders—who felt that Manokwari’s Christian identity was threatened by the large-scale influx of Muslim migrants (SP, Interview, May 21, 2025).

Even if the Gospel Perda functions largely as symbolic legislation, it nonetheless raises important concerns regarding civil rights and religious freedom. Such concerns become evident when examining the regulation’s legislative history. The initial 2006 draft contained provisions that would have imposed significant restrictions on non-Christian communities, including proposals to prohibit the wearing of the hijab in public spaces, limit the volume of the azan (call to prayer), and impose a Sunday shutdown affecting non-Christian residents. Although these provisions were ultimately removed from the enacted regulation, their inclusion in the original draft suggests that exclusionary understandings of religious identity influenced the early stages of the legislative process. Furthermore, while the 2018 version no longer contains explicit restrictions on religious expression, it retains provisions that limit certain activities in public spaces on Sundays until 1:00 p.m. (IM, Interview, May 21, 2025). Although relatively modest in scope, such provisions represent a formal restriction on economic activity based on a religiously defined schedule, raising broader questions about equal citizenship and the accommodation of religious diversity within local governance.

Beyond the written articles, the most damaging implications lie within the psychological and social realms. The Chairman of MUI Manokwari, BS,

¹⁸ Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*; Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*.

explained that the *Perda* still fosters a sense of "discrimination" among Muslims, even if the content is no longer explicitly exclusionary (BS, Interview, May 21, 2025). This is a form of institutional or structural discrimination, where even in the absence of overt legal violations, the legal framework itself creates an atmosphere of inequality. The regulation effectively establishes a Christian identity as the city's primary identity, positioning other religions in a subordinate status. This sentiment is reinforced by the fact that the regulation did not originate from the aspirations of the naturally tolerant Indigenous Papuans (OAP), but rather from external provocations that view Muslim-Christian competition as a motive to restrict the social, political, and economic mobility of Muslims (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

The relationship between the Gospel *Perda* and minority rights is therefore more nuanced than a purely legal analysis might suggest. While the regulation carries symbolic implications that may raise concerns about equal citizenship, its practical effects are moderated by longstanding traditions of interreligious coexistence. The Manokwari case demonstrates how lived pluralism can function as an informal mechanism of social regulation, shaping everyday interactions in ways that often temper the impact of formal legal provisions.

The key concept underlying this tolerance is the philosophy of "*Satu Tungku Tiga Batu*" (One Stove, Three Stones). MS, Chairman of PWNNU West Papua, explained that this philosophy symbolizes unity and harmony, where people of different religions live within one "house" or social vessel. He provided a concrete example: in a household with members of different faiths, they maintain separate utensils; if one eats pork, they do so outside the house to avoid offending Muslim family members (MS, Interview, May 23, 2025). This is not merely a theory, but a living practice of tolerance rooted in daily life. AM, Chairman of PCNU Manokwari, agreed that tolerance in Papua has been practiced for generations, long before the concept of "religious moderation" became popular (AM, Interview, May 21, 2025).

Furthermore, customary authority (*adat*) plays a vital role in social governance and conflict resolution, often carrying greater legitimacy within local communities than formal state institutions or religious authorities. BS and IM emphasized that the position of a tribal chief is frequently accorded more respect than that of government officials or religious leaders in resolving communal disputes. This dynamic is illustrated by the case of a mosque in the Sanggeng area. When local authorities moved to implement a demolition order,

the intervention of the tribal chief facilitated a negotiated resolution that ultimately allowed the mosque to remain in place (BS, Interview, May 21, 2025). The case demonstrates the significant role of customary institutions in mediating conflicts and safeguarding the interests of minority communities, sometimes in ways that formal legal mechanisms alone are unable to achieve.

Although the Gospel Perda may carry symbolic implications for minority rights, its practical impact appears to be limited. One important factor is the accommodative approach adopted by local authorities in managing religious diversity. Vice Regent HM explained that, despite the enactment of the Perda, no implementing regulations (Perbup) have been issued, thereby limiting its practical application (HM, Interview, May 22, 2025). According to HM, this approach reflects a broader commitment to maintaining social harmony and fostering positive relations among religious communities. The Vice Regent's active participation in events organized by different religious groups, including church gatherings, further illustrates the local government's efforts to promote inclusivity and interreligious coexistence. These practices suggest that the management of religious diversity in Manokwari relies not only on formal legal arrangements but also on political accommodation and mutual respect among community leaders.

The role of local leaders is equally important in shaping how the regulation is understood and implemented. Regent Hermus Indou's statement that "This is not a land of the Gospel; this is a religious land" (HM, Interview, May 22, 2025) reflects a more inclusive interpretation of Manokwari's identity. Rather than emphasizing the exclusivist implications of the Gospel City discourse, this perspective acknowledges the presence and legitimacy of diverse religious communities within the region. Such narratives contribute to an environment of accommodation and coexistence, helping to mitigate concerns that the regulation might otherwise generate among minority groups. Furthermore, the provisions that remain in force are relatively limited in scope, such as restrictions on trading activities during Sunday morning worship hours. Even these provisions appear to be implemented flexibly. According to IM, enforcement is often inconsistent in practice, reflecting a broader preference for pragmatic accommodation rather than strict legal application (IM, Interview, May 22, 2025).

It is important to note that perceptions of the Gospel Perda vary across minority communities. While some Muslim respondents expressed concerns

regarding the symbolic implications of the regulation, leaders from other minority groups, including Hindus and Buddhists, generally reported more positive or neutral assessments. WY, a Hindu leader, stated that he did not perceive the regulation as restricting the rights or activities of his community. Instead, he viewed some of its provisions, particularly those aimed at addressing alcohol-related social problems, as contributing to public order and community well-being (WY, Interview, May 22, 2025). His perspective suggests that the regulation is not uniformly interpreted as exclusionary, but may also be understood as serving broader social objectives.

A similar view was expressed by SR, a Buddhist leader, who emphasized that his community had experienced no significant difficulties as a result of the regulation. He described Manokwari as a city characterized by strong interreligious harmony and noted that local authorities had been responsive to the needs of different religious communities. As an example, he referred to the process through which land for a Buddhist temple, previously under government control, was made available without significant obstacles (SR, Interview, May 22, 2025). SR further observed that social tensions in Manokwari are more commonly associated with personal or inter-tribal disputes than with religious differences. These accounts suggest that the practical effects of the *Gospel Perda* are shaped by a broader social environment characterized by accommodation, coexistence, and interreligious cooperation. As a result, the regulation has not substantially altered the longstanding patterns of tolerance that characterize relations among religious communities in Manokwari.

Based on the interview findings, the implications of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018 for the civil rights of minority communities are both complex and, at times, paradoxical. At the formal and symbolic levels, the regulation may raise concerns regarding the principles of equality, religious neutrality, and equal citizenship, particularly because it publicly affirms a specific religious identity within the framework of local governance. However, the empirical evidence suggests that its practical effects have been substantially moderated by social and cultural factors operating beyond the realm of formal law. The experiences of minority communities indicate that the protection of their rights is shaped not only by legal provisions but also by a broader environment of cultural pluralism, reflected in the philosophy of *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu*, the enduring authority of customary institutions, and the accommodative practices of local leadership.

The Manokwari case demonstrates that the relationship between symbolic legislation and minority rights cannot be understood solely through a legalistic lens. Although the Gospel Perda carries symbolic implications that may generate concerns among some minority groups, its practical impact has been constrained by longstanding traditions of coexistence and interreligious accommodation. Rather than allowing formal legal provisions to define social relations, local communities have relied on informal norms, customary mechanisms, and inclusive leadership to maintain social cohesion. The findings therefore suggest that, in highly plural societies such as Manokwari, the effective protection of minority rights often depends not only on formal legal guarantees but also on the strength of social institutions and shared norms that sustain peaceful coexistence.

Formulating Religiously-Nuanced Regional Regulations for National Integration

In the context of regional autonomy, the enactment of religion-based regional regulations often creates tensions between local aspirations and the broader imperative of maintaining national integration. Manokwari Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City illustrates these challenges. Although the regulation has not generated significant social conflict, it highlights the potential risks associated with legal provisions that symbolically privilege a particular religious identity within a plural society. At the same time, the Manokwari case demonstrates how local traditions of coexistence, customary institutions, and accommodative leadership can mitigate such risks and sustain interreligious harmony. This raises an important question: how can local governments formulate regional regulations in ways that accommodate local identities while reinforcing, rather than undermining, social cohesion and national integration? This article argues that the answer lies in moving beyond symbolic legislation toward more inclusive and substantively oriented legal frameworks that incorporate local values, protect equal citizenship, and promote accommodation among diverse communities.

A useful framework for understanding the formulation of religion-related regional regulations is provided by the theory of legal pluralism. John Griffiths defines legal pluralism as the coexistence of multiple normative and legal orders within a single social field.¹⁹ In the Indonesian context, this pluralistic legal landscape is reflected in the interaction among state law, customary law (*adat*), and religious norms. As noted by Hariri and Babussalam²⁰, the Indonesian constitutional framework acknowledges this plurality, particularly through its recognition of the rights of customary law communities. From the perspective of legal pluralism, the effectiveness and legitimacy of a regional regulation depend not solely on its conformity with formal state law, but also on its capacity to accommodate the normative systems that operate within society. Consequently, the formulation of regional regulations should seek to harmonize state, customary, and religious norms, recognizing that social order and conflict resolution are often shaped by the interaction of these legal and cultural frameworks rather than by formal legal provisions alone.

A second relevant framework is the distinction between symbolic and substantive legislation.²¹ Drawing on the works of Murray Edelman and Joseph R. Gusfield, symbolic legislation refers to legal enactments whose significance lies primarily in their expressive function, namely the affirmation of collective identities, values, or political commitments, rather than in their practical implementation. Such legislation derives much of its importance from the messages it conveys to society and the symbolic recognition it provides to particular groups. By contrast, substantive legislation is primarily oriented toward addressing concrete social problems through enforceable legal provisions and measurable policy outcomes.

Viewed through this lens, the Manokwari case illustrates the tensions that may arise when symbolic objectives become intertwined with legal regulation. The provisions contained in the 2006 draft sought to institutionalize a

¹⁹ John Griffiths, "What is Legal Pluralism," *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 1, no. 24 (1986): 1–55,

<https://commission-on-legal-pluralism.com/system/commission-on-legal-pluralism/volumes/24/griffiths-art.pdf>.

²⁰ Achmad Hariri and Basuki Babussalam, "Legal Pluralism: Concept, Theoretical Dialectics, and Its Existence in Indonesia," *Walisono Law Review* 6, no. 2 (October 31, 2024): 146–70, <https://doi.org/10.21580/walrev.2024.6.2.25566>.

²¹ Moch Cholid Wardi, "Legislasi Hukum Islam: Telaah Terhadap Konsep Taqin Dalam Ranah Substantivistik Dan Formalistik," *Nuansa: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial Dan Keagamaan Islam* 15, no. 2 (December 18, 2018): 427–38, <https://doi.org/10.19105/nuansa.v15i2.2065>; Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*; Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*.

particular religious identity through legal mechanisms, raising concerns about their implications for equality and religious freedom. Although these provisions were ultimately removed from the enacted regulation, the case demonstrates the importance of ensuring that regional legislation remains responsive to the practical needs of diverse communities. From this perspective, regional regulations are likely to achieve greater legitimacy and social acceptance when they prioritize substantive public interests while accommodating the cultural and historical values that exist within society.

A third analytical perspective concerns the relationship between regional autonomy and national integration. The literature on decentralization suggests that regional autonomy can generate both integrative and disintegrative outcomes, depending on how local authority is exercised.²² On the one hand, decentralization provides opportunities for local governments to accommodate regional identities, address historical grievances, and strengthen public participation. On the other hand, it may also create tensions when local policies privilege particular identities or interests in ways that undermine social inclusion and equal citizenship. The challenge, therefore, lies in ensuring that local autonomy operates within a broader constitutional framework that safeguards national cohesion, democratic principles, and fundamental rights. From this perspective, the legitimacy of regional regulations depends not only on their responsiveness to local aspirations but also on their consistency with constitutional guarantees, human rights norms, and the broader objectives of national integration.

A fourth relevant perspective is the theory of accommodative leadership. In the context of conflict management, accommodative leadership refers to a style of governance that prioritizes dialogue, compromise, and the accommodation of competing interests in order to maintain social harmony and prevent polarization.²³ Such leadership is particularly important in plural societies, where the implementation of public policies often requires balancing diverse social, cultural, and religious aspirations. The Manokwari case illustrates the significance of this approach. Interview findings suggest that local government leaders responded to concerns surrounding the Gospel Perda through policies and practices aimed at preserving interreligious coexistence and social stability. These findings indicate that the effectiveness of regional regulations depends

²² Irham Bashori Hasba, "Demokrasi Dan Integrasi NKRI Dalam Sistem Otonomi Daerah," *IN RIGHT: Jurnal Agama Dan Hak Azazi Manusia* 6, no. 2 (2017): 125–36.

²³ Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann, *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument* (Mountain View, CA: CPP, Inc., 1974).

not only on their legal content but also on the capacity of political leaders to manage diversity and foster inclusive governance.

The Manokwari experience also demonstrates the challenges involved in formulating religion-related regulations within a multicultural society. The initial draft of the Gospel Perda provides an important example. According to SP, the draft emerged amid concerns among some religious leaders, including several figures from outside Papua, that the Christian identity of Manokwari was being challenged by the growing economic influence of the Muslim community (SP, Interview, May 21, 2025). Reflecting these concerns, the draft contained provisions that would have prohibited the wearing of the hijab in public spaces and imposed restrictions on certain religious activities of minority groups. Although these provisions were ultimately excluded from the enacted regulation, their inclusion in the original draft highlights the risks associated with translating identity-based anxieties into legal norms. Had such provisions been adopted, they would likely have generated significant tensions regarding equality, religious freedom, and national integration.

Particularly noteworthy is the manner in which the regulation evolved through the legislative process. Interview findings suggest that, following public debate and consultation, local policymakers reformulated the draft by removing several provisions that had raised concerns regarding equality and religious freedom (HM, Interview, May 22, 2025). This revision significantly altered the character of the regulation. While the enacted Perda continues to carry symbolic significance in affirming Manokwari's Christian historical identity, it no longer contains the most restrictive provisions that had appeared in earlier drafts. As a result, the regulation's practical implications for minority rights became substantially more limited. This outcome was further reinforced by the absence of implementing Regent Regulations (**Peraturan Bupati** or **Perbup**), which, according to interview data, has constrained the operational reach of the Perda and reduced the likelihood of interreligious tensions (MS, Interview, May 23, 2025).

At the same time, the Manokwari case demonstrates the continuing importance of local cultural institutions in maintaining social cohesion. Informants consistently highlighted the influence of the **Satu Tungku Tiga Batu** philosophy and the authority of tribal chiefs in mediating disputes and fostering intercommunal relations (MS, Interview, May 23, 2025). These social mechanisms operate alongside formal legal institutions and play a significant role in shaping everyday experiences of coexistence. Their presence suggests that

the resilience of interreligious harmony in Manokwari derives not only from legal arrangements but also from deeply embedded cultural norms and practices that encourage mutual respect, accommodation, and collective responsibility.

Based on the foregoing analysis, the formulation of religion-related regional regulations should be guided by several interrelated principles that contribute to social cohesion and national integration. The first is the principle of substantive inclusivity. Rather than serving primarily as symbolic affirmations of a particular religious identity, regional regulations are more likely to gain legitimacy when they address concrete public concerns and provide benefits that are accessible to all communities. From this perspective, regulatory frameworks that emphasize religious harmony, interfaith cooperation, or the protection of shared cultural values may offer a more inclusive approach than those centered on a single religious identity. Such an orientation signals recognition of the diversity that characterizes Indonesian society while fostering a sense of common purpose among different groups.

A second principle concerns non-discrimination and the protection of fundamental rights. As constitutional and human rights norms constitute the foundation of democratic governance, religion-related regulations should avoid provisions that directly or indirectly restrict the civil liberties of particular communities. The findings from Manokwari suggest that perceptions of fairness and inclusion are closely linked to the extent to which local governments are seen as treating all religious groups equitably. Consequently, the legitimacy of regional regulations depends not only on their legal validity but also on their capacity to protect equal citizenship and accommodate religious diversity within a shared constitutional framework.

The third principle is the integration of customary institutions and local wisdom. The Manokwari case demonstrates that social cohesion is sustained not only through formal legal mechanisms but also through deeply rooted cultural norms and customary practices. Rather than viewing customary institutions as separate from the formal legal order, regional regulations may derive greater legitimacy and effectiveness when they acknowledge and incorporate locally respected mechanisms of conflict resolution and social governance. In this regard, traditions such as *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu* illustrate how local values can serve as important resources for fostering coexistence and managing diversity.

More broadly, the findings indicate that the success of religion-related regulations depends on their ability to balance local identity, constitutional principles, and social inclusion. The Manokwari experience suggests that

regulatory approaches grounded primarily in symbolic identity claims may generate tensions within plural societies, whereas approaches that emphasize inclusivity, equal citizenship, and respect for local traditions are more likely to strengthen social cohesion. Effective regulations therefore require not only sound legal design but also supportive social institutions and leadership practices capable of managing diversity in constructive ways.

Ultimately, the relationship between regional regulations and national integration should not be understood solely in legal terms. In multicultural autonomous regions such as Manokwari, social cohesion is sustained through the interaction of formal institutions, customary norms, interreligious accommodation, and inclusive leadership. Regional regulations can contribute positively to this process when they function as instruments that reinforce these existing foundations rather than privileging particular identities at the expense of others.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implications of Manokwari Regency Regulation No. 3 of 2018 concerning the Arrangement of Manokwari as a Gospel City are both complex and paradoxical. At the symbolic level, the regulation generates concerns among minority communities because it formally privileges a particular religious identity within a plural society. For many respondents, especially among the Muslim minority, the regulation carries symbolic implications related to equality, recognition, and belonging. However, at the practical level, its impact remains limited due to the removal of the most restrictive provisions during the legislative process and the absence of implementing regulations. Consequently, the regulation functions primarily as symbolic legislation rather than as an effective instrument of social regulation.

The findings further reveal that the relationship between symbolic legislation and minority rights cannot be understood solely through a legalistic perspective. Despite the symbolic concerns associated with the regulation, the civil rights of minority communities in Manokwari remain largely protected through social mechanisms operating beyond formal law. The philosophy of *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu*, the enduring authority of customary institutions, and accommodative local leadership have collectively moderated the potential exclusionary effects of the regulation. The Manokwari case therefore illustrates

the continuing relevance of legal pluralism, demonstrating how customary norms and local cultural values can play a decisive role in sustaining interreligious coexistence and social cohesion.

Finally, the study suggests that religion-related regional regulations are more likely to strengthen national integration when they emphasize substantive public interests rather than symbolic identity claims. Such regulations should be grounded in the principles of inclusivity, non-discrimination, respect for constitutional rights, and the recognition of local customary institutions. The experience of Manokwari indicates that social cohesion in multicultural regions is best sustained not through the legal affirmation of a single identity, but through regulatory frameworks that accommodate diversity, protect equal citizenship, and reinforce existing traditions of coexistence.

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