

## IDENTITY POLITICS AND THREATS TO RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN BUKITTINGGI

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### ABSTRACT

West Sumatra. The people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra consisting of various ethnicities, tribes, races and cultures have been able to live with a spirit of pluralism and tolerance. Lately, the spirit of pluralism that has been run by the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra began to erode along with the strengthening of identity politics. The prominence of tribal, religious, racial and cultural identities becomes a serious problem in a plural society, because, the spirit of highlighting tribal, racial, cultural and religious identities excessively leads to claims of truth and the assumption that their tribes, races, religions and cultures are superior to cultures, races, tribes and religions outside their groups. In collecting data, this study uses qualitative methods. The research stages carried out are literature studies, observations, documentation, and interviews. The research will be guided by social theories such as identity politics and pluralism. The finding of this research is the strengthening of identity politics in Bukittinggi related to religious issues. Politically, religions outside of Islam are limited. This religious identity is further strengthened by the emergence of many religious groups in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. like Islamic organizations that massively bergeriliya in carrying out its mission to Islamize the entire community of west Sumatra. The movements carried out by islamic organizations seem to be strengthened by ethnicity (tribal), in the form of customs of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra which is famous for its integration of customs and religions. Indirectly religion outside the religion of Islam its existence is limited in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

**Keywords:** *Regional Autonomy; Identity Politics and Pluralism*

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, which consists of thousands of tribes, languages, cultures, ethnicities and religions, is also known as a pluralistic country. The diversity that exists in Indonesia causes contact between ethnicities, religions and tribes which not least will lead to conflict and violence. This can be seen from the various cases of conflict and violence that occurred in Indonesia, such as the Sampit tragedy in Central Kalimantan in 2001 between the Dayak and Madurese ethnic groups (Suroyo, 2001).

The Poso conflict is also considered to be motivated by differences in Muslim and Christian religions (Fisher, 2001). This conflict occurs repeatedly until now and religion is used as a trigger even though it is not at all related to religious values and understanding.

The cultural conflict that occurred in Indonesia made us realize that the consequences would be very fatal if we ignored the existence of plurality in society. But it will be even more fatal if we cannot guarantee fair justice in a plurality of societies, justice between the majority and minorities. Accommodating various values with the principle of equality in difference is impossible because in any society there will always be dominant elements holding the knot of power. So that the tyranny of the minority and the oppression of the majority will not occur which will lead to hereditary political and cultural grudges. The state must be able to guarantee the achievement of justice among cultural groups in Indonesia.

Cultural conflicts with a background of identity issues also emerged in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Issues of ethnic, religious and cultural identity often arise in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, when the democratic party for regional head elections in Sumatra took place. This identity conflict seems to have been deliberately raised to the surface for practical political interests for political contestants participating in the regional elections. Conflicts in the name of ethnic, ethnic and religious identities in Bukittinggi can be seen in the case of the ban on the establishment of a new church in Bukittinggi, the rejection of the establishment of the Podomoro Mall in Bukittinggi, and the intimidation of ethnic Chinese in the Bukittinggi Chinese village.

Studies on identity politics have been carried out by many researchers. As for the study of identity politics, we group it into two, first, studies that discuss identity politics in general, which in this discussion also alludes to cultural identity (Endrizal, 2018; Soenjoto, 2019; Al-Farisi, 2020; Nasrudi, 2018) . Second, studies that specifically discuss identity politics in the concept of religious and ethnic conflict in regional head elections, both looking at the role, process and settlement of identity politics (Triana, 2020; Pribadi, 2022; Rahim, 2018. So far, there has been no study in detail specifically discussing identity politics and threats to pluralism in Bukittinggi.

This paper will try to see the strengthening of identity politics in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, which can threaten the existence of a multicultural society in West Sumatra. As well as analyzing the problem of strengthening identity politics in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion which is a big problem in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, Sumatra today.

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. This study uses field research with a qualitative approach. According to Abdussamad, this research is research that can produce descriptive data in the form of words in written and oral form which originate from interviews and observations of the behavior of the people being studied (Abdussamad, 2021). The stages of the research carried out were literature studies, observation, documentation, and interviews. This research will be guided by social theories such as identity politics and pluralism.

The use of this qualitative method can produce complete, in-depth, and meaningful data so that the research objectives can be achieved. The reason for choosing a qualitative method in this study departs from the following considerations: 1) the issue of

identity politics in Bukittinggi as the object of this research is a problem that is still unclear, 2) this research is about the interpretation of interview data and direct observation related to identity politics and threats to pluralism in Bukittinggi, 3) this research is useful for developing theories about conflict resolution on the basis of ethnic, religious and cultural identities in West Sumatra, in particular and Indonesia in general.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Identity and Political Policy Against Religious and Ethnic Plurality**

#### **1. The Meaning of Identity for Groups in Multicultural Societies**

Samuel P. Huntington (1992) "predicted" that conflicts between civilizations in the future would no longer be caused by economic, political and ideological factors, but would instead be triggered by ethnic, religious, racial and intergroup issues (SARA). This conflict became the strongest symptom that marked the collapse of world ideological polarization into communism and capitalism. Simultaneously with the collapse of the political structure of the countries of Eastern Europe.

Huntington's prediction is reinforced by the reason why in the future there will be clashes between civilizations. Among others are: First, the differences between civilizations are not only real, but also fundamental. Second, the world is now getting smaller, interactions between people of different civilizations are increasing. Third, the process of world economic and social modernization makes people or communities uprooted from their deeply rooted local identities, besides weakening countries as a source of their identity. Fourth, the emergence of civilizational awareness is possible because of the dual role of the West. On one side of the west is at the peak of strength. On the other hand, perhaps this is a consequence of the Western position, that the return to origin phenomenon is taking place among non-Western civilizations. Fifth, cultural characteristics and differences are less compatible and therefore less compromised than political and economic characteristics and differences. And, the sixth economic regionalism is increasing (Huntington, 1992).

The people's political and cultural choice to close oneself is the best way to follow in the footsteps of the New Order's political power. Therefore, when the state has experienced a weakening of its material base, people will seek protection from religious and ethnic groups (Effendi, 2001). Society's search for protection for ethnicity or religion will sooner or later jeopardize the government's position in its vertical relations but is also vulnerable, vulnerable, full of risks and very dangerous in its horizontal relations. Apparently, this conjecture can be proven true. The various conflicts that occurred in the local sphere, in the 1995s until the collapse of the New Order regime, proved how devastating political violence was in this country.

#### **2. Identity of the Bukittinggi Community, West Sumatra**

The phenomenon of strengthening ethnicity politics in West Sumatra is monopolized by the Minang community to drive out immigrants. Because of that, the issue of local people was campaigned massively. This happened because the Minang people felt

systematically removed, who incidentally were the 'natives' of West Sumatra. Even the Minang people were made in such a way as to stay and become spectators when their hometown was plundered by leaders who came from outside. Because of that, the idea that local sons should become masters in their own villages became a historical imperative.

Feeling politically marginalized this power occurred during the New Order era. West Sumatra in the New Order era was ruled by Suharto's subordinates who came from Java. Meanwhile, West Sumatran figures politically power sidelined. This was motivated by the trauma of the New Order government related to the PRRI rebellion during the Old Order. The PRRI rebellion is considered a major rebellion that occurred in Indonesia during the Old Order.

It is this past trauma that causes discrimination politically in power among the people of West Sumatra. The New Order government seemed to justify that the people of West Sumatra were rebellious, so politically the power of the people of West Sumatra could not be given political freedom.

Ethnicity, which was used as a political identity for the Minang people, strengthened after the fall of the New Order government. The strengthening of the identity of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra can be seen from the issue of establishing adat coded as *syara'*, *syara'* coded as *Kitabullah*. The traditional teachings that are present in the midst of the people of West Sumatra become a marker as well as the identity of the people of West Sumatra. Ethnicity which is used as identity politics continues to develop to the issue of religious identity. The people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, view that what is said by the Minang people is that they are Muslims. So until now Minang is synonymous with Islam and Islam is synonymous with Minang.

The Minang community plays with religious and ethnic issues as the identity of the people of West Sumatra. This is further emphasized by the Minang proverb which says that "adat is encoded in *syara'* and *syara'* is encoded in the book of Allah". Religious and ethnic identity crystallized in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra in establishing their existence as natives (indigenous people of West Sumatra).

Ethnic and religious identity in the view of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra is considered as something important in the midst of society, because they are seen as a differentiator as well as a sign for plural society groups. The thickening of identity issues among the people of West Sumatra seems to indicate that the people of West Sumatra are more exclusive (closed) to outsiders. This can be seen from the existence of ethnic Chinese, Javanese and others. Ethnicities outside the Minang ethnicity do not seem to be given free space in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, especially in the field of power politics.

Nowadays, the issue of identity in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, is increasingly related to religious issues. The majority of the population of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra are Muslims, in terms of power politics, religions outside of Islam are restricted in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. the concept of a plural and plural society in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

This religious identity is further strengthened by the emergence of many religious groups among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. such as Islamic mass organizations which are massive guerrillas in carrying out their mission to Islamize the entire people of West Sumatra. The movements carried out by some of these Islamic organizations seem to be reinforced by ethnicity, in the form of the customs of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, which are famous for their integration of customs and religion.

This is one of the reasons why the strengthening of religious identity among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. The existence of ethnic groups other than the Minang ethnicity, whose religious beliefs are different from those of the Minang people, is not very well developed in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Indirectly, religions outside of Islam are restricted to Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

The strengthening of religious and ethnic identity among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, on the one hand, gave birth to a new social order among the people of West Sumatra. Ethnic and religious identities are able to bond solidarity among the people of West Sumatra, especially for the majority community, while in the midst of a minority community the strengthening of religious and ethnic identity will give rise to conflict and disintegration within the minority community.

### **3. The Role of the State in Identity Politics**

The role of the State in identity politics referred to in this discussion is related to the issue of how the role played by the State so that politics does not spread in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion which can threaten plurality.

The state has a very strategic role in suppressing the development and expansion of identity politics which can threaten plurality. Identity politics that is rooted and strengthened in the midst of Sumatran society when allowed to develop will become an embryo for the emergence of conflicts in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion. This is because identity issues, as the researchers discussed in the previous discussion, began to emerge and develop among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

The strengthening and development of identity politics in the midst of the plural society of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra will have a negative impact on the minority community in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Although in principle ethnic, ethnic and religious identities also began to strengthen in the midst of minority communities. This identity in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion must be accommodated by the State so as not to spread into the embryo of conflict in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion.

The issue of identity that strengthens among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, such as the Malay identity is strengthened by its Malayness, with the assumption that Bukittinggi, West Sumatra is a Minang Malay community, then their Batak ethnic identity is also strengthened by their Batakness, Javanese ethnicity by their Javaneness, Chinese ethnicity and Keling with their ethnicity and religion.

Each ethnic group tries to maintain their own group identity. Strengthening ethnic, ethnic and religious identities is carried out as an effort to maintain the group identity of each ethnic group, ethnicity and religion. The state must be able to accommodate the

strengthening of ethnic, tribal and religious issues, while at the same time trying to unite the vision and mission of each ethnic, ethnic and religious group to create a harmonious society and away from problems of conflict in the name of ethnicity, ethnicity and religion. This can be done by strengthening the role of each ethnic, tribal and religious figure. By creating and optimizing the role of FKUB, the role of ethnic and religious leaders from each group in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

Meanwhile, people think that ethnicity is something that is "classic", an obsolete matter. As modernists believe, in the modern world, ethnicity will disappear or at least be replaced by social entities based on the economy, class, party or other interest groups. Ethnic sentiment is shifted by class consciousness, ethnic politics is replaced by class politics, nationalism is shifted by globalism (Hodgson, 1999).

#### **4. The Politicization of Cultural Identity**

The first thing that must be understood is that identity politics is not politics in its traditional sense. Identity politics focuses on identity differences which include ethnicity, religion, and other things that are used to unite people on the basis of similarities. Identity politics is a sub-discipline of political science that is empirical in nature and began to be discussed in the 1960s. In 1967, the first meeting held by the international political science association discussed biology and politics.

The emergence of a feeling of belonging to the same identity as ethnicity, for example, is based on the tendency within each human group to distinguish between insiders and outsiders, to draw social boundaries, and tendencies to build stereotypes about "other groups." This tendency to build stereotypes about other groups is actually a way to support and justify these social boundaries. Eriksen emphasized that ethnicity arises when "perceived cultural differences will result in social differences" (ethnicity occurs when perceived cultural differences make a social difference). Ethnicity arises because of the interaction of groups that feel "different", when the distinction between "us" and "them" becomes important (Revida, 2006).

Identity politics is political action to promote the interests of members of a group because they have the same identity or characteristics, whether based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion. Identity politics is another formulation of the politics of difference. The emergence of identity politics is a response to the implementation of human rights which are often unfairly applied. He further said that concretely, the presence of identity politics was deliberately carried out by groups of people who experienced marginalization. Their political rights and freedom of belief have so far received very significant obstacles.

Theoretically, the emergence of identity politics is a phenomenon caused by many factors, such as: structural aspects in the form of past economic disparities and also continuing economic difficulties so that today it has provided reasons to justify efforts to separate itself from a primordial group linked to aspects of political and institutional representation.

#### **5. The Politicization of Religious Identity**

Identity is one of the various choices to be able to understand and practice cultural traditions. As an extreme form of the politicization of cultural differences, identity is not limited to a particular culture, or to a particular civilization, such as Islam, although there are many views against it.

Ethnic identity is also not an instrument of analysis, as examples can be found in other cultures, but perhaps the way it is applied in other cultures through different perspectives. On the other hand, all world cultures are shown to be in the form of barriers of discussion and social discourse which are inherently very diverse and dynamic. Within these cultures, to varying degrees, identity emerges; and in all of these cultures, identity is an expression that is opposed in the whole cultural identity (Suryadinata, 2002).

Empirical comparisons that span all cultures show that under certain conditions each culture produces identity flows along with the modernization and traditionalization that surround it. Despite wide differences in cultural settings, its structure and function exhibit the same characteristics everywhere and feed into the political and psychological needs in all cultures, namely the need for certainty, identity and recognition for those who are isolated or threatened by a higher power. or by development development.

In each of these cultures, the identity of the local community declared war on the two competing streams, namely modernism and traditionalism, and unwaveringly sought to restore the true identity of the traditional culture which was in a slump at that time, by reviving it by taking control of power. politics and achieve absolute supremacy. In this way, society is completely liberated from the sufferings of modernization contradictions.

With the end of the East-West conflict, different cultural patterns have become even clearer as basic values and forms of life, as collective brands and hopes. This lesser-known fact did not so much succeed in impressing the minds of the masses in the years that followed the ideological era, as much as it failed its attempt to become a center of publicity and political exploitation.

Conceived in part for political purposes, exaggerated in part to maintain recognition, swallowed up by a disoriented public with a feeling of relief at a safe distance from unpleasant events, a sense of cultural awareness and with it an awareness of cultural differences seems to have taken over the state of the greatest confrontation that dominated this century. 20th.

The politicization of cultural differences occurs both inside and outside. From within represents the strategy of fundamentalism which seeks to convince us that the evil that has arisen in the world can only be cured, if the demands of certainty held by the fundamental leaders in each case can take place without fear of contradiction. From the outside it represents the strategy of outsiders such as Huntington who, without being a fundamentalist himself, opens the way for fundamentalism by expressing the statement that civilization that has spread in the world is fundamentally fundamental (Huntington, 1992).

The issue of identity that is currently happening in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra is mostly carried out by the issue of religious identity. Religious identity is used as political material to reach the power of the majority group in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi,

West Sumatra. The problem of the politicization of religious identity is also growing rapidly in almost all regions of Sumatra.

The politicization of religion which is used as a new political identity for the majority group in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra is marked by the growth of fundamentalist religious identity groups. Religious fundamentalist groups have a very large role and contribution in changing the pattern of identity politicization in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

Fundamentalism is a 20th century ideology that recruits its members on the basis of shared ethnic and religious characteristics. Experiences of humiliation, suffering, hopelessness, or lack of recognition contributed greatly to his political success.

## **The Impact of Identity Politics and the Threat of Pluralism**

### **1. Conflict and Identity Politics**

The Chinese ethnic group has been an immigrant ethnic group in Indonesia since the Dutch colonial era, but after being passed down for generations, the Chinese ethnic group has become one of the larger ethnic groups in Indonesia. Unfortunately, Chinese ethnicity is not balanced with harmony with native Indonesian tribes which are commonly called pribumi. In her journal, Erika Revida included a statement from Tungadi, "Factors inhibiting integration between Chinese and indigenous peoples are differences in orientation, customs, language, religion, economic structure, and participation in politics" (Revida, 2006).

The Chinese ethnicity is growing and developing so that they have a very big role in life in Indonesia, especially in the economic field. Because most of the ethnic Chinese play a very important role in the economy in Indonesia, so most of them have excess material.

This was discussed by Erika Revida as the cause of stereotypes on ethnic Chinese. Erika Revida stated, "The stereotype of the indigenous group towards the Chinese ethnic group is caused by differences in economic resources, due to the large number of elite settlements dominated by ethnic Chinese, as well as striking differences in lifestyles, so that the various ethnic groups in Indonesia generally have the same attitude in common. in dealing with Chinese ethnic groups (Revida, 2006).

Regarding ethnic identity, the colonial government has maintained the separation of the Chinese from the natives, while the Indonesian government has tried to Indonesianize the Chinese in many ways (Alamsyah, et.al, 2020). Culturally, the Chinese peranakan community has blended in quite a bit, but they are still not accepted as part of the Indonesian nation.

Discrimination against minorities in Indonesia is still an actual problem. This should not happen again, because during this reformation period the department of justice and human rights had been set up, as well as by the government since the time of Presidents Habibie, Gus Dur, to Megawati, several Presidential Instructions had been issued which abolished previous government regulations, especially the New Order which had the character of discriminatory towards minority cultures, customs and religion of several ethnic minorities in Indonesia. The New Order was an authoritarian regime that silenced the diversity of ethnic groups.

The silencing was carried out because ethnic groups were considered a political threat that could shake power. If any ethnic group opposes power, it will be suppressed immediately. Even though they were under the control of power, the New Order's political policies towards one ethnic group and another were not uniform, aka they were treated differently according to the interests of power.

At the beginning of its formation, the New Order established relations with the Chinese for economic purposes. Simultaneously with the consolidation of the power of the New Order, the Chinese community, especially among the owners of capital, seized power and obtained economic privileges from their proximity to power. Even the top leadership of the New Order, President Soeharto, by giving economic privileges and protection to Chinese people who also had business expertise, was entrusted with running the lucrative sector (big business).

This political protection allowed Chinese businessmen to monopolize the economic sector and eventually built a business empire in this republic. This is where the famous financiers, tycoons and conglomerates in this republic were born. It was no secret that back then, in running their business, barons, tycoons, and conglomerates collaborated with high-ranking military officials who at that time became very influential political actors (Suryadinata, 2002).

The political landscape that controlled ethnic plurality changed when the New Order fell from power in 1998, since then there has been a political change. The strengthening of the campaign for democracy, the establishment of new parties, the proliferation of associations or associations that promote human rights, pluralism and multiculturalism which continue to grow in various places which are part of political change.

The collapse of the new order in the power stage brought major changes to the ethnic Chinese. In line with political liberalization, restrictions and restrictions on Chinese cultural symbols began to weaken. The Chinese community was gradually allowed to display their cultural symbols on various occasions. For example, publishing newspapers with Chinese characters, widespread use of Chinese clothing, proliferation of Mandarin language courses, flood of Mandarin songs, the emergence of lion dances, and the recognition of Chinese New Year as the heart of a national holiday (Ma'arif, 2012).

One thing that has never happened before is the growing interest of Chinese people to enter or become administrators of political parties. If previously joining a political party was taboo, after 1998 many Chinese people joined political parties and even became party administrators at both the national and regional levels.

The existence of ethnic Chinese discrimination in matters of citizenship status in Indonesia is one example of deviations from the democracy adopted by the Indonesian nation. Democracy upholds the people as the holder of power. The people in this discussion are defined as all people who live in a country or become residents of the State (Suryadinata, 1999).

The people themselves were then divided into residents and non-residents. Indonesian residents are Indonesian citizens and foreigners residing in Indonesia which are

further divided into citizens and non-citizens. From this understanding, it appears that ethnic Chinese who have settled and resided in Indonesia are part of the Indonesian people.

At that time the discrimination of the Chinese ethnicity reached its peak in the May 1998 riots which shocked the world and caused extraordinary suffering for the Indonesian people, including the Chinese community in Indonesia. During the riots, indirectly the ethnic Chinese were in the position of victims and became the objects of mass targeting. Moreover, a New Order figure emerged who questioned the existence of ethnic Chinese as part of the Indonesian nation (Ma'arif, 2012).

This illustrates that the people who are actually part of the Indonesian nation, are often the targets of events that smell of ethnicity. The replacement of the post-reform New Order government at least gave the Chinese ethnic a little freedom.

## **2. The Politics of Multiculturalism**

The concept of multiculturalism, based on the observations of Parsudi Suparlan (2002), cannot be equated with the concept of ethnic diversity (ethnic group) or ethnic culture (ethnic culture) which characterizes a pluralistic society, because multiculturalism emphasizes cultural diversity on equal terms. If the concept and principle of pluralism places more emphasis on the diversity that exists in the reality of society per se, pluralism is something that can be seen and accepted by the naked eye, something physical, physical reality.

Therefore diversity (pluralism) lies or exists prior to or the forerunner of the emergence of multiculturalism. So, a multicultural society is a society that is plural or diverse in ethnicity or ethnicity, and which accepts and appreciates diversity which of course contains differences, for example culture, cultural values, opinions or ideas and anything related to physical diversity, as an existing reality (Aisyah, 2014).

According to Hodgson, he defined multiculturalism after seeing events in America, "In America, multiculturalism arises because of the failure of leaders in uniting Negroes with White people". From this, a synthesis can be taken that the multicultural concept is simply a failure to unite certain ethnic groups. Then the problem of inhibiting the process of cultural integration leads to the failure or wrong perspective on a cultural unit (Unicultural) (Hodgson, 1999). Plurality should not mean that we have to be forced to become one, but that difference must be a complex force to unite and walk together, without conflict.

Following Bikhu Parekh (2001), that the term multiculturalism contains three components, namely related to culture, this concept refers to cultural plurality, and certain ways to respond to that plurality. Therefore, multiculturalism is not a pragmatic political doctrine but rather a perspective on human life (Setyaningrum, 2003).

Because almost all countries in the world are composed of various cultures, meaning that differences are the foundation and human movements from one place to another on earth are getting more intensive, multiculturalism must be translated into multicultural policies as the politics of managing citizens' cultural differences.

We recognize at least three models of state multicultural policies to deal with the above problems: First, a model that prioritizes nationality. Nationality is a new figure that

was built together without regard to various ethnic groups, religions and languages, and nationality works as a glue for integration. Second, the national-ethnic model which is based on a strong ethnic collective consciousness whose foundation is blood and kinship relations with the national founders (founders). Third, the multicultural-ethnic model recognizes the existence and rights of ethnic citizens collectively (Chomsah, 2012).

Multiculturalism is a term used to describe a person's view of the variety of life in the world, or cultural policies that emphasize acceptance of the reality of diversity and the various (multicultural) cultures that exist in people's lives regarding values, systems, culture, habits, and the politics they follow. Meanwhile, pluralism is one of the most important characteristics of modern society and social groups, and perhaps the main driver of progress in science, society and economic development.

Multiculturalism is a philosophy that is also sometimes interpreted as an ideology that requires the unity of various cultural groups with the same rights and socio-political status in modern society. The term multicultural is also often used to describe the unity of different ethnic communities within a country (Widayanti, 2009).

Multiculturalism comes from two words, multi (many/diverse) and cultural (culture or culture), which etymologically means cultural diversity. Culture that must be understood is not culture in a narrow sense, but must be understood as all parts of human life which will then give birth to many faces, such as history, thought, verbal culture, language and others.

The term multiculturalism quickly developed as an interesting object of debate to be studied and discussed because it debated ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as the acceptance of immigrants in a country, which was originally only known as pluralism which refers to ethnic and cultural diversity within an area or country.

It was only around the middle of the 20th century that the term multiculturalism began to develop. This term has at least three elements, namely: culture, cultural diversity, and a special way to anticipate this cultural diversity. In general, modern society consists of various groups of people who have the same cultural and political status (Kauffman, 2004).

Awareness of the existence of cultural diversity is referred to as multicultural life. Awareness of the existence of diversity must be increased again into appreciation and a positive response. This understanding is known as multiculturalism. Multiculturalism aims for cooperation, equality and appreciation in a world that is increasingly complex and no longer monoculture.

Multiculturalism is an ideology and a tool to improve human dignity and humanity. In order to understand multiculturalism, a knowledge base is needed in the form of building relevant concepts and supporting the existence and functioning of multiculturalism in human life.

Various concepts relevant to multiculturalism include democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, togetherness in equal differences, ethnicity, ethnicity, ethnic culture, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public domains, human rights ( Human Rights), community cultural rights, and other relevant concepts.

This multiculturalism will be the main reference for the realization of a multicultural society, because multiculturalism as an ideology will recognize and glorify differences in equality both individually and culturally. In this multiculturalism model, a society (including Indonesian society) has a culture that is generally accepted in that society whose style is like a mosaic.

Within the mosaic are included all the cultures of the smaller societies that form the formation of a larger society, which has a culture like a mosaic. Thus, multiculturalism is needed in the form of a peaceful and harmonious social order, even though it consists of various cultural backgrounds.

The concept of multiculturalism cannot be equated with the concept of ethnic diversity or ethnic culture which characterizes a pluralistic society, because multiculturalism emphasizes cultural diversity in equality. Comments on multiculturalism inevitably review various issues that support this ideology, namely politics and democracy, justice and law enforcement, employment and business opportunities, human rights, community cultural rights and minority groups, ethical and moral principles, and the level and quality of productivity.

Meanwhile, pluralism is a framework where there is interaction between several groups that show mutual respect and tolerance for one another. They live together (coexistence) and produce results without assimilation conflicts. Actually talking about the concept of pluralism is the same as talking about a concept of "pluralism or diversity", where if we return to the meaning of pluralism itself that pluralism is a "condition of a pluralistic society" (Baidhawi, 2006).

Plurality here can mean pluralism in religion, social and culture. but what often becomes the hottest issue is religious pluralism. In principle, the concept of pluralism arises after the concept of tolerance. So when each individual applies the concept of tolerance to other individuals, pluralism is born. It is in the concept of pluralism that the diverse nation of Indonesia, starting from ethnicity, religion, race and class, can become a unified and whole nation.

Pluralism is often interpreted as an understanding that tolerates the existence of various thoughts, religions, cultures, civilizations and others. The emergence of the idea of pluralism is based on a desire to eliminate 'truth claims' which are considered to be the triggers for the emergence of extreme, radical attitudes, wars in the name of religion, horizontal conflicts, and oppression in the name of religion. According to pluralists, conflict and violence in the name of a new religion will disappear if each religion no longer considers its religion to be the most correct.

## **CONCLUSION**

The thickening of identity issues among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra seems to indicate that the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra are more exclusive (closed) to outsiders. This can be seen from the existence of ethnic Chinese, Javanese and others. Ethnicities outside the Minang ethnicity do not seem to be given free space in the midst of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, especially in the field of power politics.

Nowadays, the issue of identity in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, is increasingly related to religious issues. The majority of the population of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra are Muslim, politically the power of religion outside of Islam is restricted in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. the concept of plural and plural society in the midst of West Sumatra society.

This religious identity is further strengthened by the emergence of many religious groups among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. The growth of religious groups in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra is an indication that religious groups have the support of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. such as mass organizations that are indicated as radical mass organizations have a place in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra because they are supported by the customs and culture of the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra which are thick with the integration of Islam and their customs. This is one of the reasons why the strengthening of religious identity among the people of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. The existence of ethnic groups other than the Minang ethnic group, whose religious beliefs are different from those of the Minang people, is not very well developed in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Indirectly, religions outside of Islam are restricted to Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

This research offers a solution amid the strengthening of identity politics in a plural society. Among them is by instilling multicultural values in the midst of a pluralistic and pluralistic society, then providing understanding to the public regarding nationalism and prioritizing identity ethics. This can be a solution in the midst of a plural society whose ethnic, ethnic, cultural and religious identities are strengthened in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

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