

Authoritarian practices in democratic settings: Illiberal peacebuilding and violence against the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia

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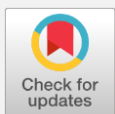
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ABSTRACT

Religious conflict involving minority groups remains a significant challenge in Indonesia, particularly regarding violence and discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community. While previous studies have focused on societal intolerance, horizontal conflict, and state responses, limited attention has been given to how conflict management becomes institutionalized and produces illiberal forms of peace. This study examines the institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding through authoritarian conflict management in the context of violence against the Ahmadiyya community. This research employs a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through archival and document-based research, including government regulations, policy documents, human rights reports, academic literature, and media archives. The data were analyzed using discourse analysis to examine how state narratives, legal instruments, and institutional practices shape conflict management. The findings show that illiberal peacebuilding is institutionalized through authoritarian conflict management operating across three interconnected dimensions: discursive, spatial, and political-economic practices. Rather than addressing the structural causes of conflict, these mechanisms normalize restrictions on the religious rights of the Ahmadiyya community through discriminatory regulations, administrative procedures, and official policy narratives. Although implementation varies across local contexts, these practices collectively reinforce an exclusionary form of stability by reproducing structural discrimination. This study argues that authoritarian conflict management functions as the primary mechanism through which illiberal peacebuilding becomes institutionalized within Indonesia's democratic context, extending the concept beyond post-conflict settings to the governance of religious conflict.

Keywords:

Ahmadiyya; illiberal peacebuilding; freedom of religion; Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with a diversity of races, ethnic groups, and religions, with the majority of its population being Muslim. Consequently, the state grants its citizens the freedom to choose and practice a religion in accordance with their individual beliefs. Normatively, this fact is also supported by the constitutional foundation

enshrined in Articles 28E and 29 of the 1945 Constitution, which guarantee every citizen's freedom to practice their religion or belief. However, in practice, this policy has not yet succeeded in accommodating the public's right to freedom in the practice of their respective beliefs. This situation is reflected in the prevalence of religion-based conflicts and violence in Indonesia.

One concrete example is the case of violence against a religious minority group specifically, the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia through a gradual process of delegitimization. The development of the Ahmadiyya's theological concepts stems from the interpretation of religious teachings by Ahmadiyya leaders, adapted to their specific context and era (Tarhan & Abdullah, 2024). It is these theological views deemed controversial and deviant that have sparked conflict, as they are considered heretical by the majority of Islamic institutions in Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia (Burhani, 2014). In Indonesia itself, the escalation of violence against this group came to the fore when the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued an anti-Ahmadiyya fatwa in 1980, declaring the group heretical and outside the fold of Islam (Schäfer, 2018). The issuance of this fatwa can mark the beginning of the institutional delegitimization of the Ahmadiyya, although during this period, the level of overt violence tended to be limited due to the state's strong control over the political and social spheres. Violence escalated significantly in the post-Reformation era, as political liberalization following 1998 opened a broader space for the mobilization of religious identities and weakened state authority over local actors (Irawan & Adnan, 2021). In this context, violence against the Ahmadiyya community has become increasingly prominent, as seen in Lombok and Cikeusik, characterized by high levels of discrimination, violence, and the number of affected victims (Masnun, 2017). These conditions indicate that the violence is not an isolated incident but rather a structural and recurring phenomenon.

Considering the dynamics at play, it can be argued that MUI Fatwa No. 11/MUNAS VII/MUI/15/2005 should not be viewed as the initial trigger of the violence, but rather as a more explicit discursive basis for various groups to justify practices of rejection, restriction, and violence against the Ahmadiyya community under the pretext of purifying religious teachings (Regus, 2020). This indicates that the escalation of violence against the Ahmadiyya is more accurately viewed as the result of an interaction between a legacy of previously institutionalized exclusive discourse and the post-reform political dynamics that provide space for identity-based collective articulation and action. At the same time, the government's response to this conflict reveals patterns indicative of *illiberal* practices in the conflict de-escalation process. These practices are evident in the government's tendency to adopt restrictive policies that limit the Ahmadiyya's freedom of movement rather than protecting their rights as citizens (Bottomley, 2014). Furthermore, this process has been hijacked by various vested interests, as evidenced by the strong ties between law enforcement officials and vigilante groups while the stated aim is to maintain social stability, these actions ultimately result in discriminatory practices against the Ahmadiyya community (Suryana, 2019).

Other findings by Farabi (2025) also indicate that peacebuilding programs addressing violence against the Ahmadiyya community tend to promote ideological homogenization, which ultimately does nothing to resolve the underlying conflicts. Thus, these various empirical findings indicate that the main issue regarding violence against the Ahmadiyya community lies not only in its persistence but also in how the state manages the conflict through a set of policies and practices that actually reinforce the reproduction of exclusion. Although some of the studies mentioned above have examined this case from the perspectives of religious freedom, intolerance, identity politics, and the relationship between the state and religion, the majority focus primarily on the causes of violence or its impact on minority groups. This research gap can be utilized to explain how the state's conflict management strategies become institutionalized through mechanisms that maintain stability by perpetuating illiberal practices. This framework can be employed to analyze the Ahmadiyya case not only as an issue of intolerance but also as a form of exclusionary conflict management.

Based on this gap, this study seeks to integrate the concepts of illiberal peacebuilding and authoritarian conflict management in analyzing violence against the Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. This is done to explain how the state's conflict management strategies result in institutionalized exclusionary practices in this case. The distinction lies in the fact that previous research has mostly focused on the dynamics of discrimination or violations of religious freedom. In contrast, this study seeks to highlight the institutional mechanisms that transform discursive, spatial, and politic-economic practices into forms of exclusivity institutionalized through state regulations, administration, and bureaucracy. Thus, the contribution of this study lies in advancing the literature by demonstrating that authoritarian conflict management strategies do not operate exclusively within authoritarian regimes but can also emerge in electoral democracies through a process of institutionalization that produces patterns of illiberal peacebuilding. Within this framework, this study aims to identify the patterns and mechanisms by which authoritarian conflict management contributes to the institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding in the governance of the Ahmadiyya conflict in Indonesia.

When viewed through the lens of the sequence of events surrounding the Ahmadiyya community, the concept of “*Illiberal Peacebuilding*” becomes relevant for analyzing this phenomenon. Oliver P. Richmond describes Illiberal Peacebuilding as a conflict-resolution approach that prioritizes short-term stability, even at the expense of democratic principles and human rights. This approach is commonly found in countries that formally claim to operate within a democratic framework but, in practice, implement authoritarian policies to manage conflict and maintain order. A key characteristic is the establishment of negative peace, a state in which open conflict is suppressed, yet discrimination and systematic restrictions on the rights of certain groups persist. This condition can create an unjust environment for minority groups and often leads to deeper exclusivity in state policies (Richmond, 2009). In line with this, Smith et al. (2020) add that illiberal peacebuilding is a form of peacebuilding driven by domestic actors through the adoption of strategies of co-optation, repression, and an exclusive political system, resulting in the creation of a false stability with the potential to perpetuate structural injustice. This framework provides a perspective on the outcomes of conflict governance; however, it does not yet explain the mechanisms by which such practices are formed and institutionalized.

To explain these mechanisms, this study employs the concept of “*Authoritarian Conflict Management*” developed by (Lewis et al., 2018). Authoritarian conflict management itself is a conceptual framework used by authoritarian regimes to address internal armed conflicts and social violence by combining elements of authoritarian control, propaganda, and resource mobilization (Keen, 2021). This concept views conflict management as not only carried out through the use of coercive force but also through discursive practices such as narrative control spatial practices such as the regulation of movement and politico-economic practices such as the distribution of resources. These three practices do not remain merely as temporary responses but can be institutionalized through state regulations, administration, and bureaucratic procedures, thereby forming a distinct pattern of conflict management. Thus, this study positions authoritarian conflict management as a mechanism that explains how these practices become institutionalized and ultimately result in illiberal peacebuilding in the governance of the Ahmadiyya conflict in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study to analyze how the state manages conflicts involving the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia and how these practices shape the institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding. A qualitative method was chosen because this study emphasizes the interpretation of meanings embedded in social phenomena, policies, and institutional practices that shape power relations (Rich et al., 2018). Meanwhile, the case study method is used to collect and analyze data related to a specific case, namely by examining the relevant factors of that case (Hardani et al., 2020). This study focuses on the period from 1980 to 2025, based on the rationale that this period encompasses the initial process of institutional delegitimization, the strengthening of discriminatory regulations following the reform era, and the development of conflict management practices targeting the Ahmadiyya community in the present day.

The data in this study were collected using *archival and document-based research* methods and drawing on various secondary data sources. These methods were chosen for their relevance to qualitative research in international relations and for their common use in gathering information and understanding social and political phenomena through the analysis of documents relevant to the research topic (Lamont & Boduszynski, 2024). The secondary data sources analyzed include documents derived from primary sources such as national regulations, government policies, official reports, and public policy documents as well as secondary sources such as reports from human rights organizations, scholarly journal articles, and media archives documenting specific events or policies. Primary sources are original documents written or issued by authorities responsible for the information they provide, whereas secondary sources are documents that serve as comparisons to primary sources (Lamont & Boduszynski, 2024). By analyzing these documents, researchers can gain insights into decision-making processes, policy dynamics, and how state institutions respond to conflicts or social issues.

Data analysis was conducted using a *discourse analysis* model that focuses on the interpretation of language and representations in various policy documents and institutional texts (Lamont & Boduszynski, 2024). Discourse analysis is employed to understand how language shapes social meaning, constructs specific categories, and legitimates policies or practices of power. As demonstrated in the following study, the analysis examines the processes by which the state frames the existence of the Ahmadiyya community through various policy narratives such as those related to social order, security, stability, or religious deviation. Thus, this study seeks to identify how language and discourse shape public opinion and influence conflict management practices. This model also enables the researcher to examine power relations reflected in policy representations regarding minority groups.

To ensure analytical consistency, this study employs the authoritarian conflict management framework proposed by Lewis et al. (2018) as its operational framework, focusing on three main dimensions: discursive practices, spatial practices, and politico-economic practices. These three dimensions serve as the primary coding categories during document analysis. Discursive practices are identified through official narratives, religious decrees, and the state's discriminatory statements toward the Ahmadiyya. Spatial practices are examined through relocation policies, restrictions on movement, and territorial controls that affect the community. Finally, economic-political practices were analyzed through administrative restrictions, unequal legal protection, and selective access to state resources. The findings from these analytical categories were then interpreted using the concept of illiberal peacebuilding to examine how exclusive conflict-management practices become institutionalized through regulatory, bureaucratic, and administrative mechanisms.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Patterns of Violence Against the Ahmadiyya Community

The threats of discrimination and violence against the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia exhibit a recurring and systemic pattern, manifesting in the form of physical violence or administrative discrimination. According to a report by the SETARA Institute, there were 2,713 incidents of violations of religious freedom in Indonesia between 2007 and 2020. The Ahmadiyya community experienced the highest number of violations against minority groups, with 570 cases (Insiyah et al., 2023). A recent report by Imparsial also states that between December 2024 and July 2025, there were 13 cases of violations of religious freedom (Siaran Pers Imparsial, 2025). The consistent occurrence of these cases indicates that the Ahmadiyya community is one of the groups facing a critically high level of vulnerability compared to other groups. This is evident through a combination of severe social stigma, policy-driven criminalization, and state-sanctioned violence a combination not fully experienced simultaneously by other minority groups. These conditions indicate that violence against the Ahmadiyya can no longer be considered a sporadic incident but rather reflects a recurring and institutionalized pattern.

The prevalence of non-physical violations indicates that violence against the Ahmadiyya community manifests more frequently in the form of administrative discrimination than in direct physical violence. In reality, the forms of discrimination most frequently experienced by the Ahmadiyya community include the sealing of places of worship, restrictions on and bans against religious activities, as well as the forced relocation or expulsion of Ahmadiyya communities (Ja'far, 2024; Tim Peneliti Imparsial, 2025). This reality was brought to light by an incident in 2021, when 200 people attacked and vandalized the Miftahul Huda mosque in Sintang an event that demonstrated how physical violence can follow administrative pressure against the Ahmadiyya community (Abdi, 2021). On the other hand, the cases of the sealing of Ahmadiyya mosques in Depok and Garut also demonstrate that restrictions on religious freedom are also enforced through local government instruments (BBC News Indonesia, 2017). The following findings reveal that discrimination against the Ahmadiyya is not only perpetrated by societal actors but is also facilitated through the state's administrative mechanisms.

In addition to restrictions on places of worship, other violations of freedom of religion and belief have also encroached upon the personal lives of members of this group. There have been widespread incidents of violence, destruction of private property, and administrative discrimination, which tend to be localized and episodic. This situation parallels what occurred in Lombok in 2006, where 26 homes were burned down, and 137 residents were displaced (Insiyah et al., 2023). Another incident involved the forced relocation of the Ahmadiyya community, resulting in approximately 30 Ahmadiyya families being forced to live in a temporary shelter the Transito Shelter in West Nusa Tenggara (Purnomo, 2013). Such conditions do not directly provide a sense of security for Ahmadiyya residents, as discrimination still frequently occurs even within the Transito Shelter. Ahmadiyya residents still frequently face hate speech from nearby residents, and the living conditions at the shelter are unsuitable for them to lead a normal life (Prabandari, 2023). In addition to discrimination regarding the Ahmadiyya community's right to life, other restrictive actions also occur concerning their administrative rights. Administrative discrimination encompasses restrictions on access to basic rights. This situation mirrors what has occurred in Manislor, Kuningan, West Java, where Ahmadiyya members have faced difficulties obtaining e-KTPs since 2002. By 2014, they were forced to sign a statement and recite the shahada to obtain identity documents (Artharini, 2017). Another case occurred in Tasikmalaya, where marriage registrations at the Office of Religious Affairs have been rejected since 2012 (Nugraha, 2012). Further discrimination was evident in the case of teacher Cucu Nurhayati in Ciparay, Cianjur, demonstrating that discrimination extends into the economic and employment spheres. In this case, the teacher was forced to resign due to public pressure (Insiyah et al., 2023). These practices are often justified as measures to maintain public order and prevent horizontal conflicts; however, in practice, they significantly restrict the religious freedom of the Ahmadiyya community.

Several of the findings above indicate that patterns of violence against the Ahmadiyya community have evolved from physical violence toward recurring forms of administrative discrimination. Thus, the primary issue lies not only in the frequency of violence but also in the emergence of mechanisms that consistently restrict the Ahmadiyya community's living space. These findings also serve as the basis for examining how the state subsequently manages this conflict through various policies and administrative practices, as discussed in the following section.

State Response and the Institutionalization of Policies Toward the Ahmadiyya

Historically, the delegitimization of the Ahmadiyya has existed for a long time, including through a fatwa issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council in 1980. However, the escalation of overt violence and repressive policies actually intensified following the 1998 Reform era. During the New Order era, although restrictions and surveillance were in place, the state exercised strict control over social conflicts, thereby making mass violence relatively rare. In the post-Reform era, changes in the political landscape and the weakening of the state's coercive control created space for the mobilization of non-state actors, prompting the state to respond with restrictive policies. This demonstrates that violence against the Ahmadiyya cannot be reduced to a purely horizontal conflict but is closely linked to the transformation of how the state manages social conflict. In many cases, violence against the Ahmadiyya involved local mobs and majority religious organizations such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), the Islamic Community Forum (FUI), Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), and the Sintang Islamic Community Alliance (Menchik, 2019). However, the state's role cannot be understood as entirely passive. This pattern indicates that the state plays a role in shaping the direction of the conflict not by protecting victims, but by adjusting its response to pressure from the majority. Thus, violence against the Ahmadiyya cannot be reduced to a purely horizontal conflict. These patterns indicate the involvement of policy structures and government practices that indirectly facilitate marginalization. These findings provide a basis for understanding how the state's response is subsequently institutionalized through formal policies and administrative practices.

Indonesia's response to violence against the Ahmadiyya community has taken the form of administrative policies purportedly aimed at maintaining public order and social stability. However, despite purporting to protect minority groups, these policies actually systematically restrict the Ahmadiyya's freedom of religion. This approach reflects a shift from a rights-based approach to rights protection toward a restriction-based approach to conflict management. One of the most notable policies is the 2008 Joint Ministerial Decree (SKB) issued by the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Attorney General, and the Minister of Home Affairs, which contains warnings and orders directing JAI followers to cease activities deemed deviant of Islamic teachings. Although this policy is formally intended to prevent conflict, its implementation on the ground often diverges from its original purpose. Instead, it has largely served as an administrative justification for repressive actions against the Ahmadiyya community, such as acts of violence, the sealing of mosques, and the disruption of worship activities (Abubakar et al., 2016). Thus, the existence of this Joint Ministerial Decree (SKB) can be said to serve as the primary legal basis for various discriminatory policies at the regional level. In this context, the state not only responds to conflict but also establishes a legal framework that enables such restrictions to continue indefinitely. In addition to the Joint Ministerial Decree, the application of Law No. 1/PNPS/1965 on the Prevention of the Misuse and/or Desecration of Religion particularly Article 1 further strengthens the legal legitimacy for restricting Ahmadiyya activities. Although this regulation aims to maintain public order, its implementation is more often used as the fundamental legal basis for discriminatory regulations targeting the Ahmadiyya community.

The response patterns of local governments also frequently exhibit a concerning level of consistency, with many policies that overlap and are discriminatory toward the Ahmadiyya community. This is evidenced by a report from the SETARA Institute, which notes that there are at least 71 discriminatory legal instruments affecting the constitutional rights of the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia. These policy instruments comprise 16 regulations, 47 Administrative Decisions, and 8 non-regulatory instruments, such as fatwas and religious rulings. The highest concentration of discriminatory policies is found in West Java province with 23 legal instruments, followed by West Nusa Tenggara with 7, West Kalimantan with 6, and finally Banten with 5 (Insiyah et al., 2023). The accumulation of these policies indicates that restrictions on the Ahmadiyya community no longer depend on the individual decisions of officials but have become an institutionalized part of governance through both national and regional regulations.

At the subnational level, central government policies are translated into various local regulations and circulars that are even more restrictive. Among the evidence of this is West Java Governor's Regulation No. 12/2011, which explicitly prohibits Ahmadiyya activities in West Java, including the dissemination of teachings, the use of the organization's name, and the use of Ahmadiyya symbols. This situation has, in fact, served as a justification for certain individuals acting in the name of Islamic organizations to carry out attacks that have only

further exacerbated the situation (Zulain, 2013). A similar pattern occurred in Sintang, West Kalimantan, illustrating how administrative pressure precedes mass violence. This situation began with a series of warning letters from the local government, the suspension of operations at places of worship, and ultimately culminated in an attack on the Ahmadiyya community (Insiyah et al., 2023). Other instances include the case of Garut Regent Rudy Gunawan, who justified the sealing of a mosque by stating that the Ahmadiyya are not part of Islam. Meanwhile, the mayor of Depok claimed the sealing was in accordance with policy, and local police justified the action on the grounds that there were plans for an attack by intolerant groups (Taher, 2021). Such mechanisms illustrate that violence does not emerge suddenly but is produced through an accumulation of policies and institutional neglect. The presence of security forces and local government officials at conflict sites often involves an approach of neglect or mediation that positions the Ahmadiyya as the party that must yield in order to defuse tensions. Even the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) has been involved in handling the Ahmadiyya issue, a move criticized as exceeding their constitutional role in national defense. This view is further reinforced by Suryana's findings of a strong connection between law enforcement agencies and vigilante groups, a relationship formed to maintain social stability and serve specific interests.

The consequences of institutionalizing this policy have been tangible, far-reaching, and multi-layered. This is evident in the Ahmadiyya community, which faces community fragmentation, restricted access to public spaces and religious facilities, and prolonged legal uncertainty. The resulting impacts are also diverse; economically, they manifest as loss of livelihoods and property damage. Meanwhile, on the social front, these impacts are reflected in psychological trauma, social exclusion, and barriers to the fulfillment of basic rights such as civil registration, marriage, health services, and education (Kustini, 2019). Discrimination, which was initially social in nature, has since transformed into structural exclusion legitimized by state policies, thereby narrowing the community's capacity to maintain its social and religious life with dignity. These findings serve as evidence that restrictions on the Ahmadiyya are no longer incidental but rather the result of a pattern of conflict management institutionalized through state policies.

The Institutionalization of Illiberal Peacebuilding in Authoritarian Conflict Management

Based on findings regarding patterns of violence and state responses, this study shows that discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community does not stop at incidental repressive actions. Rather, this situation is reflected in various state responses that institutionalize conflict management practices that prioritize stability by restricting minority rights. In this context, the framework of authoritarian conflict management proposed by Lewis et al. (2018) can serve as an analytical framework to explain how these practices evolve into a form of illiberal peacebuilding. In this study, institutionalization can be understood as the process by which conflict management practices, which were initially situational, are subsequently repeated, normalized, and legitimized through state policies, regulations, and administrative procedures. Thus, discrimination no longer emerges as a spontaneous response to conflict but transforms into a governance mechanism continuously reproduced by state institutions.

Discursive practices indicative of institutionalization are evident in the state's framing of the Ahmadiyya as a group that disrupts social order, thereby justifying the restrictions imposed on them as legitimate measures. The narrative constructed here frames the Ahmadiyya as a threat to social order and harmony. Concrete evidence of this can be seen, among other things, in Regent Rudy Gunawan's statement that the Ahmadiyya are not part of Islam and in the Mayor of Depok's justification that the sealing-off action was in accordance with previous regulations, demonstrating how administrative and religious narratives are used to legitimize discrimination (BBC News Indonesia, 2017). This narrative provides moral and political legitimacy for restrictive actions, while simultaneously closing off space for equal dialogue. On the other hand, as the Ahmadiyya community grows, its members often become the subject of negative media coverage, leading to their exclusion from their social circles (Wulandari & Bawono, 2023). In addition to direct narratives, a number of discriminatory policies have also been documented as justifications for imposing restrictions (Burhani, 2020). Further evidence from Irawan (2017) also indicates that the Ahmadiyya are portrayed negatively as a deviant Islamic group. The following facts demonstrate that control over public narratives grounded in government statements and policies reflects an *illiberal approach to peacebuilding* that normalizes exclusion. Findings regarding these discursive practices indicate that narratives controlled and continuously repeated by the state lead to restrictions on the Ahmadiyya being perceived as legitimate actions, thereby granting discrimination both political and social legitimacy.

Furthermore, the institutionalization of spatial practices is evident in conflict management, as seen in the control of religious and public spaces, such as the sealing of mosques, bans on the construction of places of worship, and the relocation of communities. This is evidenced by the repeated sealing of mosques in various regions, restrictions on the use of places of worship, the forced suspension of construction of places of worship,

and the forced relocation of 137 residents in Lombok (Insiyah et al., 2023). These three cases represent concrete forms of spatial practices aimed at reducing the visibility of the Ahmadiyya. These practices create the illusion of order by removing sources of conflict from public spaces, without addressing the root causes of existing social tensions. This pattern also reveals a cycle of violence that begins with the issuance of a decree, continues with community mobilization, escalates into violence, and concludes with state intervention a pattern clearly evident in the case of Sintang and other locations (Insiyah et al., 2023). These findings indicate that the practice of restricting the religious space of the Ahmadiyya community is implemented gradually through administrative instruments, thereby making such restrictions a permanent component of conflict management mechanisms.

In the final dimension the economic-political dimension of institutionalization this is also reflected through policies and access to daily life. Restrictions on access to public services, administrative permits, and economic resources function as a mechanism of latent pressure against the Ahmadiyya community. This is demonstrated by facts observed on the ground, including various cases of restrictions covering services in both administrative and economic spheres. This is evidenced by the emergence of barriers to access to civil registration documents, marriage services, health facilities, and employment opportunities experienced by the Ahmadiyya community (Artharini, 2017). These practices are not always explicitly stated as sanctions, but they function as latent mechanisms that weaken minority communities' capacity to sustain their social and religious lives. These conditions indicate that discriminatory practices have become entrenched in government governance, thereby reinforcing the institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding.

Thus, these three practices can be seen to operate simultaneously in shaping illiberal peacebuilding by establishing social legitimacy through discursive practices, restricting communities' living spaces through spatial practices, and narrowing access to resources through economic-political practices. The combination of these three forms a mutually reinforcing conflict management mechanism, allowing discrimination against the Ahmadiyya to occur repeatedly without always relying on physical violence. Conflict is not eliminated but managed to avoid disrupting the regime's stability or the majority's dominance. Multi-actor coordination between state actors through local governments, the police, and the military and non-state actors through mass organizations and religious institutions demonstrates that discrimination is not a sporadic phenomenon but a systematic one. The mobilization of the public in accordance with official discriminatory policies creates a cycle of sustained violence. The ultimate outcome of this is the institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding through these three practices that is, reaching a state where the restriction of minority rights, without substantively resolving the sources of conflict, is carried out in the name of social stability (Richmond, 2009). In this context, the Ahmadiyya case demonstrates that illiberal peacebuilding in Indonesia does not operate in isolation but through the simultaneous integration of narrative control, spatial restrictions, and concurrent economic and political pressures, collectively producing an exclusive form of stability.

Thus, the Ahmadiyya case in Indonesia illustrates how authoritarian conflict management can operate within an electoral democracy. This study demonstrates that the resulting stability is not an inclusive peace, but rather a fragile peace dependent on the sustained marginalization of minority groups. Conceptually, these findings also indicate that conflict management practices in Indonesia possess a distinct character, in which legal and administrative instruments are used to control conflicts rather than address their root causes. This phenomenon further expands our understanding of how the logic of authoritarian conflict management can permeate democratic systems.

CONCLUSION

Violence and discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia demonstrate that the conflict is not merely horizontal in nature but rather reflects the state's institutionalization of illiberal peacebuilding through authoritarian conflict management. This study finds that the state's response reflects a process of institutionalization through *authoritarian conflict-management practices* that operate simultaneously through discursive control, spatial restrictions, and economic and political pressure on minority groups. These practices do not aim to resolve the root causes of the conflict but rather to manage it so that it does not escalate into political instability, thereby producing a form of stability that is exclusive in nature. In this context, illiberal peacebuilding does not emerge as a single policy but rather as the institutionalization of authoritarian conflict-management practices. This finding expands our understanding of illiberal peacebuilding by demonstrating that, within the context of electoral democracy, stability can be constructed through the normalization of policies and administrative practices that restrict the rights of minority groups without relying on the continuous use of overt violence. Nevertheless, this institutionalization process does not occur uniformly across all regions of Indonesia but is influenced by local political dynamics and the relationships between state and non-state actors.

The implications of these findings suggest that the management of religious conflicts in Indonesia should shift from an approach focused on term stabilization to one that prioritizes protecting rights, ensuring equality among citizens, and addressing the use of conflict. Given that this study is based on document analysis, future research is recommended to combine document analysis with field research, such as interviews or observations, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how this institutionalization process is experienced and reproduced by the Ahmadiyya community at the local level.

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