

## Harmonising Worship and Noise: Community Responses to Loudspeaker Regulations in Bali and Manado

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**Abstract:** In multicultural societies, the regulation of worship loudspeakers, particularly those affecting the Muslim community, has sparked significant debate, ranging from strong support to outright rejection. This study seeks to explore the social tensions arising from these regulations, focusing on the culturally diverse regions of Bali and Manado. Employing a qualitative approach, interviews were conducted with religious leaders, community figures, and local government officials to gain insight into the community's reactions. The findings reveal two predominant responses. On one hand, some view the regulations as unnecessary, believing that the established tradition of tolerance has allowed diverse religious practices to coexist peacefully without significant issues related to loudspeakers. On the other hand, others feel that the loudspeaker use is excessive, disturbing their rest and seeking quieter times. Some members of the Muslim community perceive the regulation as discriminatory, noting that other religious groups might also use loudspeakers at higher volumes. This study offers valuable insights for policymakers on how regulatory interventions can influence social harmony in diverse environments, highlighting the importance of adjusting regulations to respect religious diversity and equitably manage public auditory spaces.

**Keywords:** Community reactions; loudspeaker regulation; multicultural society; places of worship; social harmony.

**Abstrak:** Dalam masyarakat multikultural, peraturan tentang pengeras suara untuk ibadah, khususnya yang mempengaruhi komunitas Muslim, telah memicu perdebatan yang signifikan, mulai dari dukungan yang kuat hingga penolakan. Penelitian ini berusaha untuk mengeksplorasi ketegangan sosial yang timbul dari peraturan tersebut, dengan fokus pada wilayah Bali dan Manado yang memiliki keragaman budaya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, wawancara dilakukan dengan para pemuka agama, tokoh masyarakat, dan pejabat pemerintah daerah untuk mendapatkan wawasan tentang reaksi masyarakat. Temuan-temuan yang ada menunjukkan adanya dua tanggapan yang dominan. Di satu sisi, beberapa orang memandang peraturan tersebut tidak perlu, karena mereka percaya bahwa tradisi toleransi yang sudah mapan telah memungkinkan beragam praktik keagamaan untuk hidup berdampingan secara damai tanpa masalah yang signifikan terkait pengeras suara. Di sisi lain, yang lain merasa bahwa penggunaan pengeras suara berlebihan, mengganggu waktu istirahat mereka dan mencari waktu yang lebih tenang. Beberapa anggota komunitas Muslim menganggap peraturan tersebut diskriminatif, mengingat bahwa kelompok agama lain mungkin juga menggunakan pengeras suara dengan volume yang lebih tinggi. Studi ini menawarkan wawasan yang berharga bagi para pembuat kebijakan tentang bagaimana intervensi peraturan dapat memengaruhi keharmonisan sosial di lingkungan yang beragam, dengan menyoroti pentingnya menyesuaikan peraturan untuk menghormati keragaman agama dan mengelola ruang publik secara adil.

**Kata Kunci:** Reaksi masyarakat; regulasi pengeras suara; masyarakat multikultural; tempat ibadah; kerukunan sosial.

## 1. Introduction

Recently, the Muslim community was shocked by a new circular issued by the Minister of Religious Affairs (SE No. 5 of 2022) regarding loudspeakers. This circular came out to regulate houses of worship in performing shiar, among others; 1) Inner and outer loudspeaker mounting function; 2) Volume of speaker usage; 3) Sound quality in performing shiar; 4) Time of use of loudspeakers (e.g., Solawat before Azan Subuh). Several problems arose, so the circular was formed. *First*, the loudspeakers of houses of worship disturb people with different beliefs. In 2016 involved the Chinese race community (Meliana) who filed a protest against the call to prayer in Masjid Al Maksum (Monza & Chairunnisa, 2018). *Second*, the loudspeakers of houses of worship disturb the community itself during the season. The case that occurred was a protest from the Muslim community in Aceh (Sayyed Hasan) against 10 mosques surrounding the area of his house, which was considered too noisy (Mubarok, 2022; Putri & Chairunnisa, 2018). *Third*, the problem of loudspeakers during Ramadan. This case involves a famous artist in Indonesia (Zaskia Mecca) who commented on the way the people wake up the suhoor. In 2021, this artist judged the way that society did was unethical and did not respect others who did not fast (Hello Celebrities, 2021). *Fourth*, loudspeakers in the house of worship create problems of interfaith disputes. In 2015 in Papua, more precisely in Tolikara, a community group proposed a process and even tried to stop Muslim Eid al-Fitr worship activities. The action carried out is a form of community group process related to loudspeakers, and has been reminded not to hold these religious activities (Mubarok, 2022). These conflicts often stem from non-compliance with community norms, prompting governmental regulation efforts to address these issues. Recent disputes in Indonesia highlight concerns over noise pollution and the disruption of communal peace caused by loudspeaker use in mosques and churches, originally intended for disseminating religious information and announcements

The regulation of loudspeakers in houses of worship has become a focal point of social discourse in Bali and Manado, regions renowned for their cultural and religious diversity. In Bali, where Hinduism predominates, the regulations have sparked debates among religious leaders who are deeply concerned about their potential impact on traditional religious practices intertwined with daily communal life (Saihu, 2020). While some Hindu leaders acknowledge the need for noise control measures to maintain urban tranquility and respect for other faiths, there is also apprehension that overly stringent regulations could curtail essential religious rituals, such as temple ceremonies and religious processions, which are integral to Balinese identity and spiritual life (Shore, 2023). In contrast, in predominantly Christian Manado, community leaders view the regulations as a proactive step towards enhancing social cohesion and minimizing interfaith tensions, particularly in urban areas where religious diversity is pronounced. They emphasize the importance of mutual respect and understanding among different religious communities, advocating for regulations that balance noise reduction objectives with the preservation of religious freedoms (Larson, 2019). Despite differing perspectives between Bali and Manado, there is a shared recognition among leaders in both regions of the necessity for inclusive dialogue and balanced policy implementation. This discourse underscores the complexity of managing religious freedoms in multicultural societies and highlights the ongoing efforts to navigate these challenges while promoting harmony and respect among diverse religious groups.

Extensive research has been conducted on the use of loudspeakers in places of worship, focusing on various aspects from regulatory compliance to community impacts. For instance, Amalia (2023) explores the implementation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs' circular on loudspeakers in mosques and prayer rooms, analyzing it from the perspective of *maslahah mursalah* in Bukit Intan. Similarly, Abdillah & Raus (2021) investigate the application of national guidelines on loudspeakers in Medan's religious buildings, considering the pluralistic context and Islamic administrative law. Studies like Lumah & Sulistyawati (2022) provide a critical discourse analysis of the Minister of Religion's statements regarding mosque loudspeaker rules. Egyegini et al. (2023) and Asselineau (2019) discuss the broader societal and acoustic implications of loudspeakers in religious and public spaces, while

Hakim (2023) examines the fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) perspective on controversies surrounding sound system regulations in places of worship.

Despite these valuable insights, previous research has largely centered on technical management and policy analysis. For example, Riyanto & Munaji (2018) highlighted issues with the mosque management system related to loudspeaker buzz, focusing strictly on the technical adjustments without considering the multicultural community dynamics. Lumah & Sulistyawati's (Lumah & Sulistyawati, 2022) work, while critical, primarily dissected governmental discourse without assessing the impact on diverse religious communities.

This study aims to evaluate the impact of the new regulation on the use of loudspeakers on social harmony in multicultural societies, particularly in Bali and Manado, by understanding the views of religious leaders, community leaders, and local authorities regarding the effectiveness and fairness of these regulations, as well as assessing the perceptions of community members from various religious backgrounds regarding the implementation and results of these regulations. The study also aims to identify the potential benefits and drawbacks of these regulations to the daily lives of residents and evaluate how they help reduce or prevent conflicts related to the use of loudspeakers in houses of worship. This is very important, because every neighboring religious community must recognize that there are many differences that pervade almost all of life. Therefore, maintaining harmony is not enough just to understand that the diversity around us is factual and realistic, but must work on how to make that difference a potential to create harmony and peace (Sumbula, 2013). In addition, there is a need for efforts to anticipate the birth of religious conflicts caused by things related to the use of loudspeakers, one of which is by looking at the understanding side of the community that runs it.

This research is the result of qualitative field findings (Creswell, 2014; Moleong, 2016) with an empirical approach (Ibrahim, 2007). The main data was collected through interviews with 30 informants consisting of religious leaders, community leaders, and local authorities in Bali and Manado. This interview is designed to explore their views on the effectiveness and fairness of the new regulations on the use of loudspeakers in houses of worship. In addition, the findings were also obtained from field observations conducted by researchers for three months, from January to March 2024, focusing on two multicultural regions, namely Manado and Bali. This observation aims to observe firsthand the implementation of the regulation and the response of the local community to it. The collected data is then analyzed through the stages of data reduction to simplify and filter relevant information, the presentation of data to organize information systematically, and the drawing of conclusions to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of the regulation on social harmony and tolerance between religious communities (Miles & Huberman, 2017).

There is a theoretical analysis carried out by researchers. These theories are used to understand the impact of regulation of the use of loudspeakers in houses of worship on social harmony in multicultural societies, in line with theories that highlight the importance of harmony between religious freedom and broader social needs for peace and order. *First*, circular Letter Number 5 of 2022 issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs aims to regulate and supervise the use of loudspeakers in houses of worship across Indonesia. This regulatory framework sets guidelines for the installation and operation of loudspeakers inside and outside these premises, specifying parameters such as volume levels, timing of use, and sound quality during religious activities like solawat before azan subuh (Usti, Gusnawaty, Hasyim, & Maknun, 2023). The intention behind these regulations is to harmonize religious practices with legal norms while ensuring minimal disturbance to surrounding communities (Amalia, 2023). The circular reflects an effort to balance religious freedoms with the broader societal need for peace and order, thereby mitigating potential conflicts arising from noise pollution and inconvenience caused by loudspeaker usage (Lumah & Sulistyawati, 2022).

*Second*, religious harmony embodies the principle of fostering peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among individuals of diverse religious backgrounds. In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, where different religions and beliefs converge, the promotion of religious harmony becomes crucial (Zuo'an, 2013). The concept encourages open dialogue, respect for religious freedom, and deep religious education as essential components in building social cohesion and justice Muhsin et al. (2022).

Religious leaders play a pivotal role in promoting these values and guiding their communities towards peaceful cohabitation, thereby contributing to societal stability amidst diversity (Tan, Mahadir Naidu, & Jamil Osman, 2018)

*Third*, social conflicts often stem from differences in social identities such as ethnicity, religion, or cultural background (Verkuyten, 2018) Weber's perspective on conflict highlights how religious ideas can legitimize dominant social positions, potentially leading to tensions within society (Wood, 2017). Conversely, social conflict can strengthen solidarity among groups facing discrimination or threats, reinforcing their collective identity and resolve (Harahap, Nofianti, & Agustia, 2023). Understanding these dynamics is crucial in managing conflicts related to the implementation of loudspeaker regulations, as it involves navigating diverse social identities and interests (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). By recognizing and addressing the underlying social identities involved, policymakers can strive towards inclusive regulatory frameworks that promote harmony and peace in society (Bukido, 2023).

## 2. Results

### *Problems of house of worship loudspeakers in community social activities*

The degree of involvement in religious practice can vary greatly among individuals in society. Some people are very diligent in carrying out their religious rituals, participating in worship regularly, and deepening them with deep thoughts and feelings (Canda, Furman, & Canda, 2019) Meanwhile, others have lower levels of engagement, only celebrate religious celebrations sporadically or have looser beliefs (Mazurek, 2021). These differences reflect the complexity in how people perceive and live their religions, as well as the extent to which religion becomes an integral part of their daily lives. In this diversity, religion remains one of the very important aspects in shaping the identity and culture of society.

Religion, when understood in a cultural perspective, becomes a sacred symbol that reflects its existence in people's lives as well as how these religious symbols serve as guidelines in dealing with everyday reality. For example in Islam, *azan* is considered a sacred call that invites Muslims to fulfill their religious obligations in accordance with God's guidance (Murtdlo, 2014) *Azan* is not only a call to worship, but also a moral guide that guides the actions and behavior of Muslims in various aspects of their lives, including the performance of prayers at appointed times and the practice of religious teachings in every daily activity. Kalia (2023) said religious symbols become integral in shaping the cultural identity of individuals and communities, as well as being ethical guidelines that guide their daily actions.

The important role of *azan* in Islamic worship in Indonesia, where *azan* is considered a sacred call that invites Muslims to perform congregational prayers. The importance of loudspeakers in the performance of *azan* and other religious activities reflects how technology has supported the dissemination of religious messages and facilitated widespread community involvement in religious practice. More than just an aspect of worship, the use of loudspeakers in these activities has become part of Indonesia's rich cultural identity, demonstrating the complex relationship between religion, technology, and culture in a pluralist society.

Loudspeakers have simplified the role of muezzins or *azan* guides in delivering religious appeals, making them more efficient and effective in reminding Muslims of prayer times. In addition, the *azan* phenomenon sung loudly and supported by loudspeakers has become an inseparable part of Indonesian culture, reflecting cultural diversity and religious tolerance in the country (Hindu religious figures 3, Bali, July 16, 2022). The use of loudspeakers is also not only limited to the call to prayer, but also involves various other worship activities, which makes it an important tool in spreading religious messages and facilitating wider community participation in worship.

Problems related to the call to prayer in a society of diverse beliefs raises several important aspects in social and religious dynamics. First, it highlights the importance of freedom of religion and religious practice in a society based on the principles of freedom of opinion and belief (Hindu religious figure 1, Bali, May 14, 2022). But on the other hand, it also reflects the importance of respecting the rights of

individuals who may feel disturbed by certain religious practices, such as the sound of the call to prayer at unusual times (Christian religious figure 1, Manado, July 21, 2022).

The views expressed by some non-Muslim communities, especially those from Hindu and Christian backgrounds, underscore the importance of limiting the noise produced by houses of worship, such as mosques. They argue that the sound of worship should be limited to the mosque area to maintain mutual respect for the rights of individuals who may not wish to listen to religious activities irrelevant to their faith. This view emphasizes the values of tolerance and coexistence in a multicultural society, where individuals from different religious backgrounds can live together harmoniously without interfering with each other's rights. Given these sensitivities, dialogue between religious groups and communities is becoming increasingly important to achieve a fair balance between religious freedom and individual rights in diverse environments.

The noise produced by the activities of houses of worship for some migrants is a source of disruption to activity. Migrants commented a lot because the mosque's loudspeakers disrupted their breaks. The use of such loudspeakers is heard from the morning. Therefore, always the coordination of religious leaders with mosque administrators regarding loudspeakers is carried out properly. For example, Christian worship activities with loudspeakers are carried out during praises and they are generally carried out in community residences. However, Christians who install loudspeakers to chant praises to God seem very loud and irregular in time even until all day the loudspeakers are still heard and very loud. So, this seems very disturbing to other communities as well (Hindu religious figures 1, Bali, May 14, 2022).

Seeing the findings of problems in Bali, since a long time ago, azan has not been a problem from other people. Vice versa, the activities of other houses of worship such as in temples that perform worship with loudspeakers are not questioned by Muslims. Although there is a policy from the government (SE No. 05 of 2022), the policy is not enforced because it is still relatively safe, the community believes that the problem is only tourists from outside (Hindu religious figures 2, Bali, July 19, 2022).

Another case in Manado City, various religious activities carried out by various religions. It is undeniable that the activity uses loudspeakers. But seeing the attitude of mutual respect for each other and also getting used to it makes this not a problem. For them, as long as they don't gum each other, then life in Manado City will be beautiful. For example, functionally, a form of tolerance for the management of places of worship by the church is when the mosque carries out religious activities that use loudspeakers where the church never minds. The use of sound *systems* is more frequent and long and the church can understand it (Christian religious figure, Manado, August 16, 2022).

According to the Christian community, azan worship activities are very beneficial for them, especially at dawn they are required to wake up early. With the dawn call to prayer, for example, it helps them carry out various activities in the morning, lunch break until it is time to return home to rest (interview with Islamic religious leaders, Manado, August 17, 2019). Researchers saw each house of worship in Manado City using loudspeakers and the atmosphere was fine.

On the contrary, services carried out in people's homes become a source of disturbance. The results of a study of weekly worship of Christians or Hindus using loudspeakers in homes. The activities carried out are sometimes very disruptive to the rest activities of other people because they consider the worship carried out is not in a house of worship, making adjustments to the worship of other people. Loudspeakers that are often played very loudly and disturb the surrounding community such as hymns to God coupled with loud volumes and spiritual songs that are played very long (interview with Islamic religious figure, Manado, August 17, 2019).

In addition, it is often found that worship activities in homes are Christian worship. The observations and interviews of researchers are that the worship activities carried out are Christians based on columns but their main worship is in the church. And in that church, they set the time of morning, noon and night and the Christian community is free to choose to worship at that time. If at dawn the church conducts worship using loudspeakers. People are not disturbed, usually when they

do worship activities at dawn, surely, they wait for the dawn call to prayer time to finish, after that they carry out their activities using loudspeakers.

Even the call to prayer and the announcement of worship for Christians and Hindus are done simultaneously, but they give a difference in time. Often, they take turns, waiting for each other's voices in the house of worship to finish after which they take turns. There is always good communication between religious leaders, so that harmony is always maintained. The point is to strengthen communication between religions, if between religious people good communication then life will be good too.

Actually, when viewed in terms of religious freedom that has developed and integrated with the culture of the Balinese people, this has become the identity of the people in the area so that so far there have been no protests about loudspeakers from the internal community, maybe more to business actors. Even so, the community realizes that the volume of worship must be considered. This proves that both Manado City and Bali City have very well-maintained tolerance. The community considers that despite different beliefs, every community has the same rights in carrying out its worship activities. This principle is held until now.

#### *House of worship noise alarm conflict*

There have been many conflicts related to houses of worship such as the construction of houses of worship, excessive activities carried out in houses of worship and even major religious holiday activities that are not carried out in houses of worship have become conflicts in the community. Quoting from Azra's (2002) view that problems can arise and develop so as to lead to new and ongoing conflicts. Regulations on limiting the volume of house of worship loudspeakers regulated by the government give a discriminatory impression where Muslims consider that the rules regarding house of worship loudspeakers should also be regulated for all (Arifinsyah, 2019) This is evident in several findings presented, in addition to loudspeakers in mosques or prayer rooms disturbing the community, other houses of worship also interfere with community activities. Regulations made by the government are more focused on Muslims because the Muslim community has more quantity than other communities so that it becomes the center of attention.

The government, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, should look at this problem from the point of view of efficiency. That as an institution, it must be able to represent and accommodate the voices of all religiously diverse communities. The cons view this problem with perfectionism. For example, in azan activities, namely the call to carry out compulsory worship in Islam which must be done loudly in order to raise the spirit of worship. This becomes an inner upheaval when the perfect expectation of the call to prayer must immediately be limited by the instructions issued by the government. Thus, their shadow of perfectionism regarding the call to prayer was bumped with the government's pragmatism through these instructions so that such a counter reaction emerged (Indana & Rahman, 2019)

The surrounding community is used to this loudspeaker. Because local people are used to being safe, the most important thing is good communication, if communication is good, there is no problem (Hindu religious leader 1, Bali, July 16, 2022). We see that this problem lies in the ego of each individual. Although Marx said conflict tendencies are caused by groups, it cannot be denied that everyone has their own interests. Interests coupled with a high sense of selfishness can cause conflict between groups (Van Lange, Joireman, Parks, & Van Dijk, 2013) However, anything that causes conflict needs to be resolved. Activities carried out using house of worship loudspeakers cause social discomfort so changes need to be made. Regulations made by the government are made not to provide restrictions to Muslims in carrying out worship but regulate how to perform worship to avoid conflict.

The majority of multicultural societies have no problem with the reason for this regulation. A plural life is a necessity that cannot be rejected by anyone, and such conditions are a gift that must be grateful by this great nation, because in its history until now the Indonesian state is still able to protect the religious entities in it, regardless of its advantages and disadvantages (Yunus, 2014). The differences in stance, culture, interests, and so on mentioned above often occur in situations of social change (Lubis,

2017) Thus, social changes can be seen indirectly as the cause of social conflicts. Rapid social changes in society will result in changes in the value system prevailing in society. And this change in values in society will cause differences in stance in society (Fazey et al., 2020)

Change is indeed a normal and natural thing, but if it happens quickly, or even suddenly it can cause social conflicts. For example, in rural communities in Spain that experienced a sudden process of industrialization, social conflicts arose due to the rapid transformation of old values, often agrarian, into industrial values in traditional societies. Value changes, such as mutual aid value, changes in the value of employment contracts that adjust wages according to the type of work (Collantes & Pinilla, 2011; Inglehart, 2020). The values of solidarity change to individualism, while the values about the use of time tend to be less strict and turn into strict division of time in the industrial world, such as work and rest schedules (Chimenson, Tung, Panibratov, & Fang, 2022) These changes, if they occur quickly or suddenly, will inevitably shock the social processes in society, and there will even be an attempt to reject all forms of change because they are considered to disrupt the existing order of people's lives.

### 3. Discussion (Tolerance of other people's beliefs)

The interesting thing about Manado City is that houses of worship from various religions are very close to each other, some are facing each other, some are next to each other and it is undeniable that the house of worship uses loudspeakers to perform its *shiar*. This proves that tolerance in Manado City is very well maintained. The issue of house of worship loudspeakers is an internal aspect of religious freedom. This relativity is understood because religion does not always talk about personal beliefs. Religion is also present and intersects in the social sphere and is related to other institutions. On this basis, then again, the freedom of religion associated with the loudspeakers of houses of worship and others includes the freedom to express them. Because religion, not only involves personal beliefs, but also means in them is a manifestation of these beliefs (Chairman of Bimas Islam Prov. Sulut, July 24, 2022).

Looking at the social aspect between Muslims and Hindus in Bali always work together and in terms of worship each community / group does not disturb each other. So, the level of tolerance is good and even applicative. Since 1990, it has been seen how Hindus like our brother have even stayed at each other's houses (Hindu religious leaders 3, Bali, July 16, 2022). For example, in the construction of mosques carried out by mutual cooperation. In addition, in *takbiran* Muslims are escorted by the Hindu community. Thus, in matters of religion already understand each other. Bali is known as "*Basudewa kuntum bahar*" which means we come from one blood in the sense that we are the same and there is no difference if there are differences only in their respective affairs, one of which is in religion (Hindu religious figures 2, Bali, July 19, 2022). Similarly in Manado City, the term "*torang samua basudara*" has a high meaning of brotherhood because it does not look at certain religions, cultures, ethnicities and races all become one and carry out their respective activities peacefully.

The use of loudspeakers in houses of worship is an issue that often arises in many cities, including Manado City. To overcome problems related to noise due to the use of loudspeakers, the people of Manado City have adopted a wise approach by determining certain times to use loudspeakers in worship activities. This approach reflects a commitment to maintaining a balance between religious freedom and the rights of other citizens, especially those living in the vicinity of houses of worship. Manadonese people strive to maintain their religious traditions while respecting the needs and comfort of other residents in the neighborhood. This is a concrete example of how communities can work together to solve sensitive issues with an inclusive and understanding approach.

There is a long history of tolerance among communities in Indonesia, especially in the city of Bali. Real evidence comes in the form of communities such as Madurese and Bugis that were given a place and accepted by local people, especially during the reign of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms (Husain, Khusyairi, & Samidi, 2020) In addition, Muslims already feel like native Balinese because they have long settled and have declared Islam and Hinduism to be brothers even though there has never been a marriage between Muslims and Hindus.

The above statement shows a concrete example of religious tolerance and inter-community harmony that has lasted for many years. Bali's long-settled Muslim community feels part of the local community and considers Islam and Hinduism to be "brothers," although marriages between Muslims and Hindus are not common. This means that the spirit of tolerance and harmony between religions has been present in the area for a long time. This is in line with Zuo'an's (2013) opinion that religious differences do not hinder harmonious relations between communities. This history reminds us of the importance of understanding and friendship amid religious diversity, and how intercultural dialogue can enrich social harmony and multiculturalism.

The religious dimension often focuses on external and practical aspects of religious activity that can be clearly observed, such as rituals, ceremonies, or congregational activities in places of worship centered on specific religious beliefs. On the other hand, the spiritual dimension includes the deeper inner experiences of the individual, which are related to the search for meaning, reflection, and tranquility in relation to transcendent aspects or believed supernatural powers. Problems arise when people have different understandings of these two dimensions. Some may place more emphasis on the religious aspect by seeing worship as a collection of external actions, while others are more likely to seek deep spiritual experience and personal meaning in their religious practice. It is important to remember that both religious and spiritual dimensions have value and relevance in a person's life, and these views can vary between individuals (Nursyahida & Wardana, 2020). Evident in the belief of Balinese people by knowing *empines* that we talk about how we know what does not exist (empty) so that there is a balance between the two. Most people have not yet reached that point (Hindu religious figures 3, Bali, July 16, 2022).

Religion as a central element in human experience includes devotion to the divine entity or power that is considered to be the creator and origin of all things. Religion plays an important role in adding and maintaining values and providing direction in people's lives through diverse symbolic expressions and rituals (Aghazadeh & Mahmoudoghli, 2017). It also reflects how religion can serve as a means to restore human connection with supernatural powers considered beyond human reach, as well as a source of hope and belief on which human beliefs are based. These findings highlight the complexity of religion's role in human life, which includes deep spiritual, moral, and social aspects across different cultures and beliefs.

#### 4. Conclusion

The regulation of loudspeakers in houses of worship, particularly focused on the Muslim community, has sparked debates regarding its potential discriminatory impact on minority groups. Critics argue that such regulations may unfairly restrict religious practices and discomfort minority communities. However, proponents contend that these regulations are essential for maintaining peace and order by setting guidelines on the timing, volume, and sound quality of religious broadcasts, such as calls to prayer and religious sermons. Research should prioritize conducting impact assessments to gauge how these regulations affect minority communities, ensuring they do not disproportionately burden specific groups or violate their rights to religious freedom. Additionally, a thorough legal analysis is needed to assess the regulations' compliance with constitutional protections and international human rights standards. Facilitating community dialogue and engagement among religious groups, local authorities, and policymakers is crucial to fostering understanding and collaboration in developing guidelines that respect religious diversity while promoting community harmony. Exploring technological innovations and architectural solutions to minimize noise pollution from loudspeakers without compromising their religious efficacy is also essential. Longitudinal studies tracking social cohesion indicators before and after regulation implementation would provide empirical insights into their impact on community relations, guiding evidence-based policy recommendations to improve regulation effectiveness and fairness while upholding religious freedoms in multicultural societies.

This study contributes significantly to the ongoing dialogue on religious freedoms and regulation within multicultural contexts. By examining the perceptions of diverse communities in Bali and



Manado, it highlights the nuanced ways in which different groups interpret and respond to the regulations. This research enriches our understanding of the interplay between law, religion, and minority rights, providing stakeholders with nuanced insights to consider in policy formulation. It underscores the necessity of incorporating a wide array of religious and cultural perspectives in the legislative process to ensure that regulations are both equitable and sensitive to the complexities of religious practice in diverse societies.

The study's focus on only two regions may not capture the full spectrum of responses across Indonesia or in other countries with similar multicultural settings, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the qualitative approach, while in-depth, relies heavily on the subjective interpretations of interviewed participants, which could introduce bias or overlook other significant factors. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating a larger, more diverse sample and employing mixed methods to combine qualitative depth with quantitative breadth. Further studies could also explore the long-term effects of such regulations beyond the immediate reactions of the communities involved.

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