

# Moderate Attitudes Towards Sex, Marriage, and LGBT in Indonesia: A Study of the Concept of *Ipulaksanai* and Its Implications for Sexuality, Marriage, and LGBT Norms Among Maanyan Dayak Communities in Indonesia

Idrus Sasirais<sup>1</sup>, Bimbing Kalvari<sup>2</sup>, & Agustinus Hermino<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis (STT GKE), Indonesia. E-mail: idrusgke@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Jakarta Theological Seminary (STFT Jakarta), Indonesia. E-mail: kalvaribimbing@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup> National University of Laos (NUOL), Lao PDR. E-mail: agustinus\_hermino@yahoo.com

Correspondence: Agustinus Hermino, National University of Laos (NUOL), Lao PDR. E-mail: agustinus\_hermino@yahoo.com

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to highlight the open and accepting attitude towards love, life, sexuality, and LGBT issues in the Maanyan Dayak tribe in Indonesia. They have a unique concept of "*ipulaksanai*," which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all human beings and a moderate and accepting view towards these topics. This serves as an inspiration for others in Indonesia facing a shift towards increasing conservatism, especially regarding sexual morals, to show more respect and respect for diverse attitudes towards love, life, sexuality, marriage, and LGBT issues. The Maanyan concept of "*ipulaksanai*" holds a similar view with the Indonesia philosophy of Unity in Diversity, different but one. This article is based on qualitative research conducted in 2019 with 14 informants, including traditional Dayak Maanyan figures, Kaharingan ritual leaders, Christian religious leaders, and representatives of the Maanyan community. The tribe believes in anti-violence and reconciliation and has a scapegoat mechanism in place to deal with sexual moral violations. The article shows how the tribe values democratic space regarding amorous and sexual initiatives and encourages people to ease the burden of shame.

**Keywords:** Maanyan, *ipulaksanai*, sexuality, interconnectedness, moral

## 1. Introduction

Since the fall of the New Order in Indonesia, there has been a shift towards increasing conservatism in all aspects of Indonesian society, especially regarding sexual morals. This conservative attitude is reflected in many aspects, ranging from how to dress and think about gender roles and sexual relations to laws that threaten criminal penalties for adultery and cohabitation.

The rise of conservatism is putting women, young people, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) people at a greater risk of marginalization. Despite having a moderate administration led by President Joko Widodo, other powerful elements such as politicians, political parties, and religious leaders are promoting a regime of power that creates a complex moral system. This leads to the vulnerability of these groups. For example, the Anti-Pornography Bill. The bill, initially drafted in 1992, revived in 2006, and passed in 2008, establishes a ban on displaying sensual body parts in public, such as breasts, navels, hips, and thighs (Parker & Nilan, 2013, p. 112). In some regions, including West Sumatra, the regime tried to strengthen its control over women with Islamic practices by applying sharia (Parker & Nilan, 2013, p. 112). Another example, recently, a law has also been passed that regulates the threat of criminal penalties for adultery and cohabitation for unmarried people, as stated in Chapters 411 and 412 of Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code (CNN, 2023).

Human Rights Watch report on 2021 shows that since 1990, there have been a growing number of national and local regulations regulating Islamic dress standards for women in educational institutions—both for students, teachers, and lecturers. One example that illustrates the influence of political contestation on the headscarf

uniform is the implementation of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 45 of 2014. It is this regulation that currently regulates uniforms for primary and high school students nationally, specifically regarding Islamic attire, in government-owned educational institutions that should be plural. Various parties, including the National Commission on Violence against Women, criticized that the standard dress regulations tended to be gender biased and misogynistic. However, referring to the Minister of Education and Culture, the reason for issuing this regulation was to "strengthen national identity" (Oktafiana, 2022).

As for LGBT issues, LGBT people in Indonesia, they are increasingly experiencing bullying. The "Global Attitudes Project" report by Pew Research on attitudes towards homosexuality shows that 93% of survey respondents in Indonesia expressed rejection of homosexuality and only 3% were receptive (Oetomo & Suvianita, 2013, p. 29). They not only refuse but also stigmatize LGBT people (Bartianus, 2014). LGBT people are considered as the scum of society, spreading infectious, abnormal, unnatural diseases, the source of catastrophe, people with mental disabilities (Arus Pelangi 2011), and not all human beings (Suleeman, 2015, p. 40). For example, on January 1, 2023, Medan Mayor Bobby Nasution stated that he firmly rejected LGBT in Medan City. This statement received support from the North Sumatra Islamic Mass Organization Alliance. The Alliance of Islamic Mass Organizations also asked the Mayor of Medan and the Medan City Parliament to immediately form a bylaw that prohibits the existence of LGBT people in Medan City (Anon n.d.-a). The Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) of Medan City also stated that it fully supports the statement of Nasution (Anon n.d.-b).

The increasing conservatism in Indonesia has negatively impacted the rights and freedoms of marginalized groups such as women, young people, and sexual minorities. A power regime of politicians, political parties, and religious leaders is promoting a narrative of conservatism as the original Indonesian identity and lifestyle, leading to the suppression of different sexual expressions. However, the Maanyan Dayak tribe in South Barito Regency offers a unique perspective on human relationships and sexuality with the concept of *ipulaksanai*, which believes in the interconnectedness of all human beings and promotes a moderate attitude towards sexual morals and the existence of LGBT within the community. It holds a similar view with the Indonesia philosophy of Unity in Diversity.

## 2. Methodology

The research method used is qualitative research. Following Bogdan & Biklen (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992:29–32), the researcher, as the key instrument, goes directly to the locus of research to get data by maintaining the natural setting of the direct source. Exposure to research results is descriptive, and analyzing the data inductively, with meaning as an essential concern.

The collection of field research data to obtain primary data was carried out using in-depth interview techniques (Subagyo, 2004, pp. 228-232). Informants are selected purposefully by carefully selecting them based on the data needs and considerations of researchers, consisting of traditional elders, village officials, Kaharingan ritual figures, church figures, and ordinary congregational citizens. Information from indigenous elders aims to obtain data on the concept of "*ipulaksanai*" in enforcing customary laws and social norms. Information from the figures of the Kaharingan ritual aims to obtain data on mythology, concept and rites related to the topic discussed. Information from village officials to obtain data on the relationship between the concept of *ipulaksanai* and the enforcement of social norms and order in society. Information from the pastor to understand the influence of the concept of *ipulaksanai* on the relationship of Maanyan residents who are majority Christian. Information from villagers is to understand how this concept is in the minds and practices of the daily life of society. The determination of informants is also carried out by snowballing techniques, namely obtaining the next informant based on information from previous informants (Endraswara, 2006, p. 203).

Fourteen people served as informants for the study. The number is considered sufficient as the required data, including information on the concept of *ipulaksanai* in enforcing customary laws and social norms, details on mythology, rituals, and the relationship between the concept of *ipulaksanai* and the maintenance of social norms and order in society, was collected comprehensively and the supporting data had reached saturation.

The research was conducted in five locations in Tamiang Layang, Siang-Telang, Murutuwu, Balawa, and Maibe where the concept is still practiced by the community. Indigenous leaders continue to enforce institutionalized customs in these areas. In addition, interviews were conducted in Jakarta in 2018 and Banjarmasin in 2019. The primary data collection took place between April to May 2019. A preliminary study, consisting of reading related documents and previous research reports, was conducted in 2018.

In terms of data analysis, the authors refer to Miles and Huberman that the approach in qualitative data analysis consists of data reduction, data display, conclusion, and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1992, pp. 16-18). To

process the data, the author analyzes data in the form of content analysis (analysis of the content or meaning content of the data obtained from the respondents), interpretation (translating the data obtained from the respondents), and generalization (formulating general conclusions from the data obtained from the respondents). The author analyzes opinions, knowledge, experiences, and other aspects and then presents them so that they have meaning. To reduce the possibility of misconceptions, the author also verifies the data, among others, and re-checks the necessary data to be reconfirmed.

### 3. Findings

This research discusses the concept of "ipulaksanai" in the culture of the Dayak Maanyan tribe in South Barito, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, and its implications for societal norms regarding sexuality, marriage, and the LGBT community. The Maanyan people have an open and moderate attitude towards love and sexuality and have mechanisms to reconcile and resolve customary violations, including sexual morality violations. The concept of ipulaksanai encourages people to alleviate psychological shame, especially for women, by developing customs that respect their bravery and initiative.

The Maanyan view the human body as not exclusive and have close relationships with others. This tribe also has a nonviolent and reconciliatory attitude towards sexual morality violations, which are resolved through customary fines, traditional rituals, and social responsibility. This report highlights that this community values the democratic space for romantic and sexual initiatives and reduces the burden of shame, especially for women. Although they generally do not accept LGBT and homosexual practices, when they fail to change them, they choose to protect and conceal so that these LGBT individuals remain safe and can live their lives as they wish. This research confirms that the moderate attitude towards sexuality, marriage and the LGBT community still exists in Indonesia. The Maanyan concept of "ipulaksanai" holds a similar view with the Indonesia philosophy of Unity in Diversity, different but one.

### 4. Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.1 Overview of the Maanyan Dayak Tribe

The Maanyan Dayak tribe is one of the Dayak sub-tribes that inhabit the middle part of the Barito River. The term Dayak itself, according to Mikhail Coomans, is the name for all other residents in the interior of Borneo who are not Muslim. Therefore, Dayak is a socio-religious term (Coomans, 1987, pp. 4-5). The word Maanyan comes from the combination of Ma, which means to use custom, and Anyan, which is the name of the last king of the Nansarunai kingdom, the kingdom owned by the Maanyan people (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 6).

Maanyan society, in general, is attached. In social relations, they enforced the *Panganrau* system. *Panganrau* is a social system that regulates the recompense for the help one gives to others (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 6). They also have an excellent appreciation for *adat* (custom). In general, the Maanyan people divide customs into two main parts, which is *adat tiba welum* (customs related to life) and *adat tiba matei* (customs related to death). Both are inseparable from religious ritual ceremonies (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 101). Customs in the context of Maanyan society is widely understood to include legal issues, customs, traditions, religious rites, social rites, etc. All aspects of the life of the Maanyan people have always been categorized as customs (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 153). Whatever problems arise in everyday life, according to Murba Abas (Chairman of the Dayak Traditional Council of Paju Epat District), is always sought a solution in a traditional manner (Abas, 2019).

Maanyan people really uphold the concept of ipulaksanai. The word ipulaksanai is sometimes interpreted as a sibling. However, the basic meaning of the word "ipulaksanai" is not only a sibling. The translation is too narrow to represent the word ipulaksanai. There is a concept of bodily unity that does not explicitly appear in the word sibling. According to Allen Ngepek, the word ipulaksanai is a combination of two words, namely "pulak" and "sanai" (Ngepek, 2019). Sanai is sometimes interpreted as gut, but the real meaning refers to the digestive tract that connects the mouth, esophagus, stomach, intestines, umbilical cord, and anus as a single entity called sanai (Ngepek, 2019). Sanai in the understanding of the Maanyan people is the organ of the body where food enters, processed, and supplied throughout the body. It becomes the source of life for the whole body; it can even be said to be the core of the body, the staple of the body. This sanai also later became a basic part of the life of the human fetus. When the fetus is born, the navel, understood as sanai that connects the baby's life with the mother's life, is cut in half. The word cut into two parts is ipulak or pulak (Ngepek, 2019). Therefore, the literal definition of ipulaksanai is a cut sanai or a piece of sanai. According to Nimer Widen, this mention allegedly appears as a reflection on the birth process in that society (Widen, 2018). When the first child is born, the mother's navel (sanai) is cut off. So did the second child, the third child, and so on. This gives insight to the Maanyan people that they are all people who were born from the same sanai, but was later dismembered (Widen, 2018). Each person is a connection to his brother's sanai. Therefore, when a person greets with an ipulaksanai

greeting, then it means that he refers to the person being called as a piece of himself or his hemisphere (Ngepek, 2019).

The word *ipulaksanai* originally referred specifically to relationships between siblings or people who came from the same father and mother. However, as all respondents also recount, today, the term has been widely applied to fellow Maanyan people (Gunedi, 2019). Likewise, Tulus Darmaputera. He stated that as far as he is a fellow Maanyan then he is an *ipulaksanai* because he is still a descendant of Itak Ayan and Kakah Warikung. So, if someone is a Maanyan, then for other Maanyan people, he is *ipulaksanai* (Darmaputera, 2019).

On the other hand, in association with the broader community, this concept also turns out to be carried over, and therefore this concept becomes increasingly inclusive. Although socially the differences between outsider and insider remain, in this concept of *ipulaksanai* there is a motive of openness and initiative to embrace the outsider to be an insider. Christian Nada, one of the Maanyan elders, stated that this *ipulaksanai* greeting could also be aimed at foreigners, non-Maanyans, especially those who are willing to interact and build close relationships with Maanyan people (Nada, 2019). If he wants to be part of a group, the person can be considered an *ipulaksanai* (Nada, 2019). Ngepek asserts the same thing: "Even other tribal people, if they have associated with the Maanyan people, already have emotional closeness, have become one with the Maanyan community, are also considered *ipulaksanai*" (Ngepek, 2019). The greeting conditioned the inner attitude that connected the stranger as relatives, even one blood and one derivative (Keloso, 2005, p. 97).

#### 4.2 Implications of the *Ipulaksanai* Concept for the Norms of the Maanyan Society Regarding Sexuality, Marriage, and LGBT

The Maanyan people, in general, also have an open attitude towards love life and sexuality. Among the Maanyan people, there are expressions regarding the celebration of romance which are widely known. For example, *Biar galis haraga jukung panyang enem asal naan persintaan* (even if the money is used up from the selling price of the boat six fathoms long, the important thing is as long as there is romance). Words like these may have started as a joke or ridicule, but they become famous. According to Samuel Anugrahhu, it is an expression that wants to describe the extraordinary attitude of self-sacrifice from Maanyan youths in fighting for their love (Anugrahhu, 2019). Likewise, bedtime stories. Many of these tales also contain romances that Nimer Widen classifies as "heavyweight" (Widen, 1995, p. 114) or in other words, very forthright. The Maanyan people also are known as people who like to joke and are good at putting words together. They often joke by grazing on sexually related things (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 143). For example, in the *Panganrau* (mutual cooperation) activity, when many people of various ages and genders gathered while at work, it was common to have conversations about daily life interspersed with funny stories with sex nuances (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 143). Sex, in the view of the Maanyan people, is considered a good thing, a positive thing. An informant interviewed by Pilakoannu revealed that one of the male characteristics of Maanyan is *pamawey* (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 83). *Pamawei* is a title given to a womanizer. In the Maanyan context, this kind of title is not necessarily harmful but rather a reputation for being "a bit mischievous or a little amoral, but not evil." (Widen, 2018). Traditionally, they associate the reputation of the Maanyan man as *Pamawei* with the reputation of a figure from the Nansarunai kingdom named Raden Anyan alias Ambah Rare, their ancestor. Raden Anyan won the heart of Damayanti, wife of Admiral Nala, an admiral of the Majapahit Kingdom, so this relationship produced a child named Sekar Mekar (Pilakoannu, 2010, p. 83).

The openness of the Maanyan people regarding romance and sex seems to be rooted in their cultural worldview that sex is a gift from God or Alatalla. In the creation mythology of the Maanyan, after Alatalla (God) created this world, He created the first human. Alatalla created humans from some elements of the earth. When He finished forming the man, He put the spirit into him. However, the human body suddenly shattered. It is broken and thrown away or *disiwai* (*siwai* in the Maanyan language means to throw away). Then Alatalla made another one. He took from several essential elements: fire, water, iron, etc. After being shaped, it is wrapped with a piece called *Sindusin* cloth. Then He put the spirit of life into the body that He formed, and the man lived and woke up. Alatalla named it Kakah Warikung. When Alatalla finished creating Kakah Warikung, he saw that creating a different type of human form was necessary. So, He retook the elements of the earth and made them different. The process is the same as creating Kakah Warikung. When given the spirit of life, this human also lives, then Alatalla names him Itak Ayan. Alatalla placed Kakah Warikung, and Itak Ayan in a tree of life called the wood of *mali-mali biduri sipasiali* (Batherius, 2019). He ordered the man: "You take care of this *mali-mali* wood. This wood is *kakau kaharapen murunsian* (the wood of human hope)". The world was just small, as big as a plate. Then Alatalla gave lust to Kakah Warikung. After that desire was put into Kakah Warikung's body, Kakah Warikung's lust for Itak Ayan arose. He approached Itak Ayan, but Itak Ayan avoided him. The more Kakah Warikung tried to get closer, the more Itak Ayan avoided it. Then they chased around the tree. As a result of their actions, the world is getting wider and higher. Kakah Warikung's lust spilled and became mountains, plants,

animals, etc. When Kakah Warikung rests, Itak Ayan also rests. When Kakah Warikung woke up and started chasing him again, Itak Ayan got up and ran away again. This action repeatedly continues, day after day. Then Alatalla came to Kakah Warikung and asked, "Are you tired?" Warikung's answered, "Yes. I was tired." "Is your lust still burning?" Asked Alatalla back. "Yes. Still," replied Kakah Warikung. Then Alatalla taught Kakah Warikung to touch Itak Ayan gently, and he did it, and suddenly Itak Ayan softened. Their union ensued. Then, through this union, their descendants emerged, namely Sawalang Gantung (Lord of the Heavenly World/The Upper World/The World of the Dead Spirits) and Ungkup Batu (Ruler of the Underworld/Human World). These two brothers married, and from their marriage, offspring were born that now fill this world (Nyupur, 2019). The story that lust was Alatalla's gift builds a positive perspective on sex among this tribe.

Despite being open to love life and sexuality, this society does not condone sexual acts that violate *adat*, such as adultery or extramarital affairs. All forms of sexual moral violations will be subject to customary sanctions. However, the spirit of *ipulaksanai* in these customs makes a distinctive character emerge, namely the character of anti-violence and the character of reconciliation. All these customary violations were resolved by employing customary and *palas* fines. Both methods help account for errors and restore the balance of the cosmos. Nada stated that there had never been a physical fight because of premarital sexual relations or extramarital affairs. Suppose there are problems related to sexual life, in that case, the traditional elders will conduct education and mediation before moving on to customary sanctions. Customary penalties were applied when counseling and mediation were no longer found to be sufficient (Nada, 2019).

Local people believe that humans are good. Customary violations, including violations of sexual morality, occur because there are elements in the form of spirits who work at any time to disrupt human life. This spirit is the spirit of Datu Sansiwai, the first creation that failed and was hurt by being banished. Batherius said:

When God created the first man, He entered the spirit, the body breaks, and then it is thrown away or *disiwai*. But then it claimed its rights. It still lives and demands its rights. Its spirit transformed into an evil spirit called Datu Sansiwai. Sansiwai means to throw away. The *datu* means the king. It claimed its right to destroy human life. It haunts people. Because it is in the form of a spirit, it can enter everywhere. It enters the human body and into other living things. So (hence) there was much chaos. (Batherius, 2019).

There is also another version regarding the mythology of Datu Sansiwai, the troublemaker, as told by Nyupur, *Wadian Pangunraun Jatuh* (the highest priest of the Kaharingan death ritual):

The ancestor of the Maanyan people was named Nini Punyut. She has twenty-one children, eleven boys named Datu Sawalas, and ten girls called Dara Sapuluh. Nini Punyut arranged marriages for her children. First, she feeds them. In the food, he secretly put a potion to induce sleep. After the cubs ate, they all fell asleep. Then Nini Punyut tied their feet in pairs, one male and one female. When she arrived at Datu Sansiwai, there were no more women to partner with because they had run out. When he woke up and saw that his ten brothers had found partners, only he had none. Datu Sansiwai was furious. He said to Nini Punyut, "Why can't I get a partner like my other siblings?". "Well, I cannot do anything anymore," Nini Punyut said. "There are only ten women, while you are eleven men." But for the sake of a sense of justice for Datu Sansiwai, Nini Punyut also said, "You still get a share. Your part is: free to mess up relationships, men, and women human beings, make affairs, divorce, quarrels, seize other people's husbands or wives ... *idapa* (cheating), *itamput* (grab someone else's wife or husband), *ibela* (prostitution). (Nyupur, 2019).

Therefore, all sexual immorality is understood as caused by the actions of Datu Sansiwai, who demanded his share. So that he does not bother people anymore, an offering must be offered to him, either chicken or pork (Nyupur, 2019). If he receives a share, he will no longer destroy humans (Nyupur, 2019).

This mythology has implications for the concept that sexual moral chaos that occurs in society was not the moral failure of the perpetrator but primarily due to external influences, namely due to the actions of Datu Sansiwai. Datu Sansiwai is jealous of the happiness he is not getting. He messes up because he wants justice and wants his share. Therefore, the approach taken by society towards moral violations, including sexual morality, is relatively lenient. Violators of sexual morality are required to pay to *adat*, then get married, or pay *adat* - be married on the spot - then get divorced on the spot, or just pay *adat* without being married. This entire process redeems the moral of what occurs.

The feeling of being a fellow *ipulaksanai* makes this society build a kind of scapegoat mechanism that replaces the offender as the Main Person in Charge of sexual moral violations that occur. Perpetrators of sexual moral violations are seen as good people who have done wrong because they are under the control of an external party, namely Datu Sansiwai. Perpetrators of sexual moral violations are bound to be materially and socially responsible, and after fulfilling their customary and social obligations, they are free and worthy. Customary fines,

traditional rituals, and their responsibilities become a mechanism that realigns their spiritual and moral life.

Further, in the practice of everyday life, this concept of *ipulaksanai* provides significant implications in several forms of customary handling for the following cases of sexual moral failures:

a. Half Marriage and the Fines to Cover the Shame

The Maanyan people, especially those who still follow the Kaharingan religion, still conduct the half-marriage ritual for couples who have slept in the same room. This half-marriage is a marriage ritual with conditions and rites that have been simplified in such a way. In semi-marriage, the *saki pilah* ritual takes place only once. In the complete marriage, *saki pilah* is carried out five times for ordinary people and nine times if the bride is a descendant of the leader. Those who perform the *saki pilah* ritual are divided into men and women. The *saki pilah* ritual's purpose is to make the bride's household life happy until the end of her life, free from various bad things (Dalius, 2019). Three months and ten days after that, they must marry again in the form of a complete religious and customary marriage (Nyaben, 2019).

A typical case in the Maanyan area, especially in the Paju Epat area, is when a woman enters the house of the man she is in love with, or the man she wants, and lives with that man. The man's family, who knows about this, usually will not expel the woman because the man is immediately responsible for her visits. The family will receive and treat well. However, they immediately asked the man how he felt about the woman and what he had done. If he wants the woman to be his wife, or if he has touched the woman, then the family will contact the woman's family and the traditional administrators to have a half-marriage. According to Dalius, when there is a family agreement, they must be married immediately. After the "emergency marriage" ritual, they were considered legally spouses. However, they had to remarry three months and ten days later (Dalius 2019). The three months and ten days were set aside for them to recover the costs of their entire marriage (Dalius, 2019).

Usually, marriages among the Dayak Maanyan are always held at the bride's house. However, if the case is that the woman goes to the man's house, and the man is willing to marry her, then the marriage will be carried out at the man's house. Soten Suluh Akub stated that all costs and other matters are the full responsibility of the man (Akub, 2019). However, if the man does not want the woman as his wife and has never touched the woman sexually, he may not marry her. However, he was charged with customs fines for repatriating the woman. The fine serves as a cover for the woman's shame (Akub, 2019). Akub said:

If the man does not want to, he still must pay the customary fine. Even though they have never been making love, he is still in debt. Even if the man does not want it, he must pay customary fines. So, the woman was not ashamed to come home. It is to cover their embarrassment. That is courtesy of Maanyan people. (Akub, 2019).

The awarding of fines is understood to restore the dignity of the woman. She will still be considered a good woman and deserve to be treated according to culture, even if she does not get the man she wants. Akub said that society would not label such a woman ugly. The woman remains the same as any other woman. Akub also shared his experience: "Here I have six children. My children are all boys, six. There have been two or three times like that (two or three times sent home a woman who climbed into their house)" (Akub, 2019).

Shame is a heavy psychological burden, while democratic space regarding amorous and sexual initiatives is what they value, giving something to both men and women. The *ipulaksanai* concept encourages people to ease this burden, specifically for women, by developing customs that honor their courage and initiative.

b. Married at Balai (house of adat), Divorce at Balai

Another violation of sexual morality is pregnancy out of wedlock. Suppose the woman is pregnant and the man is not married to anyone, in that case, they must be married immediately by paying a customary fine (Nada 2019). However, in a situation where marriage is impossible, for example, a girl becomes pregnant by a man who has a wife, usually, the marriage custom will be conducted at the Balai, and then divorce on the spot. In this marriage process, the pregnant woman and the man who made her pregnant are married in the Balai Adat. The man pays the marriage custom to the woman, and after they are married according to custom, they divorce on the spot. The man then pays the customary divorce to the pregnant woman (Nada, 2019). Children born later will be considered legitimate children from the marriage (Dalius, 2019). As for women, they will also not be considered immoral by society. They will be like women whose husbands divorce them in the usual case. In other words, it is the same as a married woman who is then divorced (Nada, 2019). The concept of *ipulaksanai* encourages the community to protect its citizens so that no community members become outcasts or marginalized.

c. Affair and the Law of Kamang Waluk

Apart from pregnancies outside of marriage, infidelity is also a problem that often occurs in the life of the Maanyan people (Liusdiana, 2019). However, there has never been an incident of physical violence because of this case. There is a customary law mechanism for dealing with such cases, the Kamang Waluk Law. Agun explained:

I give an example, (for example) my wife and me. I filed for divorce, and this divorce is due to a third party. Well, I put the Law of Kamang Waluk in front of the mantir. If it stays the same and there is no evidence to the contrary attachment for three months and ten days, then my wife must leave the house without bringing anything, empty hands. So, there is no inheritance, no property division. If I am suspected of having an affair, she (also) can apply to the Kamang Waluk Law. So, there is no need for violence. If he suspects someone else is making a rift in this relationship, he will install it. (Agun, 2019).

The concept of *ipulaksanai* prevents society from punishing people who have affairs harshly. Punishment in the form of getting nothing from marriage is considered a proportionate penalty by society. However, living as husband and wife has been seen as a matter of the couple's commitment. If there are those who no longer want to live together as husband and wife and find another partner that suits their hearts, divorce is possible, and all done nonviolently.

#### d. The Attitudes Community Against LGBT People

The Maanyan people view LGBT as incorrect and not following customs. For them, the correct sexual orientation is heterosexual. Nevertheless, the concept of *ipulaksanai*, which they uphold together, prevents them from conducting physical and social violence against LGBT people. LGBT people are always seen as brothers. In association with society, they are accepted (Nada, 2019). Society has never treated them as if they were not people or as if they were people with mental disorders (Ngepek, 2019). However, especially for gay practices, this society seems quite weird about everything related to the practice. Nada said that, in general, the Maanyan people do not have standard rules regarding fines or customary punishments for same-gender acts, whether male-to-male homosexuals or female-to-female. There is only a rule that anything that deviates from the standard practice is *pali* or something that is abstinent (Nada, 2019).

Sexual life outside custom is sensitive, especially for those who appear deviant, such as same-gender relationships. According to Nada, if a case like this existed, the leaders of *adat* would usually remind the person concerned that the act was wrong. The leaders of *adat* will also remind their families to educate those concerned so that they remain aware of their identity (Nada, 2019). If they cannot change the situation, Nada said the community would let it (Nada, 2019). However, Nada emphasized that the community would avoid getting further involved with them, especially in sexual acts, because of this orientation (Nada, 2019). "It means we each take care of ourselves. We already know his or her position" (Nada, 2019).

Nevertheless, all respondents reported that whatever the situation, these LGBT people were never considered to be outside the family. Nada stressed that as far as he knew, LGBT people still felt safe living in the Maanyan society (Nada, 2019). "So, even though his behavior was strange, he will always treat them like family. No one is doing violence to them. Nothing will hinder them from attending church, school, or socializing daily" (Nada, 2019). The community also protects those concerned so that outsiders do not misbehave with them (Nada, 2019). The concept of *ipulaksanai* makes LGBT people not excluded from communal life. Tulus Darmaputera said that society has never isolated LGBT people (Darmaputera, 2019). Even sometimes, they see it as a gift from God, even if it is weird. The Maanyan people cannot refuse them because, in the Maanyan concept, all Maanyan are siblings (Darmaputera, 2019).

In Balawa village, a woman that is a Pangulu, the highest customary holder in the village, whose name was Liusdiana, openly talked about the condition of her youngest child named Kl, who is currently 32 years old. According to Liusdiana, Kl was given to him by a supernatural spirit. It is why his or her attitude was unusual. Biologically, he or she is a woman but does not like being identified and treated like one. He or she does not like to dress like a girl but dresses and acts like a man.

Liusdiana said that she and her family often pressured Kl to marry, but Kl did not want to. He or she never wanted to be in a relationship with a man. When Liusdiana was trying to find a partner for him or her, Liusdiana said that Kl's supernatural mother visited her in a dream. The mother, a supernatural being, said to Liusdiana: "Mama Roya (her oldest child is called Roya), our son is already married; why do you want him to marry a girl? He is married. His wife is already there." That is why Liusdiana no longer thinks of a mate for her Kl (Liusdiana, 2019). Liusdiana already considers Kl a man because she does not dispute the words from the supernatural being in her dream, saying that Kl already has a wife; even though biologically, his genitals are female.

However, the family's bickering breaks when KI forms a "special friendship" with another woman. Liusdiana said that her whole family, especially her husband's, was constantly angry with her and said: "Why are you letting the child like that? "There will be no hope for her to have a partner!". Likewise, her other six children, even her daughter-in-law, were angry with her. Liusdiana said she was very depressed and hurt. He cried for a week. "Who can treat my child?" he asked himself. Then, said Liusdiana, she had another dream. In her dream, a magical spirit, a ghost dressed in white, KI's supernatural mother, visited her. The ghost sits in the middle of their house. Then, while holding KI on his lap, the ghost said: "This is my child that I entrusted to you. We trust our son because he has no sense. He wants to be with humans, so he can go to school, be educated, study, and so on. We ran out of ideas, so we leave it to you. So, what is your complaint?" asked the ghost. Liusdiana answered while scared because the ghost asked with an angry expression. Liusdiana said: "My husband and my children are angry with me because he is in a relationship with a girl." The ghost said, "Okay. Let me take responsibility. You do not do anything" (Liusdiana, 2019). Liusdiana told her dream to her husband and children. After that, they were no longer angry and forced KI to marry or behave like a normal boy (Liusdiana, 2019). Time goes by, KI has changed partners and is now with a fourth friend (Liusdiana, 2019).

Sexual life outside of adat is a sensitive issue for the Maanyan people, especially regarding homosexual practices, so discussions about this are very closed or rarely exposed outside the community. Society covers them up. One of the reasons that can explain this "covering" phenomenon is the *ipulaksanai* concept earlier. One typical expression related to the concept of *ipulaksanai* in the life of the Maanyan people describes it: '*Biar mauai makai Riu amas, nasuhu makai Riu intan, jaka ngaran ipulaksanai tatap ipulaksanai*' means no matter how bad you are, you are still our brothers, no matter how bad their behavior was, they were still brothers (Darmaputera, 2019). "Even though they misbehave in society, they are still considered a family. No matter how the person behaves, it is undeniable that they are the *ipulaksanai*, our birth brothers and sisters. The Maanyans will not destroy their family ties" (Antini, 2019).

Homosexual practices are still considered wrong, deviant, and unusual, but when they fail to be pushed to be heterosexual, society will just cover them up. They will not oppress them just as they covered up the shame of the girl who failed to marry after breaking into the house of the man, she wanted with her once they covered up the same-sex (homosexual) relationship in their society. Although LGBT is still seen as abnormal, inappropriate, and deviant, hospitality in the concept of *ipulaksanai* prevents them from being inhumane towards them. It can even happen that someone commits an act of customary subversion, for example, by claiming to have a dream, as Liusdiana did, to resist opening a generous space to the LGBT reality. The concept of *ipulaksanai* allows all this to happen.

#### 4.3 The Parallels between the Concept of *Ipulaksanai* and Indonesian Philosophy of Unity in Diversity

Indonesia is a country with a rich tapestry of tribes, cultures, languages, and religions. Despite this diversity, the nation has come together with a common oath - the youth oath - to become one Indonesian nation. The country embraces its diversity through the philosophy of Unity in Diversity, where differences are acknowledged and celebrated, while promoting unity and cooperation among all members.

The concept of "Unity in Diversity" and "Ipulaksanai" share a similar emphasis on the idea of unity despite differences. The "Unity in Diversity" philosophy recognizes and celebrates diversity within a community, while promoting cooperation and unity among its members.

Similarly, the concept of *Ipulaksanai* represents the idea of unity and cooperation among different individuals and groups. This concept is based on the belief that all individuals, despite their unique characteristics, are connected and derive from the same source of life - "sanai." This concept promotes a way of life where individuals and groups work together to create a strong and harmonious community. In this view, different parts of the "sanai," including men, women, LGBT people, and spirits, are seen as representing various aspects of the community and contributing to the whole in their own unique way.

In both cases, diversity is viewed as a source of strength, not a threat to unity. The underlying parallelism is that diversity provides an opportunity to unite people and create stronger and more resilient communities.

The importance of the above discussion for the current Indonesian nation is its focus on unity and cooperation among diversity. The principles of "Unity in Diversity" and "Ipulaksanai" emphasize the value of diversity as a strength, not a barrier to unity. This is particularly relevant for Indonesia, known for its diverse tribes, cultures, languages, religions, and sexual expressions. By accepting these differences and promoting cooperation, the country can build a stronger, more harmonious community. This aligns with the Indonesian youth oath, calling for unity despite diversity, and the democratic values of the nation, where every element is valued and contributes to a better future.



The conservative trend in Indonesia has had adverse effects on the rights and freedoms of vulnerable groups, such as women, young people, and the LGBT community. The idea that conservatism is the true Indonesian identity and lifestyle has led to the repression of diverse sexual expressions. However, "Ipulaksanai" and "Unity in Diversity" recognize and respect diversity, providing a foundation for promoting a moderate attitude towards sexual morality and the existence of the LGBT community in society.

### 5. Suggestions for Further Research

For further research, some suggestions that can be given include:

1. Explore more deeply about the concept of Ipulaksanai, including aspects of its history, philosophy, and practices in society.
2. Evaluating the positive and negative impact of the application of the concept of Ipulaksanai in people's lives, especially in terms of the formation of social norms and the regulation of society.
3. Investigate the relationship between the concept of Ipulaksanai and other philosophies and practices in society, such as customs, religion, and culture.
4. Examine how the Ipulaksanai concept and the philosophy of Unity in Diversity can be applied in other fields, such as government, education, and business.

These suggestions can help improve understanding of the Ipulaksanai concept and the Unity in Diversity philosophy, as well as how both concepts can contribute to the life of the Indonesian nation today.

### 6. Conclusion

The concept of ipulaksanai from the Maanyan Dayak tribe provides a unique viewpoint on human bodies and relationships, emphasizing unity, equality, and mutual support. This idea aligns with the Indonesian philosophy of "Unity in Diversity," which values unity and cooperation despite differences, and views diversity as a source of strength. These principles are significant for Indonesia, a country renowned for its diverse tribes, cultures, languages, religions, and sexual expressions. Despite the rise of conservatism in Indonesia, which has hindered the rights of marginalized groups, the principles of ipulaksanai and "Unity in Diversity" offer a foundation for promoting respect and equality for all individuals.

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