

## Regulatory Compliance among Religious Radio Stations in West Java

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Radio broadcasting institutions operating under the legal framework are required to comply with all applicable regulations. Indonesia has established legal provisions that specifically govern the broadcasting system. To date, no article has examined the stance of religious radio stations in West Java on broadcasting regulations. **Purpose:** This study was conducted to examine the extent to which religious radio stations in West Java comply with existing regulations. Additionally, it aims to shed light on various phenomena, ranging from compliance to violations occurring at religious radio stations in West Java. **Methods:** This study used a qualitative multi-case study. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and a review of documents from West Java Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID Jabar). These data were then processed and analyzed to evaluate regulatory compliance among 18 radio stations, utilizing an analysis grounded in law, communication ethics theory, the journalistic code of ethics, and the nine elements of journalism. **Results:** Based on the research findings, four violations were identified in this phenomenon: restrictions on women's voices, the temporary suspension of the broadcast of the national anthem "Indonesia Raya," funding sources that do not comply with regulations or rely on donations, and promotions made in the name of specific groups. **Conclusion:** Some religious radio stations in West Java have not fully complied with applicable regulations. **Implications:** These findings suggest that strict oversight is necessary, along with a strong commitment by radio stations to comply with government-established regulations.

**Keywords:** broadcasting; radio; regulation; religion; violation

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## INTRODUCTION

The media has existed for a long time and has now evolved significantly, driven by technological advancements. As a result of these changes, the media now generates significant interest in various philosophical issues, giving rise to a variety of new trends, habits, and different values (Alshawi et al., 2022). Every country has the authority to establish the rights and obligations of the media within its borders. Some liberal countries establish regulations through democratic processes, while others impose stricter media regulations (Bôtošová et al., 2023). The Republic of Indonesia has issued various legal instruments as regulatory guidelines to ensure that broadcasting institutions, including radio stations, remain within their proper scope in accordance with the functions of the mass media. According to Nova and Irma (2025), mass media serve as a channel for both the production and distribution of information, operating in accordance with established rules. However, radio today does not merely provide informational broadcasts. It also serves as a medium for education, entertainment, and religious preaching. Some stations even adopt names that reflect their broadcast content. For instance, those specifically focused on religious preaching are generally referred to as “religious radio stations.” Laor (2022) believes that most listeners actually prefer radio stations with specific content because it saves them time in selecting suitable content.

Religious radio stations have emerged in response to the growing religiosity in Indonesia. The Agency for Research and Development and Education and Training (Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan serta Pendidikan dan Pelatihan - Badan Litbang dan Diklat) (2024) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs reported that Indonesia’s Religiosity Index reached 70.91% in 2024, up from 69.33% in 2023. Religiosity is often prioritized in Indonesian society. Among social media users, the majority often associate moral principles with religious teachings (Anom & Rassanjani, 2026). Islamic broadcasting is a media practice that plays a strategic role in providing religious knowledge, shaping identity, and fostering ethical awareness among young people (Madsen, 2023). When viewed through the lens of history, media with Islamic religious content were once strictly restricted until they finally reached a turning point during the Reformation era. Before Indonesia entered the Reformation era, the government strictly limited media content with Islamic themes (Palupi et al., 2025). Since the era, Islamic media have experienced steady growth.

The spread of religious-format radio stations has reached nearly every corner of the province. These stations operate under various ownership structures. They range from private commercial entities and foundations to religious communities. Content segmentation is typically based on the predominant religion of the population in a specific area. For example, West Java, which has the largest Muslim population in Nusantara (the Indonesian archipelago), records 33 active and continually growing Islamic-oriented religious radio stations, as shown in Table 1. Nevertheless, in accordance with applicable legal policies, radio stations must fundamentally remain neutral, uphold national unity, and avoid content related to ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA).

Indonesia has established a legal framework to guide broadcasting law. Law No. 32 of 2002 serves as the legal foundation governing the entire national broadcasting system. This law was enacted to ensure that broadcasting operations are grounded in the principles of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Article 36, Paragraph 1 of the Act stipulates, “Broadcast content must include educational and entertainment information, as well as content beneficial for intellectual development, character, morality, progress, national strength, maintaining unity and solidarity, and must uphold the religious and cultural values of Indonesia.” The provision requires broadcasters to air educational and entertaining content without neglecting

**Table 1.** Data on Religious Radio Stations in West Java

| No | Radio Name                  | Legal Entity                          | Type | Frequency | Religion and Faith | Networked / Standalone |
|----|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|-----------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1  | Rodja Bandung               | PT. Radio Generasi Muda               | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 2  | Rodja Bogor                 | PT. Radio Ika Lesmana                 | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 3  | Rodja Majalengka            | PT. Radio Fantasi 70                  | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 4  | Fajri Bogor                 | PT. Radio Fajar Imani                 | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 5  | Fajri Bandung               | PT. Radio Swara Pandawa Lima Shakti   | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 6  | Wadi Bogor                  | PT. Bahana Suara Alam                 | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 7  | Wadi Purwakarta             | PT. Bias Suara Alam                   | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 8  | SKN Al-Bayyan Cianjur       | PT. Radio Swakarya Niaga              | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 9  | RadioQU Cirebon             | PT. Radio Mustika Gelar Said          | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 10 | RadioQU Kuningan            | PT. Radio Duta Muslim                 | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 11 | RadioQU Majalengka          | PT. Radio Swara Rajagaluh Gemilang    | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 12 | RadioQU Bogor               | PT Media Silaturahmi Radioqu Bogor    | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 13 | Simpati Cirebonn            | PT. Radio Simpati Pratama             | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked +            |
| 14 | As-Shiddiq Purwakarta       | PT. Radio Reza Bobby Cendy            | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 15 | Trend Religi Purwakarta     | PT. Radio Gita Kanari Ria             | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked +            |
| 16 | MQFM Bandung                | PT. Radio Madinatussalam Bandung      | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 17 | MQFM Subang                 | PT. Radio Pelangi Cakrawala Nusantara | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Networked              |
| 18 | Elshifa Subang              | PT. Radio Elshifa Indoqat Mandiri     | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 19 | Latanza Sukabumi            | PT. Radio Swara Latanza               | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 20 | Salam FM Sukabumi           | PT. Radio Ciung Wanara                | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 21 | Riyadul Jannah Tasikmalaya  | PT. Radio Swara Prabu Kiansantang     | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 22 | Inayah Tasikmalaya          | PT. Radio Inayah                      | LPS  | FM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 23 | Tarbiah Sunah Bandung Barat | PT. Radio Suara Sabanda Sariksa       | LPS  | AM        | Islam              | Standalone             |
| 24 | Maestro Bandung             | PT. Madah Ekaristi Swaratronika       | LPS  | FM        | Christian          | Standalone             |

(continued on next page)

**Table 2** (continued)

|    |                          |                                                       |     |    |           |            |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----------|------------|
| 25 | Suara Indah Bandung      | PT. Radio Bandung Suara Indah                         | LPS | FM | Christian | Standalone |
| 26 | Kharisma Bandung         | PT. Radio Nada Kencana Agung                          | LPS | FM | Christian | Standalone |
| 27 | Suara Gratia Cirebon     | PT. Radio Suara Mulya Afrindo Rekatama                | LPS | FM | Christian | Standalone |
| 28 | Rakom Veritas Cirebon    | Perkumpulan Radio Komunitas Suara Veritas             | LPK | FM | Catholic  | Standalone |
| 29 | Rakom RCK Cianjur        | Perkumpulan Radio Komunitas Pendidikan Citra Kasih FM | LPK | FM | Christian | Standalone |
| 30 | Radio Indah Siar Cirebon | PT Radio Indah Siar                                   | LPS | FM | Islam     | Standalone |
| 31 | Cahaya FM Sukabumi       | PT Radio Senada Indah                                 | LPS | FM | Islam     | Standalone |
| 32 | Syiar Tauhid Depok       | PT Radio Swara Pakusarakan Pratita                    | LPS | AM | Islam     | Standalone |
| 33 | Talitakum Bekasi         | Perkumpulan Komunitas Radio Talitakum                 | LPK | FM | Christian | Standalone |

Source: Research Results, 2025

the development of listeners' intellectual character, as well as the character and moral values that support the nation's strength and unity. Furthermore, Paragraph 6 explicitly states that broadcast content is prohibited from mocking, demeaning, disparaging, and/or disregarding religious values. This verse strictly prohibits broadcast content that incites SARA. This means that broadcast content must not be discriminatory toward other groups, as such content could lead to division of the nation. The provisions of this clause are particularly relevant for religious radio stations, as its final sentence states that broadcasters must not disregard religious values. Broadcasting institutions with religious programming are legally required to practice their respective religious values without disparaging other religions, in accordance with the state ideology, Pancasila.

In this context, legislation regulates not only broadcasting but also the individuals (i.e., journalists) and institutions that report on broadcasts, collectively referred to as the press. The government has enacted the Press Law, Law No. 40 of 1999, which imposes an obligation on the press to respect religious norms in its news broadcasts. As stipulated in Article 5, Paragraph 1, the law requires the national press to report events and opinions while observing these norms. In addition to this law, a journalistic code of ethics and the 9 elements of journalism outline various rights and obligations that the press must uphold, such as being non-discriminatory, comprehensive, and unbiased. When broadcasting news, the press must also adhere to communication ethics as a guide for how it receives and conveys messages. Thus, the established regulations serve as a normative guideline for all broadcasting organizations. Indirectly, it also serves as a benchmark for assessing the extent to which broadcasting organizations with a religious programming format fulfill their functions in accordance with applicable law.

Although regulations governing broadcasters and related matters are set forth in law, their implementation on the ground does not always comply with the rules. Each broadcaster has its own distinct character and approach, ranging from management practices and

organizational capacity to differing perspectives. This situation becomes even more interesting when considered in the context of religious radio stations, which directly promote da'wah and disseminate religious teachings through their broadcasts. This poses a challenge for religious radio stations, as they must balance their objectives and broadcast formats with the provisions of requirements, the journalistic code of ethics, the 9 elements of journalism, and other relevant regulations.

The emergence of Islamic-themed broadcasting is driven by a strong desire to uphold the teachings of tawhid, promote an inclusive way of life, and unite the Muslim community. This reflects da'wah that aligns with the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the prophets, prioritizes Islamic principles, and avoids materialism (Alit et al., 2025). Islamic-themed broadcasting plays a crucial role in disseminating religious teachings, knowledge, guidance, and values to the audience (Azizah, 2021). Islamic-themed religious radio has a positive impact on spreading messages of tolerance to a wide audience. Islamic content that emphasizes compassion, mutual respect, and living together in harmony without conflict can strengthen the values of moderation among its listeners (Rafisqy, 2024). Both statements actually indicate that the radio is in line with norms and regulations. However, if the broadcast format prioritizes a specific group, it may conflict with existing regulations. Unfortunately, this phenomenon can lead to majority bias, in which the dominant group is more likely to justify the actions of its members. Conversely, the minority group will be more scrutinized if it acts against the norms.

In addition to the general phenomena mentioned above, the researchers also found several instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations, communication ethics, and other press regulations by religious radio stations in West Java. For example, restrictions on women's voices that are suspected of perpetuating negative stereotypes, revenue sources that contradict criteria set by law, technical non-compliance with regulations (violations of the P3SPS), and business models that operate outside legal provisions.

Research on religious radio and regulatory oversight has been discussed in several academic articles. Nova and Irma (2025) examined the role of the Aceh Broadcasting Commission (KPI Aceh) in preserving local values and Islamic law. The study focuses on the Commission's oversight, broadcasting regulations, and Islamic law. Furthermore, there has been a discussion of media capitalism in religious radio in West Java, as researched by Basith and Hidayat (2026). The main topic of that research is to uncover the practices of capitalism carried out by religious radio in West Java through an analysis of the political economy of media. From the two studies above, there has been no discussion of religious radio stations' compliance with applicable laws in West Java. Furthermore, no one has yet elaborated on this phenomenon in relation to the Broadcasting Law, the Press Law, the Journalistic Code of Ethics, the 9 Elements of Journalism, and Communication Ethics Theory. Therefore, this study aims to answer these questions.

Based on the above description, this study examines the extent to which religious radio stations in West Java comply with applicable regulations. The researchers identified the normative gaps and analyzed the case study results in relation to the laws. This study aims to make an academic contribution by identifying these normative gaps and their legal standing.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study was qualitative research with a multiple-case study approach. The subjects of this study were radio stations broadcasting religious programs in West Java. Data were collected through observation and interviews with experts and stakeholders from broadcasting institutions, regulators, and associations. The data were then processed and

analyzed to assess the implementation of regulations at each radio station, using an analysis grounded in Broadcasting Law, the Press Law, the Journalistic Code of Ethics, the 9 Elements of Journalism, and Communication Ethics Theory. Data collection was conducted naturally, as the researchers immersed themselves directly in the research setting to observe how participants addressed the issues under investigation. Informants also provided detailed explanations of various phenomena occurring without any coercion or threats. The data obtained were validated through data triangulation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Violation of the Principle of Equality

The researchers have identified a significant normative tension within religious radio stations in West Java, namely the failure to provide equal opportunities for women's participation in broadcast content. Some religious radio stations, particularly those with an Islamic orientation, view women's voices as *awrah*, something that should not be heard indiscriminately by non-mahrams. This is based on a Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which states, "A woman is an *awrah*; if she goes out, the devil will watch her." (HR. Tirmidhi, Ibn Khuzaimah, Thabarani; authentic). Scholars interpret this Hadith to mean that every part of a woman is an *awrah*, including her voice. On the other hand, the Shafi'i school of thought explains that a woman's voice is not considered an *awrah*, except in unnatural forms that violate Allah's guidance, such as flirting with the opposite sex.

The researchers categorized the 33 religious radio stations in West Java into several regional clusters and selected three stations from each. Consequently, 18 religious radio stations were examined, revealing different views regarding the role of women in broadcast programming. One notable example is Radio Rodja, which prioritizes male speakers over female ones.

For example, if there's information about West Java and so on, there are plenty of women there too. That's not a problem. But for the speakers, well, the speakers are all men or Ustadz. Why is that? At first, we were selective, meaning we looked for qualified candidates, and once we had enough men, we just went with it. Especially since we don't take this lightly; the speakers really need to be experts in their fields, there are many factors involved (Informant 1, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

In addition, the researchers highlighted a statement from RadioQu Kuningan that they allow women's voices to be broadcast under certain conditions: only as announcers or guests, not in songs.

Because the concern is that with a woman's voice, there might be sexual desire or slander and so on, especially in songs. It's okay to have female interviewees, as long as they have an escort. Usually, for example, if there's a female interviewee, there's an escort accompanying her. They're not left alone together in a room; they're not alone with the interviewee. There should be at least three people present. I'm afraid of slander, especially without a cover (Informant 2, personal communication, February 16, 2024).

Although most religious radio stations claim to allow women's voices to be featured in their broadcasts, the researchers who cross-referenced their data with the West Java Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID Jabar) found conflicting statements. The Chair of the KPID Jabar, Adiyana Slamet, stated that several broadcasting institutions in West Java had previously received warnings regarding this issue. Among them was Radio Tren Dakwah Purwakarta. The Chair of the KPID Jabar stated that, "We previously issued a warning sanction to Tren Dakwah for refusing to provide opportunities for female guests on the air, citing religious views as the reason." According to him, this has undermined the spirit

of broadcasting, which does not discriminate on the basis of gender. He believes everyone is entitled to equal opportunities based on their qualifications to work. Not only that, but Ganang Partho, Editor-in-Chief of Jabar Now, managed by the West Java Association of National Private Broadcasting Radios (PRSSNI Jabar), stated that some PRSSNI members with a religious focus have made specific requests to avoid using female newsreaders in Jabar Now's news segments. Furthermore, when women read news segments, the station's management requested that the presenters scheduled to broadcast them be replaced by men. The reason given for this request was based on their religious beliefs.

When analyzed in light of Law No. 32 of 2002, the issue above relates to Article 36 (6), which states, "Broadcast content is prohibited from mocking, demeaning, harassing, and/or disregarding religious values, the dignity of the Indonesian people, or damaging international relations." Restricting women's voices in broadcasting constitutes a violation of this provision, as it undermines human dignity through unequal treatment between women and men. Every human being, without exception, based on gender, has the right to equal opportunities, particularly in the public sphere. Radio is a mass medium in the public sphere that, in practice, must comply with state-enacted regulations and respect human rights. That includes providing equal opportunities for women in the broadcasting sector. In line with this statement, Article 6 (b) of the Press Law No. 40 of 1999, which states, "... upholding the fundamental values of democracy, promoting the rule of law and human rights, and respecting diversity," also implies that the press is obligated to uphold human rights, including the right to exercise one's professional competence. In addition to these two laws, the journalistic code of ethics enacted by the Press Council through Press Council Regulation No. 6 of 2006, in Article 1, states: "Balance means that all parties receive equal rights."

The debate over whether a woman's voice is part of the *awrah* is an issue of "vocal nudity." Views on a Muslim woman using her voice to recite the Qur'an in public spaces, call the *adhan*, serve as a female imam in prayer, sing "halal" songs, deliver sermons, and answer the phone depend on the listener's understanding of that voice. Malama Khadija, a female scholar in Nigeria, publicly expressed her view that a woman's voice is not part of the *awrah*. According to her, Islam permits women to use their voices in public spaces, provided it is not done in a manner that appears seductive or intentionally seeks to attract the attention of non-mahram men (Muazu, 2022). The issue of "vocal nudity" regarding women's voices turns out not to be limited to Islam. The Abrahamic religions, including Jewish tradition, hold the view that women should not use high-pitched tones when singing in the presence of men. A woman's fingers, hair, thighs, and voice are considered parts of the body that can arouse men and lead to forbidden relationships (Borts, 2021). The debate over whether a woman's voice constitutes a "forbidden part" is unavoidable. However, from the perspective of human rights equality, restricting women's voices in public spaces constitutes a form of gender inequality.

This phenomenon is not limited to countries with Muslim majorities. It also occurs in Italy. According to Perrotta (2023), discrimination against female broadcasters has been a topic of discussion for quite some time. In line with this view, Rimmer (2021) states that the small number of female broadcasters is not due to a lack of interest but rather a deliberate effort to prevent women from being more vocal, which in turn silences men who feel their voices are being suppressed.

### **Structural Threats to Independence**

The second finding of a violation concerns operational funding sources that do not comply with regulations. The funding model for a broadcasting institution is governed by Law No. 32 of 2002. Under Article 15 (1), the funding sources for public broadcasting institutions come



**Figure 1.** Radio Rodja Donation Drive Poster  
Source: Research Results, 2024

from broadcasting fees, the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget or the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN & APBD), public donations, advertising revenue, and other lawful activities. Meanwhile, under Article 19, the funding sources for private broadcasting institutions come from advertising revenue and other lawful activities. In a case study of a religious radio station in West Java, the researchers found several private broadcasting institutions (LPS) whose funding sources did not comply with regulatory provisions. Namely, they were obtained through open donations or voluntary contributions.

The study revealed that 14 of the 18 religious radio stations in West Java rely on donations for income, with LPS dominating the 18 stations. One of these stations is Radio Rodja. Radio Rodja does not accept commercial advertising and relies on listener donations for its operational costs, which are channeled through a foundation. This approach is considered capable of raising funds quickly and building emotional closeness with its listening community.

Figure 1 shows that donations were once promoted around late 2019. This, of course, violates the regulations established by KOMINFO and KPI. However, the public's enormous enthusiasm also poses a problem for activities like this. Additionally, Radio Rodja has used the same strategy and has successfully raised 757 million rupiah in less than a month, starting on September 11, 2020. The fundraising campaign was officially announced through their website. Radio Rodja continued this practice several times, eventually reaching a total of 2.9

billion rupiah in donations.

Based on the observations, Radio Rodja, via [www.rodja.co.id](http://www.rodja.co.id), actively seeks public donations to expand its broadcast network by acquiring other radio stations and to cover operational costs. One factor contributing to this is that the majority of the public is unaware of the applicable regulations. People enthusiastically make donations under the pretext of giving alms to receive a divine reward in accordance with Islamic beliefs.

Radio Rodja explained that for voluntary contributions or larger donations, the sender's identity is not disclosed. The solution is to use the foundation's bank account to ensure accountability if questions arise in the future about how the donations were distributed. The foundation fulfills this accountability by reporting to donors through a dedicated donor group. In addition, the researchers also found the same phenomenon at Radio Fajri AM in Bandung. They explained that the accountability model at Radio Fajri is exactly the same as that of Radio Rodja: "If there are advertisements and product sales, the proceeds are transferred to PT's account. However, if there are donations, infaq, zakah, and other contributions, they go into the foundation's account." (Informant 4, Personal Communication, February 16, 2025). Fundraising is conducted when needs are not covered, and donations are collected from the public to meet those needs. Donations are adjusted according to need. Once the needs have been met, fundraising is discontinued. These donations are used to cover operational costs, maintenance, and other expenses. As proof of how donations are distributed, Radio Fajri provides written reports and documentation.

Informant 5, Deputy Chair of the Central KPI, stated in an interview with the researchers that, "If it is publicly funded or funded by a specific community, it should be classified as a community broadcasting institution." (Informant 5, personal communication March 20, 2024). After hearing Informant 5's explanation, the researchers concluded that all radio stations have bypassed existing regulations. However, nearly all radio stations bypass these regulations by using institutions or foundations to manage donation funds. The relevant committee must certainly be aware of this. This revelation has raised new questions about how the regulatory process can be avoided simply by establishing a foundation. This is because, from a legal perspective, it does not constitute a violation. The entities subject to broadcasting laws and regulations are broadcasting institutions, whereas foundations are not bound by such regulations.

In truth, the fundraising practices conducted by some private radio stations remain improper. They can generate negative public perception when people feel that the donated funds are being used for unintended purposes. There is also concern that this will undermine public trust in these institutions. Furthermore, this practice is also unlawful. As private broadcasting entities, radio stations should optimize their operational funding through their own business activities (e.g., advertising and other broadcasting-related ventures), rather than relying on public donations. Any collection of public donations must be accompanied by detailed accountability to the public regarding their usage. This is especially given that public trust in donation-collecting organizations has previously been damaged by corruption scandals. This can become a serious issue, as public sentiment can be significantly influenced by broadcast content, whether positively or negatively. According to Sulistijanto et al. (2025) this study examines how broadcasting regulators enforced ethical standards under structural, commercial, and ideological pressures. Using a qualitative case study method, it draws from institutional documents, official reports, and interviews with broadcasting practitioners in West Java to analyze the challenges faced by the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI, the mass media not only exerts technical and economic influence but also extends into the ideological realm. In this technological age, audiences play the role of active citizens who shape the flow

of media. For example, a study by Saleh et al. (2025) found that religion-based radio broadcasts can enhance psychological stability and even challenge extremist interpretations of Islam in Nigeria. Compliance with these regulations is closely tied to the duties and responsibilities of West Java KPID. First, regarding limited liability companies, for example, Private Broadcasting Institutions (LPS) are not permitted to accept public donations, with the exception of Public Service Broadcasting Institutions (LPP) and Community Broadcasting Institutions (LPK). LPS are permitted to raise funds from the public solely for the purpose of donations to disaster victims.

### **The Discrepancy in Civic Duties**

The Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI), in its Guidelines on Broadcasting Conduct and Broadcast Program Standards (P3SPS), has systematically regulated the schedule for playing the national anthem, “Indonesia Raya,” for radio stations that broadcast 24 hours a day and those that broadcast for less than 24 hours. The regulations stipulate that 24-hour radio stations are required to play the anthem at 6:00 a.m. local time, while stations broadcasting for less than 24 hours must play it at the beginning of their broadcast. According to records from the KPID, Radio Rodja was once found to have failed to play the anthem, citing the presence of musical elements within the song as the reason. They held the view that the music was haram and should not be broadcast on their station. However, after receiving a reprimand from the West Java KPID, they agreed to play the anthem in accordance with the regulations set forth in the P3SPS, but without musical accompaniment, that is, in an a cappella version.

Even after being reprimanded, they still asked for leniency, requesting that the national anthem be played in an a cappella version (without music). After checking the relevant law on the National Anthem, Law No. 24 of 2009, we found that it does not specify in detail that the song must have music. Therefore, an a cappella version is permissible. However, it is still mandatory to play it (Informant 3, personal communication, August 11, 2023).

Law No. 32 of 2002, in Article 5 (d), mandates that broadcasting institutions maintain and reinforce national unity and integrity. This article implies that they are obligated to uphold national unity and integrity, one way being to play the national anthem at designated times. For a broadcasting institution, playing the anthem is the very least it can do to uphold national unity and solidarity. According to Hidayatullah (2022), legal broadcasting media are still only half-hearted in fulfilling their commitment to maintaining and fostering a sense of nationalism. Yet the law explicitly states that one of the objectives of broadcasting institutions is to strengthen national integration and build a national identity rooted in faith and piety.

When viewed through the lens of communication ethics, such violations are related to deontological theory. This theory posits that ethics is grounded in moral duties, rules, and absolute principles. Deontological ethics, or “non-consequentialism,” explains that actions such as killing an innocent person and breaking a promise are inherently wrong, not merely wrong because of their consequences. The leading figure in deontological theory is Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher. Kant’s deontological theory emerged from the view that humans possess a rational nature, enabling them to consider legal rules governing their actions (Benlahcene et al., 2018). According to this theory, an institution’s religious beliefs cannot be used as an exception to legal obligations. Based on the findings of Mussa’s (2024) study, the prohibition of music in Islam is explicitly stated in the Qur’an and authentically narrated by the Prophet, specifically regarding music and singing that are deemed inappropriate. There is no Islamic regulation that clearly states that playing music is an act that violates Sharia law. Nevertheless, some scholars still prohibit the playing of music on the grounds that modern musical performances can lead

to the mixing of the sexes, explicit sexual content, and nudity. However, this violation is not a matter of whether a national anthem is halal or haram. Instead, it concerns how a radio station complies with the legal obligations it accepted when obtaining a license to establish the station.

The Directorate of Control at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika - KOMINFO) has the authority to conduct monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and annual evaluations. In accordance with the Minister of Communication and Information Technology Regulation No. 6 of 2021, the relevant Directorate General is required to monitor and evaluate broadcasting institutions regarding broadcasting administration. Meanwhile, the format and content of broadcasts fall under the authority of KPI. Informant 6, Head of the Sub-Coordinator and Radio Broadcast Trial Verification Section at KOMINFO, stated that if religious radio stations, in their operations, have the potential to violate the principle of religious moderation and endanger national unity, the government will likely review broadcasting regulations to prevent such incidents from recurring.

The researchers agree that if anything threatens the national integration of the Republic of Indonesia, people must act immediately, based on recommendations from the public and the KPI, as there are matters that require attention. “We will reconsider whether new regulations are needed or which existing regulations should be applied.” (Informant 6, personal communication, April 15, 2025).

### **Category-Based Affiliate Marketing**

Business competition among a wide variety of radio stations requires each broadcaster to be creative in designing its business strategy. Radio is considered an excellent digital platform for effectively implementing branding strategies (Barrio Fraile et al., 2021). One of the trending business strategies is religious broadcasting. Broadcasting religious content is not prohibited by law, but regulations set certain limits: it must not involve SARA and must not link religion to promotional activities, as stipulated in No. 32 of 2002, Article 46, Paragraph (3), letter (c): “promotions linked to the teachings of a religion, ideology, individual, and/or group, which offend the feelings and/or demean the dignity of other religions, other ideologies, other individuals, or other groups.”

Religious radio stations in West Java employ various business models to ensure the sustainability of their organizations. One such station is Radio Fajri AM Bandung, which sells a variety of products (e.g., non-medical remedies, milk, honey, and other items) to support the station’s operational needs. These products are sourced from distributors through a profit-sharing arrangement. However, among these products, the researchers identified a unique business model: Radio Fajri AM Bandung has developed a business strategy by selling olive oil that has been blessed through ruqyah. This product is associated with a religious name and tends to be in high demand among the public. Additionally, Radio Rodja employs a business model involving fundraising under the guise of religion. The researchers assessed this based on the narratives shared by Radio Rodja as follows:

“Join us in supporting Radio Rodja FM through your contributions and donations to the following account: Bank Syariah Mandiri 756 3939 006, in the name of Yayasan Cahaya Sunnah (Rodja FM). Bank code: 451. For information and confirmation (WhatsApp), ...

\*Confirmation is not required because the account is designated specifically for Rodja FM

Please make sure you play a part in the establishment of Radio Rodja FM, and may it be a source of ongoing charity.

May Allah reward you with good. Among the most meritorious forms of charity, when the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, was asked which form of charity is the most meritorious, he replied:

مَوْقُلُ خُلَا تَغْلَبَ إِذَا يَتَخَّ لُؤْمُتُ الْوَى، نَغْلَا لُمُتَو رَقْفَلَا شَخْت، حِي حَشَّ حِي حَصَّ تَنْ أَوْ قَدَّصَتْ نَأْ

“You give charity while you are in good health and find it difficult to part with your wealth, while you fear poverty and hope for wealth. So do not delay, until your soul reaches your throat” (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

Based on the results of interviews, several sources stated that they had ensured in advance that the news they reported complied with regulations, as stated by a source from Radio Rodja: “Yes, we make sure in advance to adhere to the code of ethics in broadcasting. We are not allowed to broadcast hate speech or content that incites ethnic, religious, or racial discrimination” (Informant 3, personal communication, February 16, 2026). However, in fact, Article 46 (3) (c) of Law No. 32 of 2002 not only prohibits promotions that offend religion or other groups. Implicitly, this article also prohibits promotions associated with religion or other groups. The issue appears more nuanced, yet both are equally problematic from a normative perspective. Product promotions packaged with the teachings of a specific religion or group serve as a marker of superiority, as if the product is inherently better. This statement also applies to the business models employed by the two radio stations mentioned above. Promoting olive oil that has undergone “ruqyah” makes the product appear superior because it has gone through the process. In Islam, the ruqyah process involves healing or protection through the recitation of specific verses from the Qur’an, zikr, and prayers. Consequently, this olive oil sells well because most buyers believe it will be more effective at healing or protecting them from certain illnesses due to the prayers recited over it. Additionally, the fundraising campaign conducted by Radio Rodja is deemed to violate legal regulations because the promotion is linked to religion. The narrative shared by it, as described above, even directly cites religious texts to intensify its fundraising efforts.

As a company operating in the media sector, a radio station must naturally prioritize profitability to cover operational costs, so that some of the advertised products align with the audience’s interests. For example, research findings by Putri and Aji (2021) on Radio Suara Muslim, which features a flagship (prime-time) program titled Kajian Fajar. A program is categorized as prime time if it has more listeners than other programs on that radio station (Rihartono, 2015). To ensure the company can continue operating, Radio Suara Muslim determines its programming based on segmentation, classification, programming strategies, and advertising classification. Religious segmentation is believed to encourage all Muslim residents to follow Islamic religious culture. High levels of interaction between broadcasters and listeners can attract advertisers, as shown by the numerous advertising slots in one of Suara Muslim’s programs. Nevertheless, content segmentation focused on religion is not prohibited. However, if it crosses certain boundaries, such as linking religion to promotional activities, it constitutes an action prohibited by law. When a promotion conducted by a broadcasting institution utilizes the teachings of a religion, audiences will find it difficult in the future to distinguish between broadcast content containing religious and commercial messages. Therefore, all radio stations operating within a country are required to fully comply with its regulations, without exception. According to Ebenezer et al. (2022), violations by religious radio stations in West Java are suspected to be caused by exclusive religious beliefs, resulting in material intended for private religious settings being broadcast in public broadcasting spaces. Furthermore, weak government oversight of public fundraising can lead to misappropriation due to a lack of public accountability.

## CONCLUSION

This study examines the compliance of religious radio stations in West Java with applicable regulations. Based on the findings, four violations were identified: gender discrimination by restricting women's voices, not playing the national anthem, Indonesia Raya, because it contains musical elements considered haram (forbidden), funding sources from public donations that were not publicly reported, and promotions made in the name of specific groups. These findings were analyzed using the perspective of Law No. 32 of 2002 concerning broadcasting, and violations were found by several religious radio stations in West Java. These findings served as the basis for the West Java KPID to carry out regulatory and guidance for religious radio stations suspected of violating these regulations. These findings recommend strict supervision and increased awareness among radio stations to comply with government regulations. This study is limited to cases in West Java. Recommendations for further research include expanding the scope to other provinces or on a national scale.

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