

THE MALAKOK TRADITION AS A CUSTOMARY KINSHIP MECHANISM FOR BUILDING INTERRELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN MINANGKABAU SOCIETY



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Abstract

The *Malakok* tradition, locally known as *Mangaku Induak*, is a customary kinship mechanism through which individuals are incorporated into the social and genealogical structure of Minangkabau society. Beyond its function of establishing customary belonging, *Malakok* may also provide a social space for negotiating difference and fostering interreligious relations. This study aims to examine the process through which *Malakok* is practiced and to analyze its role in generating social acceptance, kinship solidarity, and interreligious tolerance in Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency, West Sumatra. Employing a qualitative field research design, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving interreligious *Malakok* participants, *niniak* mamak, customary leaders, religious leaders, community leaders, and local residents. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings indicate that *Malakok* involves family deliberation, approval by *niniak* mamak, and a customary ceremony that formally legitimizes an individual's incorporation into a Minangkabau kinship network. More importantly, the practice extends customary belonging across religious boundaries: Christian and Catholic individuals can be incorporated into customary families without relinquishing their religious identities. Interreligious tolerance is subsequently sustained through familial relations, participation in communal activities, mutual assistance, and everyday solidarity. The study demonstrates that *Malakok* functions not merely as a mechanism of customary integration but also as a locally embedded institution for negotiating religious difference, strengthening social cohesion, and sustaining interreligious coexistence in a plural society.

Abstract

Tradisi Malakok, yang dikenal secara lokal sebagai *Mangaku Induak*, merupakan mekanisme kekerabatan adat yang memungkinkan individu diintegrasikan ke dalam struktur sosial dan genealogis masyarakat Minangkabau. Selain berfungsi membentuk ikatan dan pengakuan kekerabatan, Malakok juga menyediakan ruang sosial untuk mengelola perbedaan dan membangun relasi antaragama. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji proses pelaksanaan Malakok serta menganalisis perannya dalam membangun penerimaan sosial, solidaritas kekerabatan, dan toleransi antaragama di Kecamatan Pauh Duo, Kabupaten Solok Selatan, Sumatera Barat. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penelitian lapangan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan pelaku Malakok lintas agama, *niniak* mamak, pemangku adat, tokoh agama, tokoh masyarakat, dan masyarakat setempat. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Malakok dilaksanakan melalui musyawarah keluarga, persetujuan *niniak* mamak, dan prosesi adat yang memberikan legitimasi formal terhadap penerimaan individu ke dalam jaringan kekerabatan Minangkabau. Lebih jauh, praktik ini memungkinkan perluasan ikatan kekerabatan melampaui batas agama, sehingga individu Kristen dan Katolik dapat diterima sebagai bagian dari keluarga adat tanpa harus mengubah identitas keagamaannya. Toleransi antaragama kemudian diwujudkan melalui hubungan kekeluargaan, partisipasi dalam kegiatan sosial, saling membantu, dan solidaritas dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Malakok tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai mekanisme integrasi adat, tetapi juga sebagai institusi lokal yang memungkinkan negosiasi perbedaan agama, memperkuat kohesi sosial, dan menopang kehidupan antaragama dalam masyarakat plural.



INTRODUCTION

The Mangaku Induak tradition or better known as Malakok is one of the customary mechanisms in Minangkabau society that functions to integrate individuals or groups of immigrants into the local kinship structure. In the Minangkabau social system which relies on matrilineal genealogical relationships, the existence of tribes and races has an important position in determining a person's social identity. Individuals who do not have a genealogical relationship with local communities often face limitations in accessing social and customary networks. In this context, Malakok is present as a cultural mechanism that allows a person to gain social recognition through adoption into a certain family or indigenous people. Various studies show that Malakok practices have long been part of the Minangkabau people's social adaptation strategy in dealing with population mobility, migration, and encounters between different ethnic groups (Adesaputra et al., 2019; Eriyanti, 2016; Sefriyono, 2015).

Studies on Malakok have so far placed the tradition as a mechanism for the social integration of immigrant communities into the Minangkabau traditional structure (Adesaputra et al., 2019; Mulyono, 2024; Sefriyono, 2015). Sefriyono's (2015) research on the Nias-Christian community in Padang Pariaman shows that Malakok functions as a means of identity negotiation between immigrant groups and the Minangkabau community. Research by Nengsih and Nurman (2021) highlights the practice of Mangaku Induak in the context of marriage and customary kinship relationships in South Solok. Meanwhile, a number of other studies emphasize Malakok's function as an instrument of social adaptation, cultural acceptance, and strengthening local community cohesion. However, studies that specifically examine Malakok as a medium for the formation of interfaith social relations in indigenous peoples are still relatively limited. Most previous research has focused on ethnic relations, migration, or social integration, so the dimensions of acceptance of individuals of different religions have not received adequate attention.

The limitations of this study are important to observe considering that the Minangkabau people have been known for their traditional philosophy of *basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK) which places Islam as the normative foundation of indigenous life. In various studies, this philosophy is often understood as a form of strong connection between customs and religion in the life of the Minangkabau people (Darwis & Muslim, 2024; Mariana, 2024). However, social dynamics in various regions show that there are variations in practices and interpretations in their implementation. One interesting phenomenon was found in Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency, where Malakok practices not only involve the Muslim community, but also individuals who are Christians and Catholics. This phenomenon raises important questions about how indigenous peoples interpret the acceptance of individuals of different religions in the kinship system that has been attached to the Islamic identity of the Minangkabau people.

Pauh Duo District was chosen as the location of the research because it is one of the areas in South Solok that shows the existence of interfaith Malakok practices that are still ongoing and accepted in the daily lives of the community. Based on the researchers' initial observations, there are a number of non-Muslim individuals who have undergone the Malakok process and are accepted as part of the indigenous family without having to change their religious beliefs. This condition is interesting to be studied further because it shows the existence of customary-based social mechanisms that allow the formation of family relationships in the midst of

differences in religious identity. In the midst of increasing attention to issues of intolerance, identity exclusivism, and religion-based social polarization in Indonesia, the experience of the Pauh Duo community offers an important empirical context for understanding how social practices based on local culture can contribute to maintaining harmony in relationships between different groups (Moeis, Febriani, et al., 2022; Salim & Aprison, 2024).

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of field research. Data was obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of interfaith Malakok actors, traditional leaders, *niniak mamak*, *penghulu*, community leaders, and communities involved in social life in Pauh Duo District. This approach is used to understand the meanings, processes, and social experiences that develop in Malakok practice in depth based on the perspectives of local actors and communities.

Based on this description, this study seeks to answer two main questions. First, how is the process of implementing the *Mangaku Induak* (Malakok) tradition in the indigenous community in Pauh Duo District. Second, how Malakok's traditions shape social acceptance and interfaith relations in the life of the local community. This study aims to explain the implementation mechanism of Malakok and analyze the role of this tradition in building interfaith social relations among indigenous peoples. The findings of this study are expected to enrich the study of the relationship between customs, kinship, and religious diversity, as well as show how social mechanisms based on local culture can contribute to building social cohesion in multicultural societies.

THE MANGAKU INDUAK TRADITION IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF MINANGKABAU SOCIETY

In the social structure of Minangkabau society, a person's identity is not only determined by their place of residence or daily social relationships, but also by their position in the matrilineal kinship system based on tribe and race (Darwis & Muslim, 2024; Mariana, 2024). Membership in a tribe is an important aspect because it relates to social rights and obligations, participation in indigenous life, and recognition in the structure of society. Therefore, individuals who come from outside the Minangkabau community or do not have a genealogical relationship with a tribe often face limitations in accessing the social and customary networks that prevail in the local community. It is in this context that the *Mangaku Induak* or *Malakok* tradition develops as one of the social mechanisms that allows a person to gain recognition and position in the Minangkabau traditional kinship system.

Etymologically, the term *Mangaku Induak* means recognizing a person as an *induak* or mother in the structure of customary kinship, while the term *Malakok* refers to the process of entering and joining a person into a traditional tribe or family through a socially agreed mechanism. Through this process, individuals who were previously outside the customary structure acquire a new social identity as part of the family and the people who receive it (Nengsih & S, 2021). In practice, *Malakok* is not only concerned with symbolic recognition, but also with creating social relations that contain mutual rights, obligations, and responsibilities between the accepted individual and the indigenous families who receive them.

Various studies show that *Malakok* practices have long been part of the social dynamics of the Minangkabau people. Sefriyono (2015), for example, explained that *Malakok* is an important mechanism in the identity negotiation process between the Nias-Christian community and the Minangkabau-Islamic community in Padang Pariaman Regency. Through

Malacco, immigrants gain space to adapt to the new social environment without having to lose their original identity. The research shows that *Malakok* not only serves as a mechanism for cultural integration, but also as a means of building more equal social relations between immigrant groups and local communities.

Another study conducted by Nengsih and Nurman (2021) shows that the Mangaku Induak tradition has an important role in the traditional life of the South Solok people, especially in the context of marriage and kinship relationships. Through this process, individuals who do not have a genealogical relationship with a tribe can gain social legitimacy so that they can engage in various customary activities that require kinship attachment. These findings show that *Malakok* cannot be understood solely as a ceremonial tradition, but as a social institution that functions to maintain the order of social relations in the Minangkabau society.

In its implementation, the *Malakok* process generally begins with the search for a family who is willing to accept someone as part of the traditional family. After finding a family who is willing to accept, a deliberation is held involving family members, *ninik mamak*, and traditional leaders to discuss the willingness to accept and the social consequences that will arise after the process is implemented. The approval of *ninik mamak* has an important position because they are customary authorities who are responsible for maintaining the continuity and legitimacy of kinship structures in society. After obtaining approval, a traditional procession is carried out as a symbol of an official's acceptance into the family and the people concerned.

Once a person is accepted through the *Malakok* process, he or she gains recognition as part of the family and the people who receive it. This recognition allows individuals to engage in various traditional activities, attend family deliberations, and obtain social support in community life. However, recognition through *Malakok* does not necessarily change all aspects of a person's customary status. In some Minangkabau communities, there are certain boundaries that are still maintained, especially those related to customary leadership, the inheritance of the title of *penghulu*, and authority in customary structures that are traditionally related to lineage. Therefore, acceptance through *Malakok* is more appropriately understood as a mechanism of social integration and kinship than the elimination of all identity boundaries that exist in indigenous peoples.

Although the basic principles of *Malakok* are relatively the same, the practice can differ between regions in West Sumatra. These variations are influenced by the social characteristics of the community, the structure of traditional leadership, and the historical experience of each country in interacting with immigrant groups. In some areas, *Malakok* is more practiced in the context of marriage and family relationships, while in others it develops as a social integration mechanism for immigrant communities that settle in the long term. These differences show that *Malakok* is a dynamic customary institution and is able to adapt to the social needs of the community that continues to develop (Eriyanti, 2016).

In the development of contemporary studies, *Malakok* practice has also given rise to various discussions about the relationship between customary identity, ethnicity, and religion in Minangkabau society. Some people see *Malakok* as a form of customary openness to immigrant groups and an effective social integration mechanism (Adesaputra et al., 2019; Sefriyono, 2015). However, some others consider that acceptance through *Malakok* does not necessarily eliminate the normative boundaries inherent in the traditional structure of

Minangkabau, especially because of the strong influence of the traditional philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*. The debate shows that *Malakok* is not only a cultural practice, but also an arena for identity negotiation that continues to evolve in accordance with the social changes of the Minangkabau society.

In the context of this study, the experience of four interfaith *Malakok* actors interviewed in Pauh Duo District shows that *Malakok*'s function is not only related to social integration based on ethnicity or kinship, but also related to the process of social acceptance of individuals who have different religious identities (Liza Jauharotul Munfarida Al Khurriyyah et al., 2025).

MANGAKU INDUAK AS A SOCIAL INTEGRATION MEDIAL

The *Mangaku Induak* tradition in Pauh Duo District not only serves as a customary mechanism to provide kinship identity to immigrants, but also serves as a means of social integration that connects individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, regions of origin, and religions into the social network of the local community (Adesaputra et al., 2019; Eric, 2016). In Minangkabau society which has a social structure based on race and ethnicity, the existence of kinship relationships is important because it is the basis for social recognition, participation in traditional activities, and access to various forms of social support in daily life. Therefore, the *Malakok* process cannot be understood simply as a customary formality, but rather as a social mechanism that allows a person to obtain a clear position in the life of the community.

Based on the results of the research, the *Malakok* process in Pauh Duo District began with the search for a family who was willing to accept someone as part of the traditional family. After a family was found willing to become an *induak*, a deliberation was held involving extended family members, *ninik mamak*, and traditional leaders. The deliberation is an important stage because one's acceptance is not only concerned with personal relationships with certain families, but also related to the collective recognition of indigenous peoples and peoples.

This is as explained by Dt. Rajo Alam:

"If there are people who want to go to *Malakok*, they usually discuss it first with the *niniak mamak* and their families so that everything is clear. It cannot be accepted immediately. There must be a mutual agreement because what will be accepted later is not only by one person, but by the family and the community as well." (Interview with Dt. Rajo Alam, February 2, 2026).

This information shows that *Malakok* is a social process that involves customary control mechanisms. The approval of *ninik mamak* is important because they have the authority to maintain the continuity of the kinship structure and ensure that the acceptance process runs in accordance with applicable customary norms. Thus, the social integration produced by *Malakok* was not individual, but gained legitimacy from the broader social structure.

After obtaining approval, a traditional procession is carried out as a symbol of an official's acceptance into the family and the people concerned. Based on the results of research observations, the procession is generally accompanied by the slaughter of animals, such as goats or free-range chickens, which is interpreted as a form of respect for customs as well as a symbol of official recognition of the social status of individuals who perform *Malakok*. According to Dt. Rajo Alam, the slaughter of animals is not just part of traditional ceremonies,

but is a sign that a person has been accepted and has a clear position in the community's kinship network.

Malakok's role as a medium of social integration can be seen in the experiences of actors who have undergone the process. For immigrant communities, the existence of indigenous families provides a sense of security and social certainty because they are no longer seen as outsiders. They gain kinship relationships that allow involvement in various social and customary activities that were previously difficult to access without kinship ties.

This experience was conveyed by one of the Malakok perpetrators, AY, who is from Nias and is a Christian:

"After Malakok, we feel that we already have a family here. If there is a family event, party, or village activity, we are always informed and invited to participate. We no longer feel like outsiders." (Interview with AY, 12 February 2026).

A similar experience was conveyed by JM who is from Nias and is a Christian. According to him, after undergoing the Malakok process, social relations with the community have become closer than before. He explains:

"Before Malakok I did feel like an outsider. But after joining the traditional family, the community began to get closer to me. They come if there is a family event, I am also called if there is a traditional activity or mutual cooperation. The relationship becomes closer even though they are different religions." (Interview with JM, February 2, 2026).

The information shows that Malakok not only provides formal recognition in the structure of indigenous kinship, but also forms a real social closeness in daily life. Through the family relationships that are built, individuals who were previously seen as immigrants gain space to participate more actively in the life of the community.

The statement shows that the social integration produced by Malachi does not stop at symbolic recognition, but is manifested in the social relationships that take place in daily life. Involvement in various community activities is an indicator that Malakok perpetrators have been accepted as part of the wider community (Moeis, Indrawadi, et al., 2022).

Although the social relations built through Malcolm tended to be harmonious, some informants explained that the process of adjustment in the early days was still necessary, especially in understanding customary norms, community communication patterns, and the boundaries of participation in activities directly related to religious practices (Azizah & Pebriyenni, 2021). However, these differences are generally resolved through familial communication and do not develop into open conflicts in society.

The findings of the study also show that social acceptance of Malakok perpetrators is reflected in various customary practices that are usually only carried out in the family environment. When the family of the Malakok perpetrator has children, for example, the bako family continues to carry out the tradition of *mankeliak anak* as applicable in the Minangkabau society. Similarly, in weddings, the traditional family is involved in various traditional processions that are commonly carried out in the Minangkabau kinship system. The involvement suggests that the relationship formed through Malakok is not formal or temporary, but develops into a socially recognized familial relationship (Eriyanti, 2016; Moeis, Febriani, et al., 2022).

The findings were also strengthened by the statement of Dt. Mudo as the head of Jorong Kapau. According to him, individuals who have undergone the Malakok process are not discriminated against in the implementation of customary activities as long as they have been accepted as part of the Minangkabau indigenous family. He explains:

"If he is already Malakok, it means that he is already part of the traditional family. So in traditional activities, the seat also remains according to its role and position, it is no longer differentiated." (Interview with Dt. Mudo, February 13, 2026).

The statement shows that acceptance of Malakok perpetrators is not only symbolic, but also manifested in daily social and customary practices. Recognition as part of the indigenous family provides space for Malakok actors to participate in community life without experiencing social discrimination in various traditional activities.

This finding is in line with the view of Sefriyono (2015) who explains that Malakok functions as a mechanism of adaptation and social integration for immigrant groups in Minangkabau society. However, the research in Pauh Duo shows a broader dimension. If previous research has focused more on ethnicity-based social integration and migration, then based on the experiences of four interfaith Malakok actors interviewed and confirmed by traditional leaders and community leaders, this study shows that Malakok also functions as a means of social integration for individuals who have different religious identities from the majority of local communities. In other words, the social integration built through Malakok not only connects ethnically different groups or regional origins, but also opens up space for acceptance of religious diversity in the lives of indigenous peoples.

However, the reception does not take place automatically. This was emphasized by Dt. Mudo who explained that the acceptance of Malakok perpetrators is not determined by a person's regional origin or religion, but by his willingness to respect customs and maintain good relations with the community.

"For us, the important thing is that the person wants to live well with the community, respect customs, and maintain family relationships. If it is carried out, the community can usually accept." (Interview with Dt. Mudo, 2026).

Based on the interview, the acceptance of Malakok perpetrators is greatly influenced by the individual's ability to adapt to applicable social norms, respect local customs, and maintain good relations with the surrounding community. Therefore, the success of *Malakok* as a mechanism of social integration is not only determined by the traditional processions carried out, but also by the shared commitment to maintain harmonious social relations in daily life. Thus, the Mangaku Induak tradition in Pauh Duo District shows that customary institutions still have an important role in building social cohesion of the community. Through the kinship mechanism generated by *Malakok*, individuals from different backgrounds gain space to participate in social life more equally. These conditions show that social integration in indigenous peoples is not built solely through geographical proximity or economic interests, but also through the formation of kinship relationships that are recognized and maintained collectively by communities.

TOLERANCE AND INTERFAITH TOLERANCE

Based on the experiences of four interfaith *Malakok* perpetrators interviewed as well as the statements of traditional leaders and local community leaders, this study found that *Malakok* practices in Pauh Duo District not only function as a social integration mechanism, but also open up space for acceptance for individuals who have different religious backgrounds. In contrast to a number of customary kinship practices that are often limited by the similarity of cultural and religious identities, *Malakok* di Pauh Duo shows that social acceptance can take place without demanding a change in religious beliefs from the recipient (Azizah & Pebriyenni, 2021). This condition can be seen from the experience of several *Malakok* perpetrators from the Christian and Catholic communities, namely JM, YZ, MH, and AY.

The four informants have different backgrounds. JM is a Christian community who has lived in Pauh Duo for a long time and lives a social life with the local Minangkabau community. YZ is a Catholic and has practiced *Malacco*, so that he has obtained kinship relations with the indigenous families in Pauh Duo. Meanwhile, MH and AY are from Nias and are Christians. They came to the region to work and then settled with their families. In a process of social interaction that lasted for many years, they chose to do *Malakok* as a means of gaining social recognition and kinship in the local community.

Based on the results of the interviews, the acceptance of the *Malakok* perpetrators did not occur spontaneously, but through a customary mechanism involving the recipient's family, *ninik mamak*, and traditional leaders. Collective consent becomes an important requirement because the individual who performs *Malakok* will be part of a kinship network recognized by the community. Thus, the acceptance given is not only personal, but is a form of social recognition legitimized by customary structures. According to Dt. Mudo:

"What is seen is not his religion, but how the person lives in the community. If he respects the customs, respects the community, and wants to be part of the family, then the custom provides space for that." (Interview with Dt. Mudo, 02 February 2026).

The statement suggests that social acceptance in *Malakok* practice is based more on social relationships and a commitment to harmonious coexistence than on a common religious identity (Faridah, 2013; Hutabarat, 2023). In this context, customs serve as a social mechanism that brings together individuals from different backgrounds into broader familial bonds.

A similar experience was conveyed by AY who is from Nias. He explained that after undergoing the *Malakok* process, he was no longer treated as an immigrant, but as part of the local community's family.

"After *Malakok*, we felt accepted as family. If there is a village activity or family event, we participate together. No one ever questioned our religion." (Interview with AY, 12 February 2026).

The AY's statement shows that the social acceptance formed through *Malakok* does not stop at symbolic recognition, but is embodied in everyday social practices. The relationships built through customary kinship allow *Malakok* perpetrators to participate in various community activities without experiencing discriminatory treatment.

The same thing was conveyed by YZ who is Catholic. He explained that during his stay in Pauh Duo, he never felt pressured to change his religion even though he had been accepted into the Minangkabau traditional family.

"I continue to practice the religion I follow. There was never any compulsion to convert to Islam. The family that accepted me also respected my religious choices." (Interview with YZ, February 2, 2026).

The same view was conveyed by MH. Based on the results of the interview, he explained that the Pauh Duo people still respect their beliefs even though worship facilities for Christians are not available in the area. According to him, the community never interferes with the implementation of their religious beliefs and still maintains good social relations in daily life.

The information shows that the tolerance that developed in the Pauh Duo society was not only reflected in social acceptance through Malakok, but also in respect for the right of each individual to practice his or her religious beliefs. This attitude of mutual respect is one of the factors that supports the maintenance of harmonious relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

In addition to continuing to practice their beliefs, the Malakok perpetrators also explained that the celebration of religious holidays is carried out independently in their family environment. Based on the results of the interview, the surrounding community did not reject the religious activity as long as it was carried out while maintaining good relations and respecting the social norms that apply in the community.

The data is strengthened by the statements of traditional leaders. Dt. Rajo Alam explained that the purpose of Malakok is not to change one's beliefs, but to build family relationships and strengthen the social life of the community.

"Malakok is a matter of tradition and family. Religion remains their own business. The important thing is to respect each other and maintain good relations in society." (Interview with Dt. Rajo Alam, February 2, 2026).

The findings are also strengthened by the views of local religious leaders. Based on the results of an interview with Angku Katik, the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Pauh Duo has been taking place in a relatively harmonious atmosphere because of the mutual awareness to maintain good social relations. According to him:

"Even though they are different religions, the people here are used to living side by side. There is no prohibition for them to carry out their worship. The important thing is to take care of each other and respect each other." (Interview with Angku Katik, Feb 5, 2026).

The statement shows that tolerance in the Pauh Duo community is not only supported by customary mechanisms through Malakok practices, but also receives support from the views of religious leaders who emphasize the importance of mutual respect and maintaining harmonious social relations in the midst of religious differences.

The findings show that the Pauh Duo community distinguishes between matters of customary kinship and matters of religious beliefs. Religious differences are not an obstacle to building social relationships as long as each individual respects the norms that apply in life together (Derung et al., 2023) . Such a pattern allows the formation of relatively harmonious relationships in the midst of the diversity of religions in society.

The tolerance that develops in the Pauh Duo community is also seen in various daily social activities. Based on the results of the study's observations, Muslims and non-Muslims are involved together in mutual cooperation activities, attending weddings, helping families who

have experienced deaths, and participating in various other community activities. The presence of non-Muslims in such social activities is accepted as part of the common life and is not seen as a threat to the religious identity of the local community (Faridah, 2013) .

However, the tolerance that develops in the Pauh Duo society does not mean that it eliminates all existing identity boundaries. Based on interviews with traditional leaders, the acceptance of Malakok perpetrators does not necessarily change the traditional leadership structure that is traditionally rooted in the Minangkabau social system and the Islamic identity of the community. In other words, social acceptance takes place within the framework of respect for differences, not in the form of the elimination of all existing cultural and religious boundaries. These findings show that tolerance in the Pauh Duo society is built through the recognition of differences, not through the uniformity of identity.

Understanding of the relationship between Malakok and tolerance was also conveyed by Dt. Rajo Mudo as a traditional leader in Pauh Duo. According to him, the main purpose of Malakok is not only to give recognition of customs to a person, but also to build social closeness that allows the creation of harmonious relationships in the midst of differences in identities. He explains:

"Malakok is actually not only about the custom of entering the tribe, but how a person is accepted in people's lives. When he has entered the race, then social relations automatically become closer. From there, mutual respect arises even though the religion is different." (Interview with Dt. Rajo Mudo, 02 February 2026).

The statement suggests that the tolerance that developed through Malakok is rooted in social relationships built through mechanisms of customary kinship. When a person has been accepted as part of a family and a race, the relationship that is formed is no longer based on differences in religious identity, but on the bonds of kinship and a sense of brotherhood that are constantly maintained in a common life.

In a broader perspective, the results of this study show that the tolerance that develops through Malakok is relational and based on everyday social experiences. Tolerance is not realized through formal declarations or certain institutional programs, but through family relationships that continue to be maintained in people's lives. Social closeness born from kinship allows people to build a sense of mutual trust, respect, and solidarity that transcends differences in religious identity (Madigan, 2018) .

Although these findings are based on a limited number of cases, the results of the study show that in the context of Pauh Duo, Malakok not only serves as a mechanism of ethnicity-based social integration and migration, but also as a means of building interfaith relationships through the formation of customarily recognized kinship bonds.

THE RELEVANCE OF MALAKOK TRADITIONS IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Based on the results of interviews and field observations, the Malakok tradition in Pauh Duo District shows that tolerance does not always grow through formal regulations, state policies, or harmony programs designed from the top. The results of the study show that acceptance of individuals of different religions actually develops through social mechanisms that are rooted in people's daily lives (Madigan, 2018) . In this context, Malakok functions as a customary institution that builds kinship relationships so that religious differences are not

positioned as social boundaries that separate the individual from the community in which he lives.

So far, efforts to build interreligious harmony in Indonesia have generally been carried out through formal approaches, such as interfaith dialogue, religious harmony forums, religious moderation counseling, and various government policies aimed at maintaining social stability. This approach has an important role in reducing potential conflicts and strengthening relationships between community groups. However, relationships built through formal mechanisms often stop at the level of recognition and respect for the existence of other groups without generating deeper social bonds.

The findings of the study in Pauh Duo show a different pattern. The tolerance that developed through *Malakok* not only resulted in recognition of the existence of different religious groups, but also established familial relationships that placed individuals as part of a common social network. After undergoing the *Malakok* process, a person is no longer seen as an outsider who simply coexists with the local community, but as a family member who has social relationships, moral rights, and social responsibilities in living together. Thus, tolerance born through *Malakok* is participatory and relational because it is built through direct involvement in family and community life (Azizah & Pebriyenni, 2021).

This form of participation can be seen when *Malakok* perpetrators are involved in various family affairs, ranging from attending weddings, children's weddings, helping when disasters occur, to involvement in community mutual cooperation activities. The engagement shows that the acceptance given does not stop at symbolic recognition, but develops into a social relationship of a familial nature.

This characteristic is one of the uniqueness of *Malakok* compared to the various forms of formal tolerance that have developed in modern society. If formal tolerance generally emphasizes respect for differences, then *Malakok* goes a step further by creating social closeness through kinship mechanisms (Eriyanti, 2016). In this context, social relationships are not built on the basis of common religious identity, but on the basis of a sense of belonging, shared responsibility, and solidarity born of kinship relationships. Therefore, acceptance of individuals of different religions is not only normative, but is manifested in concrete social practices.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, this closeness can be seen in various activities of people's lives. *Malakok* perpetrators are still involved in gotong royong activities, attending family events, helping when disasters occur, and participating in various community social activities. The relationship that is formed does not stop at the interaction between neighbors, but develops into a socially recognized familial relationship. This condition shows that the social bonds produced by *Malakok* have a strong integrative power because they are rooted in the experience of living together that lasts continuously (Moeis, Febriani, et al., 2022).

However, the results of the study also show that the tolerance that develops through *Malakok* has certain limits. Acceptance of non-Muslim individuals does not necessarily eliminate all identity differences that exist in society. The structure of customary leadership, the implementation of religious rituals, and various aspects related to religious teachings are still carried out in accordance with the norms of each group. Thus, the tolerance that develops in Pauh Duo is not a form of identity fusion, but rather a recognition of the existence of

differences within the framework of harmonious social relations. Until this study was conducted, no data was found to show that non-Muslim Malakok actors occupied positions in traditional leadership structures such as *niniak mamak* or *penghulu*. The findings of the study show that there is social acceptance that is manifested through family relationships, participation in community life, and involvement in various daily social activities. These conditions show that social cohesion does not always demand uniformity of identity, but can be built through respect for differences that are maintained in common life.

In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, Pauh Duo's experience provides an important lesson that local wisdom can be an effective social resource in building relationships between different groups (Nuriadi, 2023; Salim & Aprison, 2024). While formal approaches often face limitations in reaching people's daily lives, traditional institutions such as Malakok are actually able to present a reception mechanism that is closer to the social experience of the community. Therefore, Malakok not only has relevance to the Minangkabau people, but also offers an alternative perspective on how interreligious relationships can be built through a bottom-up approach to culture and kinship.

These findings also show that customs not only function as cultural heritage that maintains the continuity of traditions, but also as social capital that plays a role in maintaining community cohesion in the midst of diversity (Eriyanti, 2016; Moeis, Indrawadi, et al., 2022). In the case of Pauh Duo, Malakok shows how customary institutions are able to be a social bridge that connects individuals from different religious backgrounds without losing their identity. Thus, the main contribution of Malakok traditions to multicultural societies lies in its ability to build tolerance through mechanisms of indigenous kinship. These findings show that interfaith relationships are not always built through formal institutional and policy approaches, but can also grow from culturally based social practices that result in emotional closeness, belonging, and shared social responsibility. In this context, Malakok offers an alternative perspective on how social cohesion can be built and maintained in a religiously and culturally diverse society.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the *Mangaku Induak* (Malakok) tradition in Pauh Duo District not only functions as a mechanism for accepting a person into the Minangkabau traditional kinship structure, but also as a means of social integration that strengthens relationships between individuals in community life. The *Malakok* process is carried out through the stages of family deliberation, *niniak mamak* approval, and a traditional procession that gives social legitimacy to the accepted individual. Through this mechanism, *Malakok* perpetrators gain recognition as part of their families and the people who patronize them so that they can participate in various social and customary activities of the community. These findings show that *Malakok* still has an important social function as an indigenous institution that is able to integrate migrants into the lives of local communities.

This study also found that *Malakok*'s practice in Pauh Duo is not limited to social integration based on ethnicity or regional origin, but also forms interfaith social relationships. *Malakok* perpetrators who are Christians and Catholics are accepted as part of the traditional family without having to change their religious beliefs. This acceptance is realized through involvement in social activities, family relationships, and participation in various community

activities that take place in a sustainable manner. These findings show that tolerance in the Pauh Duo community is not only in the form of recognition of the existence of different religious groups, but develops into closer social relationships through the mechanism of customary kinship. In this context, the findings of the study suggest that indigenous people can function as social capital that bridges identity differences and builds social cohesion in a multicultural society. The findings broaden the understanding of the role of indigenous institutions that not only function as kinship-based social integration mechanisms, but also as spaces of social acceptance for individuals of different religions.

However, this study has some limitations. The research data was obtained from the relatively limited number of interfaith Malakok perpetrators and only focused on one research area, namely Pauh Duo District, so that the findings obtained could not be generalized to the entire Minangkabau community. In addition, this study has not conducted a comparative study with nagari or other regions that have *Malakok* practices with different characteristics. Therefore, further research is needed to compare *Malakok* practices in different Minangkabau regions, as well as to examine more deeply the relationship between customs, kinship, and religious diversity in a broader social context.

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Interview Source

- AY. The Malakok perpetrator is from Nias, Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency. Interview, February 12, 2026.
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- JM. The perpetrator of Malakok Jorong Taratak Baru, Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency. Interview, February 2, 2026.
- MH. The perpetrator of Malakok Jorong Taratak Baru, Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency. Interview, February 2, 2026.
- YZ. The perpetrator of Malakok Jorong Lasuang Batu, Pauh Duo District, South Solok Regency. Interview, 2 February 2026.