The Complexity of Ethnic Conflict Among Rohingya Refugees in Aceh: The Struggle Between Local Identity and International Law

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Abstract:

This research examines the complexity of Rohingya refugee integration in Aceh using a qualitative approach and the social religious phenomenology method. The main focus is on the interaction between international law, local norms, religion, mass media, and the social dynamics that influence refugee reception and integration. Data collection methods include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, with informants comprising religious leaders, local government officials, Rohingya refugees, and local journalists. Thematic and narrative analyses are employed to identify and interpret relevant themes related to the application of the non-refoulement principle, the role of Islam, the influence of mass media, and the psychological well-being of refugees. The findings reveal the complexity of Rohingya refugee integration in Aceh, shaped by the interplay of international law, local norms, religion, mass media, and social dynamics. Legal pluralism theory highlights a gap between the non-refoulement principle and Aceh's local wisdom. Religious solidarity theory explains the initial drive for refugee acceptance, though collective historical experiences contribute to resistance. Agenda-setting theory uncovers media bias. The study's limitations suggest the need for further research, particularly through a comparative approach to understand effective strategies for integrating international law with local norms.

Keywords: *Conflict Ethnic; Rohingya Refugees; Acehnese Muslims; Local Norms; International Law;*

INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia is known for its ethnic and religious diversity, which often serves as a source of conflict in various countries. One of the most prominent examples is the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar, which has triggered the forced migration of thousands of people to neighboring countries, including Indonesia (Islam, 2020). Aceh, a province in Indonesia with a long history of conflict and a strong cultural identity, has become a destination for Rohingya refugees. However, the integration of these refugees is not a simple process limited to economic factors or basic needs (Ehmer & Kothari, 2021). Instead, there are more complex dynamics at play, involving aspects of religion, the application of international law, the psychology of the local population, and media narratives. This study explores these multifaceted interactions, which have received little attention in the academic literature thus far.

Academic debates have emerged surrounding the role of religion in ethnic conflicts in Southeast Asia, particularly in the context of the Rohingya crisis (Listriani et al., 2020). Previous studies have often focused on the political and economic aspects of ethnic conflicts, while the role of religion has been either overlooked or viewed as a secondary factor. In many cases, however, religion plays a crucial role as both a trigger for conflict and a key component in the peace and reconciliation process (Siba, 2018). On one hand, some scholars argue that placing too much emphasis on religion can obscure the role of other variables, such as political and economic power. On the other hand, others contend that religion has a dominant influence on the dynamics of conflict and should be taken seriously in any analysis of ethnic conflict (Bangun, 2018).

Additionally, there is debate over the effectiveness of applying international law in the context of Rohingya refugees in Aceh. The principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forced return of refugees to dangerous places, is widely recognized in international law. However, its implementation often faces various challenges, particularly when it intersects with strong local laws and norms (Risdianto, 2017; Yani & Zulkarnain, 2021). Some argue that the universal approach of international law may not always be suitable for regions with unique social and cultural contexts, such as Aceh (Yulia Hartati, 2013). This raises important questions about how international law can be applied effectively without disregarding local contexts (Kusumasari & Alam, 2012). This study aims to bridge that gap by exploring how international law and local norms interact, and how the psychology of the local population and media narratives influence the refugee integration process in Aceh.

The study of the Rohingya refugee crisis has been widely explored, particularly regarding aspects of international law, human rights, and the political dynamics of Southeast Asia. Previous research, such as that by Cheung (2012) and Ibrahim (2016), has focused heavily on the role of international law in refugee protection and the challenges faced in its implementation across ASEAN countries. These studies often emphasize the principle of non-refoulement and the barriers to its enforcement in nations like Malaysia and Thailand. However, in-depth analyses of the interaction between international law and local norms, particularly in Aceh, remain limited. This study offers a novel perspective by integrating social psychology analysis of local communities and the role of mass media in shaping perceptions of refugees, a topic rarely discussed in earlier literature. Thus, this article addresses a gap in the literature by combining legal, social, and cultural perspectives in a comprehensive study.

Furthermore, research on ethnic conflict and the role of religion in refugee integration has also been the focus of various studies, such as those by Ghosh (2018) and Rahman (2020), which examined the impact of religion in either intensifying or alleviating

ethnic conflicts in South Asia. This study, however, adds a new dimension by exploring how Aceh's local identity and its historical experience with conflict influence the reception of Rohingya refugees. Additionally, this article explores how local and international media shape narratives about refugees, which has implications for policies and public attitudes toward refugees (Jerin & Mozumder, 2019). The main contribution of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach that connects legal, social, and media aspects while also advancing theories related to the interaction between local identities and the application of international law in the context of a humanitarian crisis.

This study provides new insights into the Rohingya refugee crisis in Aceh. Previous research, such as that by Cheung (2012) and Ibrahim (2016), primarily focused on the application of international law in ASEAN countries without delving deeply into the interaction between international law and local norms in Aceh. This research focuses on how the principle of non-refoulement in international law interacts with Aceh's local norms, which are grounded in cultural and religious wisdom, thus enriching the understanding of conflicts between international obligations and local values. While Ghosh (2018) and Rahman (2020) previously examined the role of religion in ethnic conflicts in South Asia, they did not specifically discuss how Islam influences the integration of Rohingya refugees in Aceh.

This study adds a new dimension by exploring Islamic values, such as solidarity and brotherhood, in conjunction with past negative experiences with refugees, which affect social dynamics and the acceptance of refugees in local Acehnese communities. The social dynamics and media roles also represent new aspects in this research. Previous studies have often not integrated the role of mass media in the context of refugee integration (Hanifah, 2019). This research highlights how both local and international media shape narratives regarding the Rohingya refugees and how these narratives influence the perceptions and attitudes of Acehnese society toward the refugees (Brooten, 2015; Irom et al., 2022).

In terms of the psychological well-being of refugees, prior studies have focused more on legal and political aspects, often overlooking psychological impacts such as trauma and stress among refugees. This research fills this gap by observing the psychological impacts on Rohingya refugees and how these factors affect their integration process in Aceh. The historical experience of local conflict in Aceh also serves as a novel aspect of this study. Previous research has not typically explored how local conflict history influences societal attitudes toward refugees. This research examines how Aceh's conflict history impacts the reception of Rohingya refugees and their integration process, providing a deeper understanding of local dynamics.

This study employs a qualitative approach with a method of religious social phenomenology, aiming to understand the experiences and perceptions of Acehnese society regarding the integration of Rohingya refugees (Gulzar et al., 2021; Stanley, 2008; Usman et al., 2023). This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the various factors influencing refugee acceptance, including religious aspects, international law, societal psychology, and the role of mass media. Data collection techniques used include in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis (Genocide & Bakali, 2020; Parveen & Sahana, 2022). The respondents in this research are categorized into several groups: religious leaders and community figures in Aceh, local government officials involved in refugee policy, Rohingya refugees, and local journalists covering refugee issues. Information from these various respondents is expected to provide a comprehensive view of the ethnic conflict dynamics and refugee integration processes in Aceh.

The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis, involving several systematic steps (Vebrianto et al., 2020). First, data collected from interviews and observations are coded based on themes relevant to the research focus. Second, these themes are identified and connected to form broader categories. Then, an in-depth interpretation is conducted to understand how each category interacts and influences one another in the context of Rohingya refugee integration. These results are then compared with previous literature to identify similarities and differences and to determine new contributions that can enrich the scholarly discourse on ethnic conflict and refugee integration. Narrative analysis is also conducted to examine the role of mass media in shaping public perceptions, focusing on how media influences societal attitudes toward Rohingya refugees.

The aim of this research is to examine the complexity of ethnic conflict involving Rohingya refugees in Aceh, with a focus on the interaction between local identity, religion, and the application of international law, and how these factors affect the refugee integration process. This study seeks to reveal the dynamics between local norms and international legal principles, as well as the role of societal psychology and media narratives in shaping perceptions and attitudes toward refugees. The expected outcome is a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the integration of Rohingya refugees in Aceh, along with a theoretical contribution that combines legal, social, and media perspectives in the context of this humanitarian crisis.

DISCUSSION
Legal Pluralism and the Implementation of International Law, Religious Solidarity, and Socio-Cultural Factors Behind Ethnic Conflict

The theory of legal pluralism explains that the legal system in a particular region does not always align with international law. In the context of Aceh, this theory reveals that the principle of *non-refoulement*, which is an international norm prohibiting the return of refugees to dangerous places (Selasih & Sudarsana, 2018), may not always be fully upheld. The Acehnese community, with its strong cultural traditions and norms, tends to prioritize community-based solutions that align with local wisdom. Legal pluralism posits that the legal framework applied in a given area is often a mix of various legal systems—both formal and informal—which can lead to tension when international legal principles need to be enforced (Yani & Zulkarnain, 2021). In Aceh, although there is pressure from the international community to protect refugees, the local government must balance compliance with international law and local demands, which often prioritize social and cultural stability.

The theory of local resistance explains how local communities may reject policies or interventions perceived as inconsistent with their values or interests. In the case of the Rohingya refugees in Aceh, this theory helps to understand how pressure from the local community toward the refugees can influence government policy. The Acehnese community, experiencing cultural and social tension due to the presence of refugees, exhibits resistance to policies that support refugee protection. This pressure creates a dilemma for local authorities, who must navigate the conflict between international obligations and local demands. Local resistance is currently manifested in calls for the repatriation of refugees or the adjustment of policies to better align with local cultural norms. This illustrates a significant challenge in implementing international policies at the local level, where global policies cannot always be directly applied without adaptation to the local context.

The agenda-setting theory in mass communication studies reveals the media's role in shaping public perception by determining which issues receive attention. In the context of

Rohingya refugees, local media in Aceh tends to focus on the humanitarian aspects of the crisis, such as aid and rescue efforts, while local social conflicts and tensions often go underreported. By choosing to highlight the positive side of the crisis, the media can create an unbalanced picture of the situation on the ground (Usman et al., 2023). This has the potential to influence public perception and reduce a deeper understanding of the tensions between refugees and the local community. Agenda-setting theory demonstrates that the media has the power to direct public attention and shape narratives, but it can also neglect important aspects of complex social issues.

Ethnic conflict theory explains how tensions between ethnic groups can arise from differences in cultural norms and values. In the context of Rohingya refugees in Aceh, this theory helps to explain how cultural identity differences between the refugees and the local community can lead to conflict. Rohingya refugees, who bring different cultures and traditions, may be perceived as threatening local Acehnese cultural values (Gulzar et al., 2021). The resistance to refugees shown by the Acehnese community is often a form of defense against perceived threats to their cultural values. This tension reflects how ethnic conflict can occur when different groups attempt to adapt to new social environments and often clash over norms and values.

Conditions of Rohingya Refugees in Aceh

Since their initial arrival in Aceh in 2015, Rohingya refugees have become part of the social and humanitarian dynamics in the region. The Rohingya refugees are a Muslim minority group from Myanmar, fleeing from persecution and violence driven by ethnic and religious discrimination in their homeland. The situation of the refugees in Aceh is complex, encompassing aspects such as the history of their arrival, the number of refugees, the locations of their shelters, their socio-economic conditions, and the dynamics of their relationship with the local community. Their presence in Aceh poses significant challenges for the local government, international organizations, and the Acehnese community.

Rohingya refugees first began arriving in Aceh in 2015 in significant numbers, with the largest wave occurring in 2020. The refugees fled Myanmar due to escalating violence in Rakhine State, where they faced systematic massacres, torture, and genocide at the hands of the Myanmar military (Ehmer & Kothari, 2021; Islam, 2020). Most of these refugees arrived via small, inadequate boats, often in dire conditions. They were frequently adrift at sea for weeks before being rescued by Acehnese fishermen, who demonstrated a strong sense of humanity and solidarity.

Upon their arrival in Aceh, the initial response from the local community and government was to provide humanitarian aid. However, despite Aceh's own history of internal conflict that led to its people becoming refugees, the arrival of the Rohingya posed unique challenges in terms of sustainable management. The local government collaborated with international agencies such as UNHCR (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) to manage the refugee influx, providing temporary shelters and meeting their basic needs.

As of 2023, the estimated number of Rohingya refugees in Aceh stands at approximately 800, though this number fluctuates with new arrivals and the relocation of refugees to third countries. These refugees are spread across several refugee camps located in areas such as Lhokseumawe and Bireuen. These camps are managed by the local government with assistance from international and local humanitarian organizations.

The shelters provided for Rohingya refugees are temporary and often inadequate to accommodate the growing number of refugees. Facilities in these camps include emergency housing, basic sanitation, and limited access to healthcare services. However, over time, logistical challenges and increasing needs have made managing these camps increasingly difficult. The capacity to accommodate refugees in the long term has become a major concern.

The social and economic life of Rohingya refugees in Aceh faces numerous challenges. Most of them lack clear legal status, which leaves them in a precarious and uncertain situation. Refugees are not allowed to work formally in Indonesia, making it difficult for them to meet basic needs such as food, clean water, and healthcare. The aid they receive from international agencies is often insufficient to meet their growing needs. Furthermore, access to education is a major issue. Rohingya refugee children struggle to receive adequate education due to the limited facilities and their uncertain legal status. Humanitarian organizations have attempted to provide informal education, but this falls far short of offering an education on par with that of local children. As a result, many refugees are trapped in a cycle of poverty and helplessness, with no clear prospects for the future.

Initially, the Acehnese community welcomed the arrival of the Rohingya refugees with open arms. The solidarity shown by the Acehnese people stemmed from their own past experiences as victims of conflict and displacement during the internal conflict in the region. Moreover, as fellow Muslims, the Acehnese felt a moral obligation to assist their brothers and sisters who were being persecuted in Myanmar. However, over time, tensions began to surface between the Rohingya refugees and the local community. These tensions were driven by cultural differences, social behavior, and reports of actions by the refugees that were perceived as being at odds with local norms. Some Acehnese residents began to feel uneasy about the refugees' presence, seeing them as a burden on local resources and a source of social problems. This has created a dilemma for the government and humanitarian organizations in seeking appropriate solutions to maintain harmony between the refugees and the local community.

Local Identity, Religion, and the Application of International Law to Rohingya Refugees in Aceh

This study reveals the complexities surrounding the integration of Rohingya refugees in Aceh, which are influenced by the interaction between local identity, religious values, and the application of international law. Analysis of government policy documents, mass media, and interviews with various stakeholders highlights the challenges faced in implementing international legal principles, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forced return of refugees to dangerous places of origin. Although there is a formal commitment to support international law, its implementation is often hindered by slow bureaucracy and resistance from the local community, which prioritizes local wisdom and culturally-based approaches. Local media reports indicate that the focus is often on the humanitarian aspects of the refugee crisis, while the social conflicts and ethnic tensions arising from the presence of refugees are rarely discussed in depth. Moreover, the role of religion, particularly Islamic values of solidarity, initially motivated the Acehnese community to welcome refugees. However, past negative experiences have contributed to growing resistance against the refugees' presence. Observations on the application of international law on the ground show legal uncertainty and differing interpretations between authorities and humanitarian agencies, affecting the social integration of refugees. This study will analyze

these three aspects to understand and address the challenges that arise in integrating Rohingya refugees in Aceh, considering legal, social, cultural, and media dimensions.

In this study, the analysis of documents reveals various complexities surrounding the integration of Rohingya refugees in Aceh, influenced by the interaction between local identity, religion, and the application of international law. Local government policy documents, such as those outlined in "Aceh Local Government Policy on Rohingya Refugee Management in 2023: Commitment and Challenges in Implementing International Law," indicate a formal commitment to upholding international law, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forced return of refugees to dangerous places of origin. However, the implementation of this principle is often disrupted by slow bureaucracy and resistance from local communities. Local wisdom values, which prioritize culturally and religiously-based approaches, sometimes clash with universal international policies (Yusuf et al., 2020). This has become a source of ambiguity in local government policies, which attempt to bridge the gap between international commitments and local demands.

Local media reports, as summarized in "Acehnese Mass Media Reports on Rohingya Refugees: Humanitarian Narratives and Social Implications in Aceh," show that the local media tends to highlight the humanitarian aspects of the Rohingya refugee crisis, focusing on the aid and support provided. However, the media rarely addresses the social conflicts that emerge at the local level as a result of the refugee presence. Media narratives, which lean towards portraying positive humanitarian efforts, often fail to explore in depth the social dynamics at play, such as ethnic tensions or resistance from parts of the community who feel threatened by demographic changes (Abdullah Idi, 2015).

The role of religion in refugee integration is often overlooked in policy analysis, despite religion having a significant influence in shaping local attitudes and perceptions towards the Rohingya refugees. Islamic values of solidarity, which should theoretically support refugee acceptance, occasionally clash with past negative experiences of Acehnese communities towards some refugees whose behavior is perceived as inconsistent with local norms. This has led to increased rejection of the refugees in certain communities.

Interviews show that the reception of refugees in Aceh is influenced not only by humanitarian factors but also by complex social, cultural, and political dynamics.

"The acceptance of Rohingya refugees in Aceh is influenced by Islamic values of solidarity. However, there are concerns that some of their past behaviors, which disappointed the community, have intensified the rejection." (Interview with Acehnese Religious Leader)

An interview with a religious leader in Aceh reveals that the acceptance of Rohingya refugees in Aceh is greatly influenced by Islamic values that emphasize solidarity and brotherhood among Muslims. In Islam, the concept of *ukhuwwah*, or the brotherhood of Muslims, encourages the community to accept and help refugees as part of their religious duty. This created a strong initial motivation for the Acehnese people to welcome the Rohingya refugees. However, the interview also reveals growing concerns within the Acehnese community about past experiences, where some refugees exhibited behaviors that were considered inappropriate according to local norms. These unseemly actions by a few refugees triggered feelings of disappointment and distrust, which in turn intensified resistance to the refugees' presence in certain communities. This suggests that while religious values can drive refugee acceptance, negative past experiences can diminish the enthusiasm of the community to support integration efforts (Yani & Zulkarnain, 2021).

"The implementation of international law, such as the principle of non-refoulement, clashes with local norms that prioritize traditional wisdom in managing refugees" (Interview with Local Government Official)

An interview with a local government official highlighted the challenges in applying international law, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forced return of refugees to their dangerous places of origin. The official explained that Aceh's local norms, which emphasize community-based approaches and local wisdom, often conflict with international legal principles. In many cases, the Acehnese community favors solutions that align with their traditions and culture, which may not always be in line with international legal standards. This creates a dilemma for the local government in integrating Rohingya refugees without disregarding the aspirations of the local community. The official acknowledged that policies often need to strike a balance between international obligations and local demands, making the implementation process complicated and, at times, inconsistent (Risdianto, 2017).

"Media highlights the humanitarian aspects of the refugee crisis but rarely addresses the social dynamics and conflicts that arise at the local level" (Interview with Local Journalist)

A local journalist interviewed pointed out that the media in Aceh tends to focus on the humanitarian aspects of the Rohingya refugee crisis, such as humanitarian aid and rescue efforts, but gives less attention to the social dynamics and conflicts that arise at the local level. According to the journalist, media narratives often emphasize the positive aspects, such as solidarity and compassion, while the ethnic tensions and social conflicts resulting from the refugees' presence are rarely discussed in depth. This creates an imbalanced portrayal in the public's eyes, where the realities of conflict faced by the local community may not be fully understood by the broader society (HS, 2019). Furthermore, the journalist acknowledged that there is pressure to maintain a positive image of Aceh as a hospitable and open region, which could influence how the media reports on sensitive issues such as ethnic conflicts and refugee integration.

"Although the government has attempted to apply international law, pressure from local communities demanding the return of refugees makes the policy ambiguous and difficult to implement" (Interview with Human Rights Activist)

An interview with a human rights activist revealed that although the local government has made efforts to apply international refugee laws, they often face pressure from local communities who demand that the refugees be repatriated as soon as possible. The activist explained that this pressure often renders government policies ambiguous and difficult to implement consistently. Policies originally designed to protect refugees and ensure their rights are often modified or even revoked under pressure from community groups who feel that the presence of refugees disrupts social order or undermines local cultural balance. This situation illustrates the significant challenges in implementing policies that accommodate international law amid communities with different views and expectations (O'Brien & Hoffstaedter, 2020). The activist emphasized that the successful integration of refugees in

Aceh depends heavily on the government's ability to manage these pressures while still fulfilling international commitments.

On the other hand, observations of the application of international law, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, show that implementation on the ground faces significant challenges. Rohingya refugees often experience difficulties obtaining a clear legal status, which affects their right to reside and work in Aceh. The enforcement of international law frequently conflicts with stricter local policies, and at times there are differing interpretations between authorities and humanitarian organizations regarding refugee rights. This creates legal uncertainty and affects the social integration of refugees. Observations also indicate that both local and international media play a significant role in shaping public perceptions of Rohingya refugees (Hanifah, 2019). News and media reports often influence the attitudes of the local community, with some reports emphasizing humanitarian and human rights challenges, while others focus on security issues and economic burdens. These media narratives contribute to shaping public opinion and influence local policies towards refugees.

Integration of Rohingya Refugees in Aceh

This study reveals the complexity of Rohingya refugee reception in Aceh by applying various theoretical frameworks to understand the dynamics involved. The implementation of international law, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the return of refugees to dangerous places of origin, often clashes with local wisdom that prioritizes community-based and cultural solutions. Legal pluralism theory explains the tension between international norms and Aceh's local norms. On the other hand, Islamic values of solidarity play a role in encouraging the acceptance of refugees, though negative past experiences may reduce this solidarity (Purwanto et al., 2023). The theory of local resistance highlights the challenges in implementing international policies at the local level, where communities often demand policy adjustments to suit their interests. Moreover, the agenda-setting theory in mass communication reveals the media's role in shaping public perceptions, often focusing solely on humanitarian aspects without exposing the social conflicts that occur. Lastly, ethnic conflict theory highlights the tension between the cultural identity of refugees and the local community as a key factor in the resistance to refugee integration.

The reception of Rohingya refugees in Aceh is influenced by a complex dynamic between humanitarian, cultural, religious, and legal factors. Based on the theory of legal pluralism, the application of international law in Aceh, particularly the principle of non-refoulement, often clashes with local wisdom. Legal pluralism explains that local communities, including those in Aceh, have normative systems and rules that do not always align with international law (Fridayanti, 2016). Local norms that prioritize community-based solutions and traditional wisdom often dominate over universal principles of international law. In the case of Rohingya refugees, despite international pressure to protect the rights of refugees, the Aceh regional government faces a dilemma in balancing the demands of the local community, which prioritize social stability.

From a religious perspective, the theory of religious solidarity helps explain the initial push from the Acehnese community to accept Rohingya refugees. Islamic values, particularly the concept of *ukhuwwah* (Muslim brotherhood), teach Muslims to help one another, especially those who are oppressed, such as the Rohingya refugees. This aligns with the statements of Acehnese religious leaders, who emphasize that Islamic values encourage the Acehnese to provide protection to refugees (Syahrin, 2018). However, while religion serves as a fundamental basis for refugee acceptance, negative past experiences, such as the

perception that refugees exhibited behavior incompatible with local norms, can reduce solidarity and increase resistance. This demonstrates that although religion plays a significant role in facilitating initial acceptance, social dynamics and past experiences can influence public attitudes towards refugees.

Furthermore, interviews with local government officials and human rights activists indicate the difficulties in implementing international law at the local level. The theory of local resistance in the context of policy implementation explains that local communities often resist policies they consider misaligned with their values or interests. The pressure from the community to repatriate Rohingya refugees reflects resistance to international policies that support refugee protection. In this context, local governments face the challenge of balancing international commitments to protect refugees with local demands for repatriation. This illustrates one of the major challenges in applying international law at the local level, where policies formulated at the global level often cannot be directly implemented without modification or adjustment to the local context.

The Role of Media in Shaping Public Perceptions of Refugees

The media's role in shaping public perceptions of refugees is also relevant to the agenda-setting theory in mass communication studies. Media outlets determine the issues that become the focus of public attention. In the case of the Rohingya, local media in Aceh tends to highlight the humanitarian aspects of the refugee crisis, such as sea rescues and humanitarian aid, but gives less attention to the social conflicts that arise at the local level. As a result, the public may receive an imbalanced view of the situation, where the tensions between refugees and local communities are often not deeply explored. This may create the illusion that refugee reception is proceeding smoothly, while in reality, significant conflicts exist between local norms and refugee behavior.

From the perspective of ethnic conflict theory, the tensions that arise between Rohingya refugees and the Acehnese community can be seen as stemming from differences in cultural and ethnic identity. Ethnic conflict is sometimes triggered by the incompatibility of norms and values held by immigrant groups with those of the local community. In this context, the resistance shown by the Acehnese community towards some Rohingya refugees can be interpreted as a form of defense of local cultural values that are perceived to be threatened by the presence of a different ethnic group.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of this study highlights the complexity of integrating Rohingya refugees in Aceh, which is influenced by the interaction of various factors, including international law, local norms, religion, mass media, and social dynamics. Based on legal pluralism theory, the application of the non-refoulement principle from international law sparks differing perceptions with Acehnese local norms that prioritize traditional wisdom in addressing refugees. This demonstrates the tension between international law and the customary legal system that prevails in Acehnese society. In addition, religious solidarity theory underscores that Islamic values, which emphasize the importance of helping fellow Muslims, initially encouraged the acceptance of refugees. However, the theory of collective historical experience reveals that Acehnese society's experience as victims of internal conflict has also contributed to resistance to the presence of Rohingya refugees, especially when refugee behavior or culture is perceived to be incompatible with local norms. The agenda-setting theory in mass communication is also relevant, as media plays a central role in shaping

public perception. However, this study shows that public perception can be unbalanced, sometimes creating a gap between social reality and the information received by the community. While these findings provide valuable insights into the social and legal dynamics that influence refugee integration, the limitations in the geographic scope and population studied suggest the need for further research. Comparative studies could deepen the understanding of how different regions in Indonesia or ASEAN countries handle refugee crises and explore more effective strategies for integrating international law with local norms.

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