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ARTICLE

When Tolerance Is Counted: The 90/60 Rule and the Governance of Houses of Worship in Indonesia

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Abstract

The regulation of houses of worship under the Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs (PBM) No. 9 and 8 of 2006 continues to generate problems because the 90/60 requirement is applied uniformly across communities with diverse religious compositions and social relations. This study aims to examine the socio-epistemological foundations of the 90/60 rule and the institutional power of the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) in governing the establishment of houses of worship and religious practices in Indonesia. The study employs a qualitative-interpretive design through systematic document analysis of PBM Nos. 9 and 8 of 2006, historical documents concerning its formulation, evaluation reports, and empirical studies on conflicts over houses of worship and the role of the FKUB. The findings show that the 90/60 requirement emerged from political and institutional compromise without adequate scientific or demographic justification and was subsequently institutionalized as a uniform administrative standard. Its implementation may overlook local diversity, widen social distance, and strengthen the influence of majority groups over minority access to houses of worship. The study also finds that the FKUB occupies a strategic position in mediating these relations. The implication of this study is the need for a more contextual, rights-based, and socially responsive governance of houses of worship, alongside the repositioning of the FKUB as a deliberative forum that actively safeguards freedom and comfort in worship.
Keywords: Houses of Worship; 90/60 Rule; FKUB; Religious Tolerance; Multiculturalism

Pengaturan pendirian rumah ibadah melalui Peraturan Bersama Menteri Agama dan Menteri Dalam Negeri (PBM) No. 9 dan 8 Tahun 2006 masih menimbulkan persoalan karena persyaratan 90/60 diterapkan secara seragam dalam masyarakat dengan komposisi keagamaan dan relasi sosial yang beragam. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis dasar sosio-epistemologis pembentukan aturan 90/60 serta kekuasaan institusional Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) dalam pengelolaan pendirian rumah ibadah dan praktik keagamaan di Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan desain kualitatif-interpretatif melalui analisis dokumen sistematis terhadap PBM No. 9 dan 8 Tahun 2006, dokumen historis pembentukannya, laporan evaluasi, serta studi empiris mengenai konflik rumah ibadah dan peran FKUB. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ketentuan 90/60 lahir dari kompromi politik dan institusional tanpa dukungan kajian ilmiah atau demografis yang memadai, kemudian terlembagakan sebagai standar administratif yang seragam. Penerapannya berpotensi mengabaikan keragaman konteks lokal, memperlebar jarak sosial, dan memperkuat pengaruh kelompok mayoritas terhadap akses kelompok minoritas pada rumah ibadah. Penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa FKUB menempati posisi strategis dalam memediasi relasi tersebut. Implikasi penelitian ini adalah perlunya tata kelola rumah ibadah yang lebih kontekstual, berbasis hak, dan responsif terhadap keragaman sosial, serta reposisi FKUB sebagai forum deliberatif yang aktif menjamin kebebasan dan kenyamanan beribadah.

A. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of religious forms are always intertwined with rationalization and cultural processes. Habermas (2008) exemplifies religion as an integral part of the development of public reason, while Geertz (1976) demonstrates how religion emerges from the cultural life of Javanese society through religious streams such as *abangan, santri,* and *priyayi*, which shape common sense, social life, negotiations, and justifications (Geertz 1976, 1983). In a sociological context, religion shapes collective consciousness and strongly influences systems of values and norms within society (Durkheim 1995). In Indonesia, this relationship is institutionalized through Pancasila, Articles 28E and 29 of the 1945 Constitution, Article 22 of Law No. 39 of 1999, and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which position religion within law, public life, human rights, and democratization (Marshall 2018; Hari 2020). Houses of worship therefore constitute an important manifestation of religious life because they are social spaces culturally shaped by society while alsocontributing to shaping of society itself (Davis 1994; Mangunwijaya, Pr 1999; Sumaktoyo 2025; Wahab et al. 2024).

The problem emerges when religious practice and the establishment of houses of worship are governed through institutional and legal arrangements that may reproduce conflict, inequality, and contested power relations. Religious practice in Indonesia continues to face territorial conflicts, intolerant groups operating through institutions or legal frameworks, political restrictions, and weaknesses in maintaining interfaith harmony (Regus 2020), while Setara Institute recorded 50 disruptions of houses of worship and 178 incidents involving 333 violations of religious freedom in 2022 (Wardah 2023). These tensions are closely connected to the Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religious

Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs (PBM) Nos. 9 and 8 of 2006, particularly the requirement of at least ninety prospective users and support from sixty local residents for establishing a house of worship. The 90/60 regulation was not based on demographic data or scientific analysis but emerged from political compromise among religious leaders and accommodation of previous regional regulations (Khoeron and Rusydi Sani 2026; Azhari 2014). Its implementation has generated multiple interpretations, discrimination, and persecution, while the FKUB has acquired a central role in determining whether houses of worship can be established and has itself been criticized as politicized, ceremonial, and vulnerable to majority dominance (Hutabarat 2017; Suntoro et al. 2020; Wardah 2023).

Previous studies have largely examined religious harmony through pluralism, tolerance, interreligious dialogue, peaceful transformation, institutional mediation, and community administration (Robita and Anwar 2025; Muchtar et al. 2024; Jondar et al. 2022; Singgih 2023; Ismardi 2011; Ibrahim et al. 2023). Other scholarship has focused on the epistemological construction of religious moderation among Islamic organizations and political institutions, showing how religious moderation operates as a system of knowledge and political ethics constructed by religious actors and institutions and subsequently supported by the state (Syarif 2024; Qorib and Umiarso 2024). Within this process, Islamic theological concepts, religious organizations, and political interests have shaped the relationship between religion and the state, particularly through the historical and political position of organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah (Zaini 2018; Menchik 2016; Kuntowijoyo 2018). These studies demonstrate that religious moderation and interreligious harmony cannot be separated from institutional authority, political interests, and the production of religious knowledge.

Studies of tolerance have further examined ethical and epistemological foundations for inclusive interfaith dialogue, emphasizing pluralism, inclusivism, and interreligious ethics as foundations for cross-faith understanding (Hoops 2025; Sirry et al. 2024; Puspawati and Ida Arjana 2025; Taylor et al. 1994). Yet tolerance remains situated between power and morality because it can function either as an instrument of domination or as an emancipatory principle (Forst 2013), raising questions about who has the authority to determine its boundaries and define the language of religious harmony. Research on religious moderation and legal pluralism similarly demonstrates an asymmetric relationship between normative acceptance of tolerance and active participation in plural legal systems, including among religious leaders and organizations such as FKUB (Yazwardi, Sandy Wijaya, and Erniwati 2025). Existing approaches therefore tend to emphasize normative pluralism, tolerance, dialogue, or institutional mediation, while giving less attention to the epistemological production of legal norms and the ways institutional power structures religious practices and the establishment of houses of worship. Multiculturalism provides an alternative perspective for examining these complex relations because it connects religious diversity with democracy, human rights, social welfare, power relations, and identity awareness (Hoon 2017; Pangalila and Rumbay 2024).

Existing research has not sufficiently examined the epistemological origins of legal norms governing houses of worship together with the power exercised by institutional state actors in implementing them. This study therefore analyzes the socio-epistemological formulation of the 90/60 regulation in PBM 2006 and the FKUB's institutional power over the construction of houses of worship and religious practices in Indonesia. This inquiry matters because the implementation of PBM 2006 continues to produce contested interpretations, power asymmetries, and tensions between formal religious harmony and freedom of worship. The analysis

synthesizes Tan Malakas mystical logic, Karl Mannheims sociology of knowledge, Jürgen Habermas's concept of public reason, and a multicultural perspective to interpret how legal reasoning and institutional authority are produced. Sociologically, the study seeks to reposition the 90/60 rule as a way of understanding the socially negotiated boundaries of tolerance and to redefine the role of the FKUB from maintaining passive harmony toward actively safeguarding freedom of worship for all religious citizens.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research design using systematic document analysis. The primary data include PBM Nos. 9 and 8 of 2006, particularly Articles 9-15, historical documents on the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs' formulation of the PBM, and regulations on civil society organizations. Secondary data include evaluation reports on the implementation of religious practices and empirical studies published within the past five years on conflicts involving houses of worship and the role of the FKUB. The documents were selected purposively according to their relevance to: (1) regulations governing the licensing of houses of worship; (2) FKUB decision-making processes; and (3) the empirical consequences of the 90/60 rule.

Data were analysed through systematic document analysis. The analysis began by reading and organizing the selected regulations, historical documents, evaluation reports, and empirical studies to reconstruct the historical and institutional context of the establishment of houses of worship and the development of the FKUB in Indonesia. The documents were then examined to identify recurring conceptual patterns concerning the formulation of the 90/60 rule, institutional decision-making, majority-group interests, religious tolerance, and restrictions on worship. These patterns were compared across the selected documents,

abstracted into analytical categories, and interpreted to establish relationships between regulatory formation, institutional authority, and their consequences for religious practices.

The theoretical framework was applied after these analytical patterns had been identified. Tan Malaka's concept of mystical logic is used to interpret the epistemological foundations underlying the formulation of the 90/60 rule. Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, particularly *Seinsgebundenheit* and ideology, is employed to examine how social positions and group interests shape institutional knowledge and decision-making. Habermas's concepts of public reason and the institutional translation proviso are used to interpret the relationship between religious claims and secular institutional processes, particularly in the operation of the FKUB. Finally, multiculturalism provides a conceptual perspective for interpreting religious diversity, power relations, and institutional arrangements and for developing a framework oriented toward safeguarding houses of worship and freedom of worship across religious communities.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Epistemic Origin of Legal Norms and the Problem of Mystification

Formulating legal norms requires not only political legitimacy but also a defensible relationship between regulatory decisions, empirical conditions, and their intended social consequences. In this sense, the problem surrounding the 90/60 requirement in PBM Nos. 9 and 8 of 2006 concerns the epistemic basis through which a negotiated administrative threshold became institutionalized as a uniform regulatory standard. Tan Malaka's critique of mystical reasoning is useful here not to suggest that the regulation was formulated through supernatural beliefs, but to question forms of reasoning in which conclusions become detached from sufficiently tested empirical realities (Tan Malaka 1951). From this

perspective, mystification refers to the process by which a socially and politically produced rule acquires the appearance of an unquestioned and self-evident standard.

The formulation of Article 14(2), particularly the requirements of 90 prospective users and support from 60 local residents, resulted from political and institutional negotiation rather than from demographic or scientific assessment. The regulation was discussed through eleven meetings involving the government and representatives of religious councils, including MUI, PGI, KWI, PHDI, WALUBI, and MATAKIN, while also taking into account several regional regulations that had existed before 2006. The problem, therefore, is not the absence of deliberation, but the limited empirical justification for transforming the outcome of this negotiation into a nationally applicable quantitative threshold. Evaluation reports from the National Commission on Human Rights further indicate that, particularly in areas with small minority populations, the requirement of 60 local supporters can become difficult to fulfil and may be used by community groups to delay or prevent the establishment of houses of worship. A nationally standardized administrative requirement can consequently generate unequal effects when implemented across highly diverse local social contexts.

Tan Malaka's emphasis on material facts and empirically grounded reasoning offers a critical perspective for examining this disconnect between regulatory standardization and social reality. The 90/60 requirement can be understood as a politically negotiated threshold that has gradually become a taken-for-granted administrative standard despite limited evidence that the same numerical requirement is appropriate across different demographic and interreligious contexts. The problem lies less in the numbers themselves than in their reification: a contingent political compromise is treated as an objective, universally applicable measure. Such standardization encourages a one-size-fits-all regulatory

approach that may overlook differences in religious composition, local power relations, minority vulnerability, and patterns of intergroup interaction (Wolf 2020; Brülle 2026).

This epistemic problem becomes sociologically significant when administrative standards interact with unequal relations between religious majorities and minorities. The requirement for local support does not operate in a socially neutral environment; its implementation is mediated by communal relations, institutional authority, political interests, and existing perceptions of religious difference. Consequently, an administrative threshold intended to regulate religious harmony may also reproduce social distance or provide institutional space for majority preferences to influence minority access to houses of worship. The question is therefore not whether the 90/60 rule is intrinsically irrational, but whether its continued implementation can be justified when its empirical foundations and unequal social consequences remain insufficiently examined.

From this perspective, the central issue is the quality of public and institutional reasoning underlying the regulation. Legal and policy decisions governing religious freedom require transparent justification, accountability, empirical responsiveness, and inclusive deliberation, particularly when their consequences affect constitutionally protected religious practices (OECD 2014; Habermas 2008). The critique of mystification therefore highlights to the need to continually subject institutionalized regulations to empirical evaluation rather than allowing historically contingent compromises to become unquestioned legal standards. In the case of the 90/60 requirement, such an evaluation requires examining whether a uniform administrative threshold can protect religious harmony without reinforcing social inequality or restricting minority communities' freedom to establish places of worship.

2. *Introducing 90/60 rule as a degree of tolerance within multiculturalism*

The difficulty in implementing the 90/60 rule across all regions of Indonesia is also due to Indonesia's identity as a pluralistic society that is reinforced by the discourse on pluralism (Knitter 1996). Pluralism is often contrasted with exclusivism or inclusivism and is usually associated with interreligious dialogue, which is common in the West. Initially, pluralism emerged as a phenomenon of globalization, in which ideas, traditions, and beliefs among different groups or communities could coexist on the basis of similarities (Setiawan 2018). This is reflected in the American *melting pot* theory, assimilation in Europe, and the notion of plural societies in postcolonial countries such as those in Africa and Asia (Khan 1995; Abercrombie et al. 2006).

Pluralism is the plurality of ideologies at the level of political philosophy. The argument for pluralism is first distinguished from the principle of assimilation of the New Order (*pembauran*) and the notion of integration in the Old Order. J. S. Furnivall, for example, understood Indonesia (and Southeast Asia more broadly) as a plural society by contrasting it with Europe's homogeneous societies. Nations lived side by side without mingling, segregated, lacking social bonds, and confined within their own cultural lives. Furnivall understood the condition of Indonesian society within the context of colonialism, namely the division of race and culture into three categories: Europeans, Chinese/Arabs (foreign Orientals), and Indonesians (natives; inlanders) (Peacock 1972).

This concept has since developed toward an understanding of a plural society as a mosaic composed of diverse fragments and colors. When these fragments and colors are united, they form a particular image or object. Conversely, if the object breaks apart, the elements that constitute it also disintegrate (Putra 2021). When linked to power in politics, pluralism is an ideology that distributes and guarantees power evenly across all social strata, thereby (1) preventing domination among

classes, and (2) fostering democracy (Abercrombie et al. 2006). This concept produces a pluralist-passive attitude of tolerance in a horizontal sense (among communities), while also receiving active-participatory legitimacy in a vertical sense (between society and government) (Suparlan 2002b; Hefner 2001).

On the other hand, multiculturalism is a productive representation of interaction among plural social elements within a sustainable collective life. Multiculturalism emphasizes understanding of individuals and society to celebrate diversity across socio-cultural entities (e.g., ethnicity, religion, race, cultural denominations) and to cultivate the spirit of managing diversity within public space and democracy (Hardiman 2009:; Suparlan 2002b). Suparlan even argued that multiculturalism is not merely a discourse but a value that must be pursued, as it is the key to upholding democracy, human rights, and the welfare of society, including religious life (Suparlan 2002a).

Similar to Suparlan, Hoon (2017) argues that the concept of multiculturalism in religious life is a further development of celedrating ethnicity and local traditions of society. Hoon then named it *Religious Multiculturalism*, which is integrated with local national ideology, specifically *Pancasila* and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. At the individual level, understanding of multiculturalism helps people recognize that identity is never monocultural but instead continuously interacts, crosses boundaries, and mutually enriches various religious and cultural traditions. The multicultural model emphasizes equality expressing different cultures by adopting of shared cultural values that best serve individuals. The concept of multiculturalism does not eliminate social entities through assimilation, nor does it sow seeds of division through acculturation. Rather, it combines active pluralist tolerance (co-existence) with emancipatory legitimacy (pro-existence), both horizontally and vertically.

Building tolerance within the framework of religious pluralism often generates cultural fragmentation because dominant social entities influence it (Suparlan 2002b). Pluralism may even turn into imperialism when tolerance, loudly proclaimed and celebrated, becomes mere jargon and universal rules imposed as standardized guidelines on society, rather than an attitude of respect for differences arising from identity consciousness. The concept of religious pluralism in Indonesia is often perceived as universalism and syncretism, which is actually counterproductive in building tolerance. Rather than merging religious identities, religious pluralism is relative within a common ground, so it can clash with particular theological identities (Hoon 2017; Moyaert 2005).

By contrast, reciprocal recognition, respect, and acceptance are constitutive elements of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism serves as a bridge to connect not only what is visible (*das Sein*) but also what is sensitive and most valuable in the wisdom of plural identities (*das Sollen*). People must be able to access state institutions and participate fully in public life without having to sacrifice or hide their religious identity (Hoon 2017:489). The need for systematic multicultural awareness is deeply rooted in cultural sensitivity (*tepa selira*) within both educational spaces and the public sphere (Ahimsa Putra 2021).

Franz Magnis-Suseno (1998) enhanced that view by identifying at least three public attitudes closely related to tolerance: humility, mutual understanding, and self-awareness (Suseno 1998). Together, these enable individuals to act tolerantly. Yet difficulties arise in determining which aspects can be tolerated, whether in the context of positive tolerance (pro-existence) or negative tolerance (co-existence). For example, sociological rules such as customs, etiquette, and norms differ between Javanese society and Minangkabau or Bugis society, even though they share the same statutory regulations on religious practice.

An individual may act tolerantly (in this context, liberally), yet in other areas, that same individual may be highly intolerant (or conservative). This situation exacerbates polarization between in-groups and out-groups, between *us* and *them*. Polarization, in turn, undermines the course of democratization and tolerance (Eve Warburton 2020). This matters because tolerance is the capacity of a person or entity to bear the burden of difference. The boundary of tolerance lies in one's satisfaction and capacity to accept obstacles (e.g., differences, dislikes) (Cohen 2004).

Therefore, interpreting the 90/60 requirements in religious multiculturalism needs to be understood dynamically, as reflected in sociological indicators. The 90/60 rule requirements in the 2006 PBM serve as a degree of tolerance that signals the limits of local community acceptance. When the requirement for 60 supporting residents fails to be met, it indicates a wide sociological distance and weak mutual cooperation mechanisms between groups in that area. Thus, the requirement of 60 local residents is not treated as a veto gate but rather as an indicator. As stated in Article 3, Paragraph 14 of the 2006 PBM, local governments are obliged to actively facilitate the availability of locations for building houses of worship. The government is obliged to facilitate the provision of new locations for houses of worship that already have a Building Permit document (*Izin Mendirikan Bangunan*) but are relocated due to changes in regional spatial plans. In this vein, understanding the context of the special 90/60 requirements from a multiculturalism perspective requires the state to actively engage in legal intervention to limit violence and persecution, maintain law and order, and protect the rights of the community to worship as religious citizens.

3. Reframing FKUB as an active agent in managing houses of worship and worship practices

The role of the FKUB, as mandated by the regulation, became an important actor in the construction of houses of worship (Firdaus 2014).[1] Initially, FKUB was formed as an extension of the government to accommodate communication between religious communities. Since the enactment of PBM 2006, FKUB has had the formal authority to recommend the establishment of houses of worship. These recommendations must be obtained through a mechanism of deliberation and consensus. A study conducted by PUSAD (2020) shows that FKUB has limitations in maintaining harmony, lacks accountability, and is often trapped in majoritarianism. FKUB, which should ideally function as a conflict mediator, often becomes one of the parties holding a position in the process of establishing houses of worship (PUSAD 2020).

In making decisions and recommendations, FKUB actors' ideas re shaped by their social positions, institutions, and original religious constituencies. Mannheim argues that ideas can only be comprehended within their socio-political *milieu* (Zeitlin 1968; Mannheim 1954). For Mannheim, there are two types of ideology: (1) total ideology (*Totalideologie*), which emphasizes the sociological aspects of group thought, and (2) particular ideology (*Partikuläre Ideologie*), which arises from the interests, motivations, and psychological conditions of individuals (Mannheim 1954; Ricoeur 1986). In the context of understanding religion and worship, doctrines or ritual practices that emerge from psychological conditions can be explained as manifestations

[1] It is stated that the important tasks of the FKUB according to Article 9 paragraphs (1) and (2) of PBM 2006 include: (1) conducting dialogue with religious leaders and community figures; (2) accommodating the aspirations of religious organizations and the wider community in the form of policy recommendations to the government; (3) disseminating statutory regulations and policies in the field of religion related to interfaith harmony and community empowerment; (4) socializing statutory regulations and policies in the religious sector related to inter-religious harmony and community empowerment; and (5) providing written recommendations on applications for the establishment of houses of worship at the city or district level.

of fear, the need for consolation, or even hidden agendas such as manipulation and deception. If such forms are contested by others, then particular ideology can be debated through shared rational standards and objective validity in dialogical activity. The consequences of particular ideology extend only as far as the objective descriptions that accompany it. In contrast, within total ideology, religion and worship are not viewed as individual interests that can be objectively positioned, but rather as the product of collective life. This has implications for the fundamental nature of perspectives, especially experiences and interpretations that may differ significantly. Religion and worship are understood as conceptual frameworks born from experiences of specific socio-historical conditions. For example, the way Muslim communities think about concepts of divinity, worship, soteriology, and tolerance will differ from Christian communities, based on their respective modes of religious experience and socio-cultural structures.

Furthermore, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge emphasizes the concept of *Seinsgebundenheit* (situational determination of knowledge-red), which is the connection of a person's mindset and value judgments to their social position, institutional structures, and the interests of their original group. Article 10, paragraph (3) of the 2006 PBM stipulates the number of FKUB members based on a comparison of the number of local religious followers. This places the proportion of FKUB actors within the constraints of social positions, so that FKUB institutional considerations are vulnerable to being trapped in the calculation and protection of majority interests. The FKUB functions as a state apparatus that carries out ideological roles. This is significant not only as a religious civil society organization (*ormas*) but also in relation to its function of maintaining harmony. However, the discourse of FKUB as a maintainer of harmony is often interpreted passively as the tranquility of the majority, so that the

aspirations and requests for minority houses of worship are often sacrificed and considered triggers of religious conflict.

The FKUB's function as a determinant and maintainer is inseparable from its position in enhancing democratization and ensuring the implementation of religious worship and life through the translation process. As part of a state institution, the FKUB needs to strive for public language that is rational, neutral, and universally applicable. It is important for the FKUB to be a mediating forum in anticipating pressure, prejudice, or majority communal vetoes. Nevertheless, the FKUB's focus is also on comfort in worship. Each member must possess sufficient knowledge about the comfort of worship, regardless of the infrastructure of houses of worship. The quality of a house of worship (as a tangible representation) cannot be separated from the quality of the comfort of worship (as an intangible representation). If society feels comfortable in worship, then religious harmony can also be achieved. Therefore, multiculturalism offers the principle of pro-existence, which not only enables communities to worship but also to safeguard and respect worship itself, both internally (*forum internum*) and externally (*forum externum*). The granting of permission, on the one hand, must be managed with a universal and neutral approach, since communities engaged in worship are, in essence, an integral part of the spirit of realizing the ideology of Pancasila and the collective ideals being built together. In this domain, once again, the role of the FKUB is crucial (Hakam 2020).

Religious multiculturalism has expanded boundaries to generate group memberships that are cross-cutting in nature. The process of cross-cutting also produces multiple loyalties held by different members. The greater the extent of cross-cutting affiliations, the more significantly conflict and the potential for disintegration can be reduced, thereby allowing tolerance and democratization to flourish more fully in religious life and worship. In other words, multiculturalism can serve as an

alternative form of public reasoning for society (Nasikun 2019). Through the concepts of religious multiculturalism and cross-cutting loyalties, the FKUB can play an active role in: (1) expanding the boundaries of social tolerance in society; (2) acting as a deliberative forum that ensures and guarantees the rights of citizens to worship; and (3) serving as a translator and liaison between the government and affected communities to overcome communal sentiment.

D. CONCLUSION

The study finds that the 90/60 requirement in PBM Nos. 9 and 8 of 2006 was not formulated through a scientific or demographic assessment, yet it has become a standardized requirement for establishing houses of worship. Its uniform application overlooks differences in local religious composition and social relations, while potentially reinforcing majority approval as a condition for minority religious practice. Rather than treating the requirement of 60 local supporters as a veto mechanism, this study interprets it as an indicator of the degree of local tolerance and the social distance between religious groups. The findings also highlight the strategic position of the FKUB in mediating the implementation of these regulations.

These findings demonstrate that religious tolerance is not simply a normative attitude but is produced through power relations, institutional authority, and everyday interactions among religious communities. From a multicultural perspective, the 90/60 rule reveals how formal regulations can reproduce unequal relations when religious diversity is managed through standardized notions of harmony. Reframing the requirement as an indicator rather than permission shifts attention from majority approval toward the social mechanisms that enable or restrict freedom of worship. In this context, the FKUB can move beyond maintaining passive harmony and function as a deliberative institution that actively reduces

social distance, mediates communal tensions, and safeguards comfort in worship.

The implication of this study is that the governance of houses of worship should move from a uniform administrative model toward a more contextual and rights-oriented approach that recognizes local social diversity while protecting freedom of worship. This study is limited by its reliance on regulatory documents, evaluation reports, and existing empirical studies, which cannot fully capture how the 90/60 rule and FKUB practices are experienced and negotiated in different local settings. Further research should therefore examine the implementation of the regulation through comparative fieldwork across regions, including interviews with FKUB members, religious communities, local governments, and groups directly involved in disputes over houses of worship.

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