

# Fostering Cultural Harmony: Economic Empowerment of Ethnic Chinese within the Minangkabau Philosophical Framework in Padang City

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111

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the intersection of cultural beliefs and spatial dynamics shaping the economic activities of the ethnic Chinese community in Padang City, focusing on their empowerment through Minangkabau traditional philosophy. The research highlights how cultural values deeply influence identity, social interactions, and economic opportunities within a pluralistic society. A qualitative ethnographic approach was used to gather insights from key community members, including Minangkabau and non-Minangkabau residents, as well as the *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan*, which consists of *ninik mamak* (tribal leaders), *alim ulama* (religious scholars), and *cadiak pandai* (intellectuals). Interviews centered on cultural and economic integration, exploring how traditional Minangkabau norms intersect with ethnic Chinese values. The research reveals that the Minangkabau traditional



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philosophy fosters an environment of coexistence, allowing the ethnic Chinese community to practice their cultural traditions without violating the overarching norms of “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*”. This cultural harmony supports economic engagement while respecting Confucian principles, which coexist with Minangkabau values. This study broadens the discourse on multiculturalism and economic interactions by highlighting how Minangkabau and Confucian values coexist within a shared economic and cultural space. The research provides new insights into the role of traditional philosophy in fostering economic inclusivity.

**Keywords:** *Cultural Belief, Chinese Ethnicity, Economic Strengthening, Indigenous Philosophy.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Economic development in Islam delivers the Ummah to holistically achieve prosperity, tranquility, and quality of life (Furqoni et al., 2023; Lamido, 2016; Maghrebi & Mirakhor, 2015). Economic justice cannot be separated from socio-political order. This emphasis should not be interpreted to mean that man and his experience in the world are concerned only with his problems and economic interests. This implies the importance of placing all values below man’s moral and spiritual needs (Khadduri, 1984). Economic justice implies the importance of placing all values below the moral and spiritual needs of human beings, even proper consideration for humanitarian affairs (Khadduri, 1984). Furthermore, the Minangkabau political sphere is explicitly contained in *The Types of Legitimate Domination*. In this case, there are three bases of legitimacy for a leader: rational, traditional, and charismatic (Holton & Turner, 2010).

The realization of Minangkabau cultural values has been inherited and maintained for generations, becoming a guideline for life and an association between community members (Tabellini, 2009). This is to the concept of cultural belief, a culture’s importance and high value. Several ethnicities living in the city of Padang competed competitively in trade activities. This is also true for the Chinese living in Padang City, who can adapt socially and culturally to Minang society without giving up their essential cultural symbols (Nur, 2016). This phenomenon is interesting because, for Chinese people, the space for activities and stays is quite limited. The phenomenon of

limited space for activities and residence among the Chinese community in Padang City can be understood through various socio-cultural and historical lenses. Historically, Chinese communities in Indonesia, including Padang City, were often segregated into specific areas, such as Chinatowns, limiting their physical mobility and access to broader regions.

The socio-cultural background of the Minangkabau people and the variants of cultural phenomena mentioned above have allowed Sharia-based economics to find its world in West Sumatra. One of Weber's monumental works that began with religious action was *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*, which inspired research into the relationship between religion and capitalism (Weber & Kalberg, 2013). This is the case in the economic dimension within the Islamic social framework, where this context occupies a unique position because Islam believes that the stability of the individual and the life of the Islamic side depends on material and spiritual well-being (Khadduri, 1984). This concept is in line with the religious beliefs of local wisdom of the Minangkabau people, which is represented by the traditional philosophy of "*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*". This philosophy is the foundation of Minangkabau culture, proving that Minangkabau people predict poverty (Addiarrahman, 2013).

This work provides an understanding of religion by creating prerequisites that allow capitalism to flourish. Capitalism is influenced not only by the contributions of entrepreneurs and investors but also by religion, which encourages hard work, perseverance, honesty, and discipline to allow capital to accumulate as much as possible. Success in this world is a sign of happiness in the afterlife. Islamic teachings believe that work is a form of worship and is an integral part of the duty and responsibility of a servant of Allah to have a good work ethic (Munawaroh & Masyhuri, 2019).

The complexity of this research will later try to develop an ethnographic approach. The understanding of this concept is based on the paradigm and direct belief of the individual concerned as a first-hand living subject. Ultimately, this research is expected to turn knowledge into benefits, making knowledge tangible benefits. Concrete expectations are positive changes based on the objectives of activities set together at the beginning, namely, Minangkabau community development in empowering the economy. Cultural and religious approaches are also used as solutions. Culture and religion are placed as informal enforcement that can encourage agents to consistently work and behave according to the provisions set by the principal (Clemente, 2013; Greif, 1994; Leeson, 2000; Tabellini, 2009). Methodologically, all

research with a cultural and religious approach uses game theory and historical methods (Greif, 1994; Okazaki, 2001).

The Minangkabau community has long been used as an object of research by many domestic and foreign researchers. From various existing research, the focus of study can be grouped on themes: Migration (Kato, 2005; Naim, 1984; Pelly, 1994), Islam and Matrilineal Kinship System (Manan, 1984), Ancient Manuscripts in Minangkabau, (Akhimuddin, 2007; Kathano, 2008), Application of Islamic Inheritance within the Minangkabau Community (Syarifuddin, 1982), Minangkabau Society (Nusyirwan, 2010), The Religious and Cultural Identity of the Minangkabau Ethnic Group in Border Areas (Rozi, 2013), Interaction and Integration of Minangkabau Communities in Border Areas (Astuti, 1999; Maryetti, 1999).

This research is framed around the potential and urgency of examining the cultural beliefs and economic spaces of the ethnic Chinese community through the lens of indigenous philosophy. What makes this particularly compelling is how the business dynamics of the ethnic Chinese in Padang City differ from those in other regions. This theme has been chosen because, hitherto, no scientific study has addressed the intersection of a region's culture, economic environment, and traditional philosophy in this manner. The study is anticipated to contribute to developing a diversity framework within the context of religious moderation. Additionally, it aims to provide a critical analysis of the practical application of empowering local wisdom grounded in indigenous philosophy while exploring its integration with the ethnic Chinese and non-Minangkabau communities.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Cultural Belief**

The term culture can be interpreted to infer how a group differs from other groups in history, traditions, values, and beliefs. This element of culture is universal in the world's society. Susane and Jane (1967) define culture as including culture (cultivating land, crops, animals); culture (cultivation of mind, arts, civilization); culture (the process of social development); culture (meaning, values, way of life); and culture (a practice which produces meanings). The influence of culture lies in its power to shape personality and ultimately boils down to the formation of behavior (Mooij, 2004). Another key focus in cultural studies is the critical aspect of culture, specifically cultural belief. Cultural belief, or mental action, plays

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a significant role in shaping societal behavior (Himes, 1967). It serves as an essential component of cultural action and becomes a defining identity within a community (Greif, 1994).

### **Minang Culture and Philosophy**

West Sumatra is part of Indonesia's territory, which has a diverse society of both ethnic and religious. The indigenous population consists of the Minangkabau ethnic group, who practice Islam. Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is nothing new to Minang society (Nafriandi, 2016). In general, Minang people are friendly to guests, especially those they have known for a long time and foreign guests who are adaptable to situations and places (Syamdani, 2008). Minangkabau society has a philosophy "*Panakiak pisau sirauik, Ambiak galah batang lintabuang, Silodang ambiak ka niru, Satitiak jadikan lauik, Nan sakapa jadikan gunuang alam takambang jadi guru*" (Sharpening a bent knife, Using a areca nut stem to be processed into something more useful, A drop of water can be likened to a sea, A little bit of land can become a mountain, The vast expanse of nature becomes a teacher). Nature also presents various experiences and teachings for the Minangkabau people, so it must preserve nature. The value of local wisdom found in Minangkabau encourages growth and development with the philosophy "*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*", a powerful guide for the Minangkabau people. Therefore, this philosophy inspires the emergence of extraordinary entrepreneurs who take advantage of local wisdom.

### **Business Patterns and Economic Development of Minang**

Padang City has a reasonably high population growth and density and relatively rapid development. Some of the business models applied by the Minangkabau community include cooperation, migration, and trade. According to the traditional saying, the custom is "*Nan Maniru Manoladan, Sahino Samahu, Sarasa Sapareso, Raso di Baok Naiak, Pareso Dibaok Turun*" (Those who follow and emulate, all day long, in all circumstances, fair and equitable, in every treatment, suppressed feelings will reappear, Feelings that are left alone will disappear over time). The Minangkabau community carries out activities based on the principles of unity and kinship. Some examples of the trading mechanism of the Minangkabau Indigenous people are Minangkabau traders always transact with bidders until the price agreement, prioritize the subscription buying and selling system, show the

advantages and disadvantages of goods, prioritize honesty based on mutual benefit and mutual welfare. Therefore, the Minangkabau people have always been a society that loves trade (Alfirdaus et al., 2014). This indicates that the Minangkabau people apply the philosophy “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*”.

### **Scope of Non-Minang Life (Chinese)**

Chinese, commonly known as Ethnic Chinese or Ethnic Chinese, is one of the ethnic groups known for its ability to do business, trade, and produce goods or services needed by everyone. China is well-known and recognized worldwide as a trade expert. The story of China as a pirate country with culture, lifestyle, and even the ability to hack world-famous brands is precisely through this model that China can dominate the industrial world and read business instincts in forming new market segments. Ethnic Chinese consistently adopt an honest approach in business, demonstrating resilience despite not adhering to Islam while employing and using Islamic economic principles, even though they are not Muslims. Ethnic Chinese refers to people residing outside of mainland China (*Chinese Overseas*) (Erniwati, 2016).

### **Business Patterns and Economic Development of Ethnic Chinese**

Companies established by ethnic Chinese typically originate from familial foundations and subsequently pass down through generations. For them, business activity represents the pinnacle of excitement in life. They perpetuate this business ethos over generations. Ethnic Chinese is an honest and unyielding businessman. Businesses provide this opportunity on an unlimited basis, that is, for anyone interested in the business world. Business offers a unique appeal in their lives, so most (if not all) Chinese people engage in business activities to support themselves. Business has become the flesh and blood of the Chinese (Lan, 1960). Among foreign ethnic groups that inhabit Indonesia, ethnic Chinese get quite a lot of attention because of their role in all sectors, especially in the economic sector (Groeneveldt, 2009).

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research method with an ethnographic approach. Data were gathered from knowledgeable and experienced individuals in their respective fields. The researchers conducted interviews with Minangkabau and non-Minangkabau residents, as well as with members

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of the *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan*, including *ninik mamak* (tribal leaders), *alim ulama* (religious scholars), and *cadiak pandai* (intellectuals).

The subjects of this research are the informants or sources from whom the necessary data will be collected. Given the complexity of identifying relevant parties and the limited time available for research, the author seeks to find suitable sources within the Padang City area. The informants selected for this study are required to meet several criteria. First, they must be either Minangkabau or Chinese residents of Padang. Second, they should possess knowledge and expertise related to Minangkabau customary philosophy. In addition, they need to understand economic development concepts and be willing to participate as informants for the study.

Table 1 lists the names and designation of the respondents. The names of the key informants in this study are as follows:

**Table 1 Key Informants**

| No. | Name   | Element                      | Position   |
|-----|--|------------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Syuhendri S.Pd, M.Sn                           | Ninik Mamak<br>Cadiak Pandai | Pamong Budaya Madya,<br>Department of Culture, West Sumatra<br>Province  |
| 2.  | Dr. Aguswan Rasyid,<br>Lc.                     | Alim Ulama<br>Cadiak Pandai  | The National Board of Zakat for the<br>Republic of Indonesia (BAZNAS)<br>Manager and MUI of Payakumbuh City<br>Postgraduate Lecturer at the University<br>of Muhammadiyah West Sumatra |
| 3.  | Prof. Niki Lukviarman,<br>SE.,Akt., MBA., DBA. | Cadiak Pandai                | Professor of Corporate Governance<br>at the Faculty of Economics, Andalas<br>University, Padang, West Sumatra  |
| 4.  | Dr. Al Busyra Fuadi,<br>ST., M.Sc.             | Cadiak Pandai                | Lecturer / Vice Dean of the Faculty of<br>Civil Engineering and Planning (FTSP) at<br>Hatta University   |

|    |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|
| 5  | Dr. Havid Ardi, S.Pd.,<br>M.Hum.<br>(Datuak Rangkayo<br>Mulia Guci) | Cadiak Pandai<br>Ninik Mamak                | Lecturer/Vice Dean of the Faculty of<br>Language and Literature, Padang State<br>University                     |
| 6. | Dr. Mursal, M. Ag.  | Non-<br>Minangkabau<br>Residents<br>(Batak) | Lecturer / Former Vice Rector II of the<br>University of Muhammadiyah West<br>Sumatra                           |
| 7  | Herwin Noor   | Minangkabau<br>Residents                    | Minangkabau Community (Former PLN<br>Employee of Padang City)   |
| 8  | Ismardi S.Pd  | Minangkabau<br>Residents                    | Staff of Social Welfare Education and<br>Training Center (BBPPKS),<br>Ministry of Social Affairs of Padang City |
| 9  | Gusti   | Minangkabau<br>Residents<br>(Pariaman)      | Minangkabau/Pariaman Residents  |
| 10 | Richard John  | Non-<br>Minangkabau<br>Residents            | Non-Minangkabau residents residing in<br>Padang City  |
| 11 | Yan Partawiajaya  | Non-<br>Minangkabau<br>Residents            | Non-Minangkabau residents residing in<br>Padang City / Lecturer of Padang State<br>Polytechnic                  |

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*Source: Processed data from the authors (2023)*

Data was also collected by interviewing some of the informants above to parse the phenomena in the field and validate the data from key informants.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Cultural Belief in the Minangkabau Realm**

Culture is universal, but the embodiment of culture has specific characteristics proportional to the situation and place. To explain it, we can learn from the Minangkabau proverbs: “*Di mana langit ditopang, bumi diinjak-injak*” which means one should respect and adapt to the customs and rules of the place where they reside. Implementing culture requires



consideration of the context of the location and the people involved. While culture is stable, it is also dynamic. It is an inherent aspect of human nature, fulfilling and supporting people's lives. However, culture can also shape the future, much like modern life heavily relies on the internet and technology. Along with the times, the culture in Minangkabau is still preserved by the prevailing customs. Some forms of cultural belief in Padang can be explained as follows:

### 1. Preventive measures

Preventive action is still the main principle related to *cultural belief* in Minangkabau. Until now, retail businesses have not been able to enter West Sumatra. The statement of the source explains this: Prof. Niki Lukviarman, SE., Akt., MBA., DBA. (*Sutan Mangkuto*) as follows:

*Oh yes, this example I think that the local government should not have Alfamart Indomart of all kinds of it is ok, but I assess them, if I as an academic I see it must be comprehensive, yes, I see it even if people are banned, but the goods come from them. Those who master the goods. However, what about West Sumatra? Is it loved? Nevertheless, they are still given, so the small stalls sell products like you find elsewhere. Gitu bay, although what, although I see the long term can be dangerous, so until now, nothing, no problem. (Niki Lukviarman, personal communication, June 4, 2023)*

Based on the explanation by the speaker, *cultural belief* lies in preventive action, such as the precautionary principle. In this case, the resource person gave an example related to the ban on establishing modern retailers such as Alfamart and Indomaret. The ban is not only a ban but with long-term thinking and includes preventive measures. In addition, the principle of usefulness refers to laws or regulations in Padang City. This is also a form of cultural belief in Padang City.

Cultural experts see culture as a strategy. One strategy is to treat culture (a word/term) not as a "noun" but as a "verb." Culture is no longer just a collection of works of art, books, musical instruments, museums or buildings, rooms, offices, and other cultural objects mainly related to human activities that work, feel, think, take initiative, and create. In this sense, culture can be understood as "the result of emotional, significant, and meaningful processes." Simplification of cultural strategies and

cultural practices in daily life and social policy is carried out to capture elements that are also conceptually culturally content (Isa et al., 2012).

## **2. Family survival**

The following cultural belief in Padang City is in the form of priorities for family survival. This was conveyed through the statement of the source, Dr. Havid Ardi, S.Pd., M.Hum. as follows:

*So, the sale of land in Padang was not free. Because the customary stakeholders or penghulu hold land rights, he would think 1000x to sell his land. That's where ethnic Chinese can't come in. But if they want to sell it here, they must first have permission from their mother. Although on the 1 side, it supports the development or hinders one ethnicity from power, on the other side, there are also such as toll road construction hindered because of layered permits first. (Havid Ardi, personal communication, June 5, 2023)*

Based on the speaker's explanation, cultural belief lies in the survival of the family. In terms of this cultural belief, the resource person gave an example of a case of buying and selling land in Padang City. Land transactions in Padang are not permitted to occur openly; this is the reason ethnic Chinese are prohibited from entry. Customary stakeholders or *penghulu* who hold land rights will think deeply about land sales. However, if they desire to sell land, they must first obtain permission from their mother. This sometimes also hinders toll road development because several layers of permit must be carried out first. This is an effort to prevent the existence of ethnic Chinese rule in Padang. In addition, local people must also think about the future lives of their children and grandchildren.

Another focus of cultural studies is more directed at the important component of culture, namely cultural belief. Cultural beliefs are common ideas or thoughts shared by some individuals. These ideas and values govern their lives, as well as interactions among them and with other groups. In culture, cultural action takes the form of mental action or

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cultural belief. Mental action or cultural belief has the power to influence behavior (on conduct) (Himes, 1967). Cultural belief becomes an identity upheld in society (Greif, 1994).

### 3. Custom density representation

The following cultural belief in Padang is about the representation of customary density. This was conveyed by Syuhendri, S.Pd., M.Sn. (Datuak Siri Marjo) as he argued:

*Usually conduct intense discussions and studies. Here, there is a Minangkabau density, and there is also a Indonesian Ulema Council. Usually, they meet in certain spaces. Then came the governor's ruling. And the leadership itself sometimes does not stand alone as a government. Because the leader sometimes has the title of grandfather. So, he already represents indigenous circles. Or the leader himself is an ustad. He has also represented real scholars. So, this could have existed in a person of tigo tungku sajarangan. And every action and result of the crackdown is a result that is rarely rejected by society. Because culturally, they are already represented. The government continues to consider aspects of ninik mamak and alim ulama. (Syudendri, personal communication, June 4, 2023)*

Based on the explanation given by the speaker, cultural belief includes the representation of customary density, Minangkabau density. Ordinary people conduct intense discussions and studies with traditional leaders and the Indonesian Ulema Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia - MUI), which a decision by the governor then carries out. In this case, the leader sometimes not only stands in the government but also acts as a grandfather representing Indigenous circles. An Ustadz sometimes already represents the real scholar. Thus, *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan* here can exist in one person only. Therefore, all the results of their discussions are rarely rejected by the community because they are culturally represented.

While we recognize that historical influences and political factors contribute to the negative effects that culture can produce, we must also consider that culture can be a source of positive impact. The debate around Christianity and African culture highlights this, with an ongoing focus on “shaping a Christianity that will feel at home in Africa and where

Africans will feel at home” (Oduyoye, 1995). It recognizes the impact of culture on spirituality and religious expression. Recognizing how culture can be both a negative and positive influence is of great importance. While in some contexts, spiritual life is infused with patriarchy, sexism, corruption, compromise, and division. In other contexts, community, generosity, justice, respect, openness and integrity, honor, and dignity define the ethical values underlying spiritual practice in many contexts (Ackah, 2017).

#### **4. Egalitarianism**

The next cultural belief in Padang is related to egalitarianism. This is based on the statement of the source Syuhendri, S.Pd., M.Sn. (Datuak Siri Marjo) as follows:

*It has indeed grown in society. The customary component is upstream; ninik mamak, cadiak pandai, is engaged in this government. He does exist culturally. Only in Minangkabau is it egalitarian. He could have stood the same height and sat the same low. His way of thinking is already democratic. The leaders in Minangkabau exist because of the support of the community. That's why in Minangkabau it is "Penghulu tingginya hanya seranting, dahulunya hanya selangkah". Unlike the sultan, there is a structure, there is work, there are soldiers, there are all kinds. And there, the sultan has his take; the people have their take—his consciousness as a people. In Minangkabau, it is not like that. The size of the leadership is, indeed, because the people support it. And if the leader is no longer trusted, he is not considered by his people. His concept of hegemony is unlike the power we have understood so far. So Tigo Tungku Sajarangan is there, but society believes he is a force in just about anything. Dai became a pakem but did not become something written. Minangkabau is entirely separated. Similar to the prophet receiving the word. The prophet is an accepted oral. Minangkabau, in the process of decreasing knowledge, is also oral. (Syudendri, personal communication, June 4, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the customary component consists of *penghulu*, *ninik mamak*, and *cadiak pandai*, who are

engaged in government. However, because of the egalitarian system in Minangkabau, they could have stood the same height or sat the same low. This contrasts with the sultanate system in which there are structures, kingdoms, and warriors. In the reign of the sultanate, the sultan had his *pakem* (pattern), while the people also had their *pakem*. Thus, it is very different from the application in Minangkabau, where the leader is propped up by his people. If the community disagrees, then the leader is not appointed. Consequently, the concept signifies that *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan* formally exists, but society believes that it becomes a force in any case. In addition, the term pronunciation is also used in Minangkabau. The process of decreasing knowledge in Minangkabau was carried out orally, just as the prophet received the word through oral means.

Among the characteristics of Minangkabau society (Syamdani, 2008). One of them is egalitarianism or equality. This principle is one of the characteristics of Minangkabau society. At the same time, the emergence of proverbs states, “*penghulu ditinggikan sarantiang, didahulukan salangkah,*” does not mean that there has been social stratification in the Minangkabau realm (Putri et al., 2022). The purpose of this election is to have respect for leaders (Fatimah, 2012; Nafriandi, 2016).

## 5. The existence of culture and customs

The relationship between cultural belief and the intermingling of culture and customs in Padang is also very good, as highlighted by Dr. Mursal, M.Ag.,

*The next is that government institutions or existing customary institutions are still very holding or still very protective of Indigenous people, descendants, and even immigrants. So, in terms of education, for example, it is still very much considered, both by Chinese immigrants and the natives themselves. Until now, the retail business that entered the province of West Sumatra did not exist. The ethnic and cultural aspects are still very strong; they are both Javanese, Sundanese, and Chinese immigrants, and they still respect the customs of the Minang people themselves. For example, the Chinese are even better at Mining than the natives themselves. In social activities such as the day of sacrifice, Chinese or Chinese can still blend in, respect, and participate as a committee. There are even some Chinese people who participate in the activities of*

*the sacrifice itself. What does it mean? Padang is a good form or forum of tolerance, whether it is for educational, social, economic, or other activities. Still, when it is taken out for regions such as Java and Sunda, it will be a very sensitive transition. (Mursal, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the respondents' explanations, there was cultural intermingling in Minangkabau. The local government is still very concerned about the existence of the community, both the Minangkabau indigenous community and the ethnic Chinese immigrant community. This can be seen in the educational aspect as well as the cultural aspect. In terms of culture, immigrant communities from Java, Sunda, and China highly respect the customs that prevail in Minangkabau. In addition, regulations regarding modern retail businesses are also still in effect. Until now, there has been no retail business entering West Sumatra. All societies from all walks of life have great respect for each other. Even in religious activities such as sacrificial activities, ethnic Chinese also participated as a committee in the sacrificial activities. As a result, Padang City is a forum for a good form of tolerance in educational, social, and economic activities, and so on.

If we refer to the concept of culture above, then culture is not the final product but the result of the debate of society. The results of dialectics that give birth to innovation and renewal are colored to expand and even enrich the existing culture. Community is realized by enriching and coloring the culture that exists in certain civilizations in specific contexts, such as in Indonesia. This has happened from generation to generation. In the end, it becomes capital itself, which is of great value from generation to generation. The richer the culture, the more capital (shares). From one generation to another (intergeneration). The culture created by the changing generation has its charm that can sustain the national economy.

Padang is very famous for its prevailing customs. The traditional philosophy of “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basndi Kitabullah*” is a guideline for the community in upholding tolerance between communities. Another respondent, Gusti (Minangkabau Resident, Pariaman), also shared the same view regarding the attitude of cultural tolerance between communities in Minangkabau,

*Yes, actually, that's all if in Minang it is indeed from immigrants or from natives who respect the name of the customs themselves. We have standard rules that must not be violated in any case. The rules must be agreed upon by all communities, whether immigrants or not. Along with the times, written rules are still held, or there is something certain to overcome that is not desirable. Yes, thanks to these customs, thanks to ninik mamak, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and governments who can unite all elements or can automatically deliberate and reach a consensus, which must be agreed upon or accepted by anyone who wants to do activities in West Sumatra or in Minang itself. In all places, of course, it is like that, but indeed, in Minang, it holds the name of customs or customs that exist. (Gusti, personal communication, July 19, 2023)*

Based on the interviewee's explanation, the immigrant community respects the customs prevailing in Minangkabau. This means that no one can violate the applicable rules where the rules are not written but are hereditary from ninik mamak, traditional figures, religious scholars, and the government. Therefore, these customs can unite all elements or automatically be deliberated; consensus is agreed upon and accepted by all communities in West Sumatra.

The cultural element in question is universal, in the sense that it is found in all societies in the world, both "primitive" (backward) and remote (isolated), simple societies (less developed societies), primitive economies (pre-agricultural societies), as well as developing societies or industrial and developed societies or industrial and post-industrial societies that are complex and demanding (highly complex society). The elements also refer to the type or category of human activity that is or will be carried out. The "creation" of culture as a human mission reveals itself to the world as a "messenger" or caliph to rule the world and its content, "*Memayu Hayuning Bawana*," not only safeguarding the contents of the universe but also caring for it, preserving it and making it beautiful. These cultural elements can be studied in detail and with interrelated sub-elements and sub-element categories in cultural systems and social systems, including social systems and organizations, religious systems and ceremonies, livelihood security, systematic knowledge (science), technological systems and equipment, and language and arts (Koentjaraningrat, 2009).

Researchers in economics have also included cultural belief as a variable in their research. An important point from the findings of their study is that cultural beliefs cause movements of economic development that differ from one country to another (Tabellini, 2009), creating efficiency in the financial and legal fields as well as social life (Clemente, 2013; Greif, 1994). Cultural belief can be informal enforcement in contractual relationships and regulate social interaction through social sanctions. Also, it can foster a strong feeling of group involvement in building collectivism in community organizations (Greif, 1994).

### **Economic Space of Ethnic Chinese in the Minangkabau Realm**

The existence of ethnic Chinese who are almost all from urban Indonesia is inseparable from the diaspora phenomenon that has occurred for a long time by Chinese people out of mainland China (Alkadrie et al., 2017; Charity, 2016). The process of the Chinese ethnic diaspora leaving mainland China is driven by internal factors that occur in China and external factors of their new place; one of the areas of the Chinese ethnic diaspora is cities in the Nusantara (Indonesia), including Padang (Erniwati, 2019).

Living as a minority group in a plural Indonesian society is not easy for ethnic Chinese in Indonesia to live (Deci, 2021). Several records of violence against ethnic Chinese from various political regimes in Indonesia show that the position of this ethnicity is very vulnerable (Cahyaningtiyas, 2020). In Indonesia, conflicts between locals and ethnic Chinese occur the most when compared to other Southeast Asian countries (Erniwati, 2019). Even though the act of violence became a tragedy that damaged human values and left sad memories and trauma, some ethnic Chinese finally chose to leave Indonesia. A different phenomenon is found in Padang City: ethnic Chinese live a waking life without being colored by the open conflict that causes casualties. In fact, in terms of quantity, ethnic Chinese are referred to as a minority group that has interacted with the people of Padang City for a long time. In reality, the dominance of majority groups, such as the Minangkabau, made ethnic Chinese merge into it without losing their original identity (Erniwati, 2003).

The ethnic Chinese diaspora also extends to the Padang region, West Sumatra. The life of ethnic Chinese in Padang took place peacefully and peacefully. In this case, the economic space of ethnic Chinese in Padang is explained as follows:



## 1. Self-positioning

The ethnic Chinese community understands very well the strong local wisdom of *Tungku Tigo Sajaringan*, which was developed in the Padang community. This is explained by Prof. Niki Lukviarman, SE., Akt., MBA., DBA. (Sutan Mangkuto) as follows:

*If China were here, there would be no restrictions. Only they agree with each other. With three furnaces, knowing him very well, it is very sensitive for him to say things that will offend the Padang people Minang people. Now, I think these ethnic Chinese are very familiar with that, and he understands that it is not a furnace; they don't want to interfere with it because that sensitive thing has the potential to break them down as well. (Niki Lukviarman, personal communication, June 4, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the speakers, the main thing that became the guideline of the ethnic Chinese themselves was their understanding of local wisdom that developed in the Padang community. Ethnic Chinese understand their position in the Padang community. This local wisdom is powerful and strengthens the Padang people in their lives. So that ethnic Chinese also do not want to disturb what has existed and developed in Padang society. This is also an effort by ethnic Chinese to anticipate and prevent divisions among ethnic Chinese themselves. Therefore, ethnic Chinese deeply understand their existence in the Padang community along with the power of local wisdom *Tungku Tigo Sajaringan*.

Local wisdom *Tungku Tigo Sajaringan* is not a novel concept, as the Minangkabau region has long been accustomed to representation and consultation. *This Tigo Sajaringan furnace* contains three main elements that do not have absolute power. Minangkabau itself is only a unity of customs and culture, which, according to some circles, is unrelated to the kingdom's territory (Bahar, 2015). Other leaders and leaders try to create various regulatory systems suitable for their community groups to improve the community's welfare. Similarly, in the life system of the Minangkabau community, figures and leaders impose arrangements based on family ties with *Tungku Tigo Sajaringan*. It is then practiced in various variations from ancient times in the realm and the region (Zahari, 2015).

## **2. Freedom to develop and synergize**

The local wisdom of *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan* is also the basis for the freedom of ethnic Chinese to develop in Padang. This is from the statement of the source Dr. Havid Ardi, S.Pd., M.Hum. as follows:

*If you observe a position similar to Jogja, it is a bit small. They can still do activities, contribute to the economy, and do business; it is free. However, according to Mas Havid, when here, they cannot economically dominate because they collide with the Minang people themselves because Minang people are traders in character. So, if a Chinese person gets an A, he can also get an A+. So, they will compete forward together, and then they will not defeat the Minang people because the Minang people can also compete. So, it's not squeezed not to develop. However, there is indeed no Chinese ethnicity in the Sijunjung area; Padang exists, and Pariaman does not. But in that field, they can grow. (Havid Ardi, personal communication, June 5, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the existence of ethnic Chinese was given freedom to develop in Minangkabau. They are free to try, carry out activities, and improve the economy together with the Minangkabau community. Their lives have no restrictions, and even ethnic Chinese people are given the freedom to trade. The character and identity of the Minangkabau people themselves are good at trading. The resource person explained that while the Chinese ethnicity may get an A grade, the Minangkabau people may attain an A+ grade. Thus, the development of ethnic Chinese will not defeat the local people. This is because trading is a characteristic of Minangkabau society. Thus, there were no restrictions on ethnic Chinese during its existence in Padang City.

This success is also the answer: the Minangkabau people can compete with ethnic Chinese and succeed as ethnic Chinese. For them, this answer is very important because they feel that, in general, ethnic Chinese have been too dominant in terms of business, including in Padang City. Being able to balance the economic capabilities of ethnic Chinese for the Minangkabau people has enormous cultural significance, which is not solely financial. It is more than just the distribution of welfare. This is also an affirmation that amid the economic dominance of ethnic Chinese, Minangkabau still cannot be underestimated. The clear evidence of the

financial success of the Minangkabau people is related to the ownership of a large Javanese-Sumatran transportation company, namely “Family Raya,” in addition to large ethnic Chinese businesses selling traditional souvenirs. “Family Raya” is often referred to as one of the symbols of the success of the Minangkabau community in Padang City. In addition, this was also to show that the Minangkabau nomads in Java succeeded in subduing Java as a symbol of national political dominance and the center of power (Alfirdaus et al., 2014).

The presence of ethnic Chinese in Padang allowed them to develop and synergize. This is elaborated by another respondent, Dr. Al Busyra Fuadi, ST, M.Sc. (Sutan Panduko Marajo), as follows:

*In Kampong, Cino Kan is a Chinese settlement place usually, in some big cities that Payakumbuh we just see. Kan kampong cina is behind the market, and they got space during the Dutch era, the VOC era. They can go in. The point is that please synergize there without violating the appropriate rules in Minangkabau. That's it. No problems.*

*Yes. Where the earth stands, there the sky is uphold. (Al Busyra Fuadi, personal communication, June 5, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the presence of ethnic Chinese in Padang is still allowed. They are given the freedom to synergize as long as they do not violate the rules and regulations in force in Minangkabau. So, ethnic Chinese must be able to place themselves according to their existence in Minangkabau. Like the saying, “Where the earth is footed, there the sky is upheld.” It means that ethnic Chinese should not equate the rules in the country of origin, but they must understand and follow the regulations in Minangkabau. This initiative aims to integrate the ethnic Chinese minority with the native Minangkabau community. Thus, the existence of ethnic Chinese in Padang can still be seen in various fields, especially in the economic sector (Alfirdaus et al., 2016).

### **3. Understanding collective consciousness**

In addition to the opportunity to develop and synergize, the existence of ethnic Chinese in Padang that looks good is also influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of the Indigenous people themselves. They

also have a collective consciousness, as stated by Syuhendri, S.Pd., M.Sn. (Datuak Siri Marjo) as follows:

*However, it is clear that the Minang people have a collective awareness of their culture. It's not that they want to be exclusive. Since then, we have not had a problem with any ethnicity. It is rare here that ethnic conflicts occur. But it's so that it doesn't matter. In each question, they are restricted in movement. So, here there is a Chinese village, a Javanese village, and a nice village. That's a grouping. Because what is maintained by the Minang people is the purity of Adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah. And they don't want that belief to be disturbed by other things. So, it's not the social aspect that they're afraid of but the ideological element that they're more worried about. So why are they clustered? To make it easier to detect it. These Chinese friends may be because their relationship with the Padang people is even more Padang than the Padang people, like Effendi Ghazali for example, or Kompas founder P.K. Ojong. That's China Payakumbuh. That's it more West Sumatran than the West Sumatran people themselves. (Syudendri, personal communication, June 4, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the arrival of several ethnicities in Padang did not cause conflict between them. This is because the Minangkabau people are collectively aware of their culture. In addition, to anticipate conflicts in society, each ethnicity is grouped individually. For example, several ethnicities are grouped in Padang, such as Kampung China, Kampung Java, and Kampung Nias. Another reason is that the Minangkabau people want to maintain the purity of the philosophy of “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah”, which is an ideological aspect that should not be disturbed by anyone. The existence of ethnic Chinese in Padang City also has a good relationship with the surrounding community. Thus, this causes the Padang community to be more Padang than the Padang community itself.

The philosophy of “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah”, is the culmination of contact, conflict, adjustment, and fusion of Minangkabau customs that have existed since the ancestors and the

Islamic religion that emerged later. This happens because Minangkabau customs already have a life order in individuals and communities. In addition, Islam, which appeared later, brought order to all aspects of life and obliged its people to obey. With the entry of Islam, two Minangkabau world life orders were met, each requiring the obedience of its people/community followers/supporters. Thus, mutual attraction between custom and religion begins (Ramayulis, 2011).

Minangkabau people practice their religion in the field of belief and worship, but in community life, old customs still prevail, as the saying goes as a traditional philosophy, “*Adat Basandi Alur dan Patut – Syarak Basandi Dalil*.” Its meaning is based on customs and manners, and *sharak* is based on postulates in the Qur’an and the hadith of the prophet. They assert rights over one another without altering their respective positions. This is where it becomes relevant: “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Adat*” (custom jointed to sharia ‘and sharia jointed to custom). This customary proverb means that adat and share are interrelated and inseparable (Ramayulis, 2011).

#### **4. Provision of space in proportion**

Good relations between ethnic Chinese and local people cause them to unite and live in Padang. The presence of ethnic Chinese in Padang is given proportional space. This is explained by Dr. Mursal, M.Ag.,

*There is indeed zoning or granting a movement area, but with time, the zone has begun to fade or loosen. Where they are already everywhere; that is, China has begun to occupy several strategic places for economic activities, but they still value the activities of customs or customs of the Minang people themselves. So, it can still blend in so well. (Mursal, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the above source, ethnic Chinese began to spread along with the times. The local community provides proportional space for the movement of ethnic Chinese. So, ethnic Chinese have occupied several strategic places in the economy. The provision of space for movement is carried out proportionally. Consequently, ethnic Chinese must still respect the activities and customs of the Minangkabau people. Thus, the

community group can blend in well. Likewise, another respondent, Mr. Herwin Noor (Minangkabau Resident), agreed with such a view,

*It may be important according to the applicable rules, both customarily and statelily. They must blend in and cannot, directly or indirectly, immediately stand alone because there are customary rules. If there were, the hotel shop does not exist. Still, when you want to carry out economic activities that do not violate existing customs or rules, as long as it is still a reasonable limit or does not violate existing norms, it means it is still safe. (Herwin Noor, personal communication, July 18. 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the speaker, ethnic Chinese economic activities can run well if carried out by the customs and regulations that apply in Minangkabau so that these economic activities will run safely without any violation of applicable norms in Minangkabau society. Therefore, in this context, ethnic Chinese are given proportional wiggle room. The same thing was also stated by the resource person Ismardi (Employee of the Ministry of Social Affairs of Padang City, West Sumatra) as follows:

*In Minang itself, the culture is strong. Is China here? Does it still work without the existence of custom? For example, buying and selling land in Solo or Jogja is not allowed in China. But if it is here, it must indeed get approval from at least as long as it is approved or allowed by the landowner or who has a lineage of the land, which becomes no problem. It is important according to the rules. For example, like the earthquake that occurred in Padang, we, the Indigenous people and the Chinese, are united into one, namely helping each other in any activities, not customs, religion, religious activities, whether education, whether to the community and so on. For example, BAZNAS activities are intended for Muslims, yes, which is religious to help. But it turns out that the activities carried out in Minang are far different; they are still very able to blend in and can still help the bazaar activities themselves. (Ismardi, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the explanation given by the speakers, the provision of space for movement is proportionally carried out in the form of various activities. The resource person gave examples in several cases, including the freedom to buy and sell land with the consent of the landowner or his descendants. Another example is during an earthquake in Padang. At that time, the Minangkabau community and ethnic Chinese mingled and helped each other with various customary, religious, and educational activities. When The National Board of Zakat for the Republic of Indonesia (BAZNAS, *Badan Amil Zakat Nasional*) organizes activities, they blend in and even go directly to the field to participate. Therefore, both ethnic Chinese and natives in Padang City can blend in with each other and interact in a friendly and comfortable manner among these community groups.

Providing professional space to ethnic Chinese creates harmonious relations between communities in Padang. This is because, in general, Minangkabau people are friendly to guests, especially those they have known for a long time, as well as foreign guests who can adjust to situations and places (Syamdani, 2008).

## 5. Unity and Indigenous strength

Another proof that Chinese ethnicity and Minangkabau society are united is the involvement of Minangkabau people in the event of Chinese ethnicity. This is by the statement of the resource person, Mr. Herwin Noor (Minangkabau Resident) as follows:

*The custom that exists here merges into one and causes the natives or Minang people to accept the Chinese so well. Well, this habit, which, when taken out of the area, maybe in Java, will not necessarily be a good issue. However, in Minang itself, the Chinese and the indigenous people melted into one because they were united with customs that were packaged by deliberation and consensus through a minimum of scholars, traditional figures, and the government itself. Yes, for example, the HBT event is a big man's event. The event is Chinese, where the Chinese also involve natives in these activities. So it's not entirely when they hold a big day event. It's full of Chinese, but it still involves natives. Yes, indeed, Minang is still very tolerant of immigrants. (Herwin Noor, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the good attitude that merges between ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people is rarely found in other regions. For example, in Java, the existence of ethnic Chinese does not necessarily provide good issues in the area. It can even cause a very sensitive issue if brought outside Java. The good unification of ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people is caused by deliberately packaged customs. So that the deliberation process is at least carried out by clerical figures, traditional leaders, and local government. For example, it is implementing *Himpunan Bersatu Teguh* (HBT) organization events as a large event held by ethnic Chinese. Where the people involved not only come from ethnic Chinese but also include indigenous people, namely the Minangkabau community. From this, it can be seen that there is a renewal in the Minangkabau realm. Every major activity of ethnic Chinese still involves indigenous people and is not only carried out by ethnic Chinese. As a result, the Minangkabau people appreciate immigrants in the area. Therefore, this mutual tolerance is a renewal that cannot be taken outside the region.

Similar things related to the relationship between ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people who can blend well were also stated by Ismardi from the Employee of the Ministry of Social Affairs of Padang City, West Sumatra, as he explained,

*Yes, that's right. When compared to other regions, it is still very mainstream, still very extreme, but in Minang, it is still very friendly, so when compared to race, religion is almost non-existent. Because they tend to merge into one. So, there is no distinction between Chinese and indigenous. These Minang people are basically for Merantau. But now it turns to traders to uphold the economy or sustain the economy as an example of women in Mining being glorified because they are of native lineage. So, when there is land or assets, it is intended for the woman, while the man does not have the identity to travel. However, over time, they suggested that the land owned by the woman be sold so that the man would get a share of the assets owned by the woman. (Ismardi, personal communication, July 18, 2023).*

Based on the explanation of the source, there is a fusion between the existence of ethnic Chinese immigrants and the Minangkabau community.



In this case, they are given proportional space to live in Padang. They are friendly and integrated into each other's lives. Thus, this makes it difficult to distinguish between indigenous people and ethnic Chinese. They also carry out trade activities with each other to improve the level of the economy. In addition, Ismardi also conveyed,

*Yes, there are rules that are mutually agreed upon through consensus or what is called Ranji. Where Ranji is owned based on bloodline, if Ranji does not sell the land or the land is not bought and sold because it is a bloodline, then the land cannot be owned by anyone except those with the bloodline. However, the rule began to fade over time, even in some strategic places. China began to be able to occupy or own assets in the area, which was important as long as the purchase of assets or land was by the rules that applied between ninik mamak, traditional leaders, religious leaders, the government, and the Ranji itself. (Ismardi, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the explanation of the source, the Minangkabau community uses a customary force to buy and sell. All agreements must go through consensus deliberation, or what is called Ranji. This Ranji is owned based on heredity. The sale of land must not be owned by anyone other than his bloodline. However, over time, the regulation slowly lost its influence. Ethnic Chinese occupy several strategic areas in the Padang area. This is not a problem as long as there are applicable regulations regarding land asset purchases between *ninik mamak*, traditional leaders, religious leaders, the government, and the circulation itself.

The Minangkabau people are known for their cunning trading and scientific achievements. Among its three commonly known social characteristics are adherence to Islam, loyalty to the matrilineal family system (*nasab* or lineage according to the mother lines), and the tendency to migrate (Naim, 1984; Kato, 2005). In the association of living together, the Minangkabau community sees others as people who must be respected, consulted, and protected. Others believe that the enemy or target of extortion is very contrary to Minangkabau's custom. Saying "*duduk surang basampik-sampik, duduk basamo balapang-lapang*" Cue about their behavior in interacting with others (Astuti & Widiyanto, 1998; Putri et al., 2022). Ethnic Chinese daily life has been arranged in conditions

that adhere to traditional isolation principles since ancient times. This compliance only applies to ethnic Chinese and not to other people or nations. Other nations are considered untrue, unclean, untrustworthy, to be wary of, scrutinized, and so on. The basis of these principles is the traditional and ancient order (La Ode, 2013).

Kampung China, or Chinatown, was originally a pocket of the early business and trade center of the city of Padang; even at that time, trade and commerce were international because the Batang Arau River was a stopover for foreign ships that needed to load and unload goods. A market named Tanah Kongsu was established near See Hin Kiong Temple on land owned by Kapiten Lie Maa Say and managed by an ethnic Chinese named Poa Leng. Although relatively new, the Tanah Kongsu market can compete with the Mudik market previously established by the Minangkabau people. Then, an ethnic Chinese trading firm called Badu Ata and a co-established market called Pasar Belakang Tangsi or Badu Ata market (Erniwati, 2019). Until the beginning of the 20th century, in the Kampung China Padang area, four markets were crowded with visitors, namely the Homecoming Market, Tanah Kongsu Market, Belakang Tangsi Market, and Kampung Jawa Market (Nafriandi, 2016). Based on some evidence of the economic development of ethnic Chinese in Padang, it can be understood that the existence of ethnic Chinese in Padang City gives them space to move freely in the economy.

### **Harmony of Cultural Belief and Economic Ethnicity of Chinese in Minangkabau Realm**

In the context of Chinese people living in Padang, they can still express their ancestral traditions as long as they do not violate the customary norms of the Minangkabau people as the majority of the population of Padang City, which is known to be attached to the '*Adat Basandi Syara, Syara Basandi Kitabullah*'. According to Erniwati (2011), since the colonial period, the implementation of the culture and traditions of ethnic Chinese ancestors in Padang has been arranged and managed by family associations (marga) and death societies, Himpunan Tjinta Teman (HTT) and Himpunan Bersatu Teguh (HBT). Even one of the typical arts of the Padang Chinese 'Sipasan', which is only found in Padang City, is always performed in celebration of Chinese holidays or Padang City birthday celebrations. This means that, within the scope of the Padang locality, there are no restrictions for ethnic Chinese to

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interact and socialize as part of other Padang City residents (Jumhari, 2013). Fostering Cultural

Harmonious relations between ethnic Chinese and people in Padang must indeed begin with a process of adaptation. So that all levels of society can unite and live side by side with each other. Another respondent, Richard John, a non-Minangkabau Resident, reiterated,

Harmony

**137**

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*They do have to adapt to the Minang people or their customs so that whatever they do can be comfortable and safe. So, any activity is indeed done together. Yes, indeed, walking together in economic development is very good and upholds the diversity of both customs and habits owned by Minang itself so that in any case between natives and Minang, it is equally advanced together. (Richard John, personal communication, July 17, 2023)*

Based on the explanation given by the speaker, the harmonious relations between ethnic Chinese and people in Padang occurred because of the adaptation process for migrants. This can then lead to a safe and comfortable community life. They advance together and develop the economy by upholding the value of diversity, as well as both the customs and habits of the Minangkabau community itself.

The harmonious relationship between ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people is also caused by the attitude of upholding the value of tolerance. This is as stated by Mr. Yan Partawijaya, ST. MT. (a non-Minangkabau residents, Padang),

*“First, the answer is that there is no problem between the indigenous Minang people and the Chinese; the sense of tolerance in Minang itself is still very high. So, they will avoid conflicts of interest because they will still respect the customs here. The social activities of the people here are still very thick and integrated with West Sumatra itself or the identity of Padang Pariaman itself. So, in any case, it will not be a significant problem as long as they or the natives come to it and respect the name of customs, such as the traditional ceremonies that unite the natives and China itself. (Yan Partawijaya, personal communication, July 18, 2023)*

Based on the speaker's explanation, a high sense of tolerance between ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people is one of the factors causing harmony in their relations. In order to avoid conflicts of interest with each other, various community social activities are deeply embedded and integrated into the identity of Padang Pariaman itself. Therefore, it will not cause any trouble as long as the ethnic Chinese and indigenous people respect the customs.

In addition to the principle of upholding tolerance, harmonious relations are also shown in the field of trade. The ethnic Chinese carry out trading activities in Padang by providing good quality products to buyers. As Mr Yan (personal communication, July 18, 2023) explained, "Yes, actually, it's normal, Mas, because the people themselves want goods of good quality, especially if those who sell are Chinese people who notably prioritize the quality of these goods." Based on the source explanation, the high price determined by ethnic Chinese in trading activities is caused by the quality of the product itself. Thus, they trade at a price corresponding to the quality of the goods sold. It will also provide benefits for buyers because they will not feel disappointed when purchasing these goods.

Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is nothing new for the Minangkabau people. When viewed from history, the concept of multiculturalism has been practiced by the Minangkabau community. Culture is an important capital in the progress of the nation. Monoculturalism will be easily lost by globalization, while multiculturalism will persist (Hanum, 2015). A side effect of multiculturalism is that it can grow and develop cultural fanaticism in society. From the concept of multiculturalism, normative ideas about harmony, tolerance, and mutual respect for the differences and rights of each culture emerged (Nafriandi, 2016).

Cultural values are an important element in people's lives. A person in his life cannot escape cultural values. Thus, such values are inclusive and can be found in the behavior in the vast life of the universe. This makes it difficult for cultural values to be replaced with other cultural values in a short time (Nafriandi, 2016). *Kampung China Padang Pondok* is an important area in Padang City. Ethnic Chinese, both from *Himpunan Bersatu Teguh* (HBT) and *Himpunan Tjinta Teman* (HTT), two shares of ethnic Chinese descent in Padang, continue to maintain their traditions and blend in with other ethnicities (Putri et al., 2022). This is inseparable

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from the egalitarian attitude of the Minangkabau community, which provides space for people of ethnic Chinese descent to live according to their culture. The growing harmonization among ethnic Chinese and other ethnic citizens is a very valuable wealth.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion of the harmony of cultural belief and the economic movement space of ethnic Chinese based on Minangkabau traditional philosophy in Padang City, it can be concluded that Chinese people can express their ancestral traditions as long as they do not violate the traditional philosophy that is known to be closely related to “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*”. The presence of ethnic Chinese in Padang received a good response, coexistence, and mutual respect. In addition, the existence of *Tungku Tigo Sajarangan* also supports community harmony through deliberative activities. As long as it does not violate the regulations in force in Padang, ethnic Chinese are still given proportional economic space. Since the beginning of its presence, ethnic Chinese people can blend in with local citizens and, at the same time, maintain their traditions. This is inseparable from the egalitarian attitude of the Minangkabau community, which provides space for citizens of ethnic Chinese descent to live according to their culture. The harmonization that grows between ethnic Chinese and Minangkabau people is a precious wealth that can improve the sustainability of the local economy.

## LIMITATION

The article has some limitations that impact on its overall depth and generalizability. The study is confined to Padang City, which limits its ability to draw broader conclusions about the interaction between ethnic Chinese communities and indigenous populations across other regions of Indonesia, where dynamics may differ. The research relies heavily on interviews with a select group of informants. While the ethnographic method provides rich qualitative insights, the limited number of participants may not fully represent the broader experiences of the ethnic Chinese community in Padang. The study is cross-sectional, capturing cultural and economic dynamics at a specific point in time. A longitudinal approach could have provided insights into how these interactions and empowerment strategies evolve over time,

especially in response to changing social, economic, and political conditions.

Since the study is specific to the unique cultural integration between the Minangkabau and ethnic Chinese communities, its conclusions may not be easily generalized to other settings in Indonesia, where cultural and economic interactions may follow different patterns. The selection of informants, particularly community leaders and prominent figures, may result in a bias toward a more harmonious portrayal of ethnic integration. The perspectives of ordinary residents, especially those from marginalized sections of the ethnic Chinese community, are less explored. While the study highlights economic empowerment, it does not profoundly explore other integration aspects, such as political participation, social cohesion, or education, which could provide a more holistic understanding of ethnic Chinese integration within the Minangkabau framework. These limitations suggest that while the study provides valuable insights, further research would be necessary to validate and expand upon its findings.

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