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Harmony in Diversity: Exploring Religiosity Cohesion Among Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist Communities in North Lombok, Indonesia

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Abstract

This research explores social cohesion among Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu communities in Pemenang Timur Village in North Lombok, East Indonesia. This village stands out because its people peacefully coexist in close proximity among three religious groups. This is in contrast to discrimination and violence that often occur in interfaith relations in other regions in Indonesia. This research employs a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach to analyze social practices and to reveal meaningful insights. It involves in-depth interviews with religious leaders (Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist), traditional leaders, *Pemangku*, and local community members. The findings show that social cohesion manifests in three forms: hereditary values characterized by blood relation through interfaith marriage, local wisdom in The *Ngejot* tradition held by sharing food during religious ceremonies, and religious cohesion represented by concepts such as *Tasamuh* concept in the Islam, *Tri Hita Karana* in Hinduism and the *Vihara Brahma* in Buddhism. Through these religious cohesion values, the social heritage and local traditions are preserved to maintain harmony between religious communities and foster mutual respect as part of civic culture, and to improve social solidarity between religious communities. They play a vital role in cultivating unity and integrity among different religions and ethnicities. The findings of this research emphasize the importance of social cohesion in building harmony between religious communities in other regions of Indonesia, contributing to more peaceful, and harmonious nations with respect for diverse religious beliefs, ethnicities, cultures, tribes, and languages.

Keywords: community, diversity, harmony, North Lombok, religious cohesion

Introduction

Indonesia is well-known for its plurality and presence of various religions. Major world religions, such as Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Konghucu, flourish in Indonesia.[1] In addition, a variety of traditional beliefs held tightly by the people in many regions also still exist until today. People are bounded by a single bond, called *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), constituting Indonesia's national slogan, conveying the message of "diverse but still one" (there is unity in diversity).[2] This slogan is carved below the claw of the eagle as the state's symbol. It represents the idea that despite the differences in ethnicities, tribes, local languages, and religion, the people of Indonesia are united.[3] In addition, this slogan also emphasizes the importance of

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[1]K.K. Kwa, and S.K. Law, *Missions in Southeast Asia: Diversity and Unity in God's Design* (Jakarta: Langham Publishing, 2022).

[2]D. E. Setiawan, and K. Stevanus, "Significance of Islam Nusantara Values in an Indonesian Multicultural Society," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 18, no. 1 (June 19, 2023): 203–14.

[3]Diab et al., "Accommodation of Local Wisdom in Conflict Resolution of Indonesia's Urban Society." *Cogent Social Sciences* 8, no. 1 (2022): 1-14, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2153413

tolerance and mutual respect for all differences, fostering unity in diversity and preserving local cultural heritage.

Indonesia is known for its religious diversity, which is reflected in its populations adhering to various religions. According to the Bureau of Public Relations' data, particularly from 2023, the total population of Indonesia is 280,725,428. Out of this number, the majority (244,410,757 people, or 87.2% of the total population) adhere to Islam. Christianity or Protestantism is the second largest religion with 20,806,470 adherents (7%), followed by Catholicism (8,596,545 people or 3%), Hinduism (4,728,954 people or 2%), Buddhism (2,007,638 people or 1%), and Konghucu (76,019 people or 0%). This plurality shows that although the majority of Indonesians adhere to Islam, they live in a multicultural environment where various religions coexist within the nation's social fabric.[4],[5] This harmony is a distinctive characteristic of Indonesia and reflects the tolerance established among the followers of different religions.[6] The demographic distribution of religions in Indonesia highlights not only the country's religious diversity but also the importance of communal values in maintaining harmony among religious communities throughout the archipelago.[7]

Diversity among Indonesian people is governed in Chapter X and XI of the Republic of Indonesia's 1945 Constitution (Indonesian: Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia 1945). Chapter X addresses human rights, and clauses 1, 2, and 3 of Article 28 ensure that every person shall have the right to freedom of belief and the right to worship according to one's religion. Secondly, every person shall have the right to the freedom of thought and expression in accordance with one's conscience. Thirdly, every person shall have the right to the freedom to associate, assemble, and express opinions freely. The topic 'religion' is discussed in Chapter X. Clauses 1 and 2 of Article 29 state that the state is based on belief in the one and only God, it guarantees each citizen the freedom to practice and worship according to their religion and faith. Article 9 confirms the citizens' right to practice their religion, based on the principle of belief in the one and only God.

The multi-faith nature of Indonesian society is exemplified by the diversity of religious practices and local customs across different regional communities, indicative of the riches and splendour of this nation. A multicultural society thrives in Indonesia, with various expressions of faith contributing to the fabric of society. However, the symbol of religious diversity poses a threat to Indonesian harmony due to the possibility of religious conflict[8] between communities. This was evident during the 1998 religious' conflict between Muslims and Christians in Poso, as well as during the Muslim-Christian conflicts that occurred in Ambon from 1999 to 2000.[9] Additionally, similar conflicts

[4]Herdiana Hakim, "Seeking 'Unity in Diversity': Contemporary Children's Books in Indonesia." *Asian Children's Literature and Film in a Global Age* (2020): 245–87. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-2631-2_12

[5]R. Saehu, and I.H. Muchtar, "Religious Pluralism and Harmony among Buddhist-Muslim Communities Living in East Lampung, Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (2023): 245–56.

[6]A. H. Ummah, "The Voices of Inter-Religious Harmony: Experiences of Islam and Hindu Millennial Generation in Lombok," *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, volume 644, International Symposium on Religious Literature and Heritage (ISLAGE 2021) http://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220206.003

[7]Prasetiawati, "The Role of Religious Harmony Forum for Maintain Religious Life in Palangka Raya," *ICCIRS Proceedings* (2020): 11-14, http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.11-12-2019.2302093

[8]S. Hamdi and B. J Smith, "Sisters, Militias and Islam in Conflict: Questioning 'reconciliation' in Nahdlatul Wathan, Lombok, Indonesia." *Contemporary Islam* 6, no. 1 (2012): 29–43.

[9]K. E. Schulze, "The 'Ethnic' in Indonesia's Communal Conflicts: Violence in Ambon, Poso, and Sambas," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(12): 2096–2114.

occurred in Tolikara Papua and Aceh Province between Islam and Christianity in 2015. In 2016 and 2022,[10] there were clashes between Muslims and Buddhists in Tanjung Balai and West Lombok.

Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara Province, is known for its religious and cultural diversity and has experienced several significant incidents of religious conflict.[11] The first occurred in May 2022 between Muslim and Buddhist communities in Mareje Village, Lembar District, West Lombok. The impact of this religious conflict resulted in the destruction and burning of houses and facilities belonging to the Buddhist community. It was sparked by a misunderstanding between youths from different hamlets or regions regarding the sound of firecrackers on *Takbiran* night for the Muslim community.[12] In addition, in 2000, Mataram City experienced conflicts between Muslims and Christians. This was triggered by a response to a religious conflict in Poso, Central Sulawesi Province.[13] These events show that any religious conflict in one area can trigger or affect interfaith relations in other regions. The above events highlight the urgency of ongoing efforts to foster religious harmony in Lombok. Although various parties, including traditional, religious and government leaders, are working together to resolve problems and avoid similar conflicts in the future.

The research suggests that religious conflict is not solely caused by differing faiths but also by other factors, including the religious politicization for elite interests, context misconception, and other considerations. It is noteworthy that the harmony between religious communities has been maintained for centuries among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists in regions like North Lombok Utara (North Lombok). Local cultural diversity in the Lombok community plays an important role in reducing religion-motivated violence and potential conflict. This can be seen in the Sasak Tribe community in Pemenang Timur Village, Lombok Utara, where local wisdom serves as a guiding principle for peaceful coexistence among the adherents of different religions. Social harmony is achieved through obedience to cultural norms, values, and morals creating a balanced community promoting harmonious coexistence of religions.[14] In this context, social cohesion plays an important role in binding the religious communities and promoting peaceful relations.

Social cohesion refers to the unity and collective coherence a community seeks to achieve in order to ensure the sustainability of its members' lives within individual groups or communities.[15] Forrest and Kearns describe the fields of social cohesion, including shared values and civic culture, social order and control, social solidarity, social networks and capital, and attachment between place and identity.[16] The concept of social cohesion embodies the idea of a collective attempt to achieve

[10]Panggabean, Rizal, Alam, et al., "The Patterns of Religious Conflict in Indonesia (1990-2008)," Studia Islamika: 17, no. 2 (2010): 233–98.

[11]E. Budiwanti and L.G. Eidhamar, "Religious Diversity in Lombok: Peaceful Coexistence or Minorities at Risk?" *Religions* 15 (2024): 1544.

[12]S. Saparudin, and E. Emawati. "Ideological Framing, Mosques, and Conflict: Bargaining Position of Salafi Movement in Lombok, East Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 44, no. 1 (2023): 163–84.

[13]M. A. Nasir, "Conflict, Peace, and Religious Festivals: Muslim-Hindu-Christian Relations on the Eastern Indonesian Island of Lombok," *Interreligious Studies and Intercultural Theology* 4, No 1 (2020): 102–23.

[14]Gede Agung et al., "Local Wisdom as a Model of Interfaith Communication in Creating Religious Harmony in Indonesia," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 9 (January 1, 2024): 100827.

[15]Fonseca, Lukosch, and Brazier, "Social Cohesion Revisited: A New Definition and How to Characterize It," *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 32, no. 2 (April 3, 2019): 231–53.

[16]Forrest and Kearns, "Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood." *Urban Studies* 38.12 (2001): 2125-2143.

common goals. Several factors affect group cohesiveness. It is important to consider these factors in the attempt to improve group cohesiveness. One of the factors is the degree of cohesiveness existing in the group; a highly cohesive group is more likely to remain cohesive. Another factor is the stability of group membership. Groups with stable membership tend to be more cohesive because of sustainable interaction and shared experiences, building a strong relation.[17] Group size is also influential, as smaller groups can be supervised more easily and are better positioned to build coherence. In addition, the frequency of interaction is another important factor- groups that interact more frequently tend to be more cohesive than those communicating sporadically.

A clear objective is also very important; the groups with a clear understanding of their objective are more likely to achieve cohesion because of less negotiation and suspicion among the members.[18] Besides, the presence of competency and difficulty can strengthen cohesion, as members are more likely to unite and to collaborate when faced with challenges. Winning in group work also needs efficient communication, cooperation, and coordination among the members. Generally, understanding and dealing with these factors can improve the group cohesion.

Social cohesion plays an important role in supporting sustainable and inclusive development. Delhey et al. noted that the success of building social cohesion is affected by several key factors: group members' engagement, strong sense of belonging, high trust between individuals, and harmonious reciprocal relation. Through a strong social cohesion, people can cooperate more effectively to achieve common goals, to deal with challenges, and to build stable environment.[19]

Additionally, the role of religion in strengthening social cohesion is also undeniable. The harmonious relation between religious communities has evidently contributed to encouraging peace, tolerance and harmony in many aspects of life, including social aspect, religion, and living in state. In Lombok Utara region, interaction between Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu communities shows a unique harmony model, in which religiosity practices are not only accepted but also supporting each other. The predominantly Muslim community maintains a close relation with Buddhist and Hindu communities, creating conducive circumstance to live adjacently peacefully. This perspective reflects the values of mutual respect and cooperation between religion, not only strengthening social cohesion but also enriching local culture and thereby making Lombok Utara an important model of social harmony in diversity.

2. Research Method

This research employed a qualitative method to explore informants' perspectives on social cohesion between three religions in Lombok Utara in 2023. Using an ethnographic approach,[20] this research studies the meanings and values held in the life of communities having social relations between Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. This approach allows for an in-depth understanding on the long-standing practices of living together and guides the development of a community's spirit, culture, and religious values.[21]

[17]Hillenbrand, "Religion, a Bridge or Barrier in Society?" *Religiosity in East and West* 2020, 19–41.

[18]A. Maćkowiak, "Conceptual Dilemmas from a Fieldwork in Indonesia: 'Religious' 'Unity in Diversity' at the Lingsar Temple Festival," *Religion* 52, no. 1 (2022): 86–101.

[19]Delhey, Dragolov, and Boehnke, "Social Cohesion in International Comparison: A Review of Key Measures and Findings," Kolner Zeitschrift Fur Soziologie Und Sozialpsychologie 75 (July 1, 2022): 95–120.

[20]Wilkinson, *Ethnographic Methods* (London: Routledge, 2012).

[21]Nardi, *The Use of Ethnographic Methods in Design and Evaluation* (Belanda: Elsevier, 1997), 361–366.

The informants included key figures such as, the village head, traditional head, religious leader (Indonesian: Pemangku) as key informants and members of Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist communities as main informants. Data collection involved three main techniques: field observation, in-depth interviews with informants, and documentation study.[22] Observations focused on social interactions and daily habits reflecting harmony between religious communities, while in-depth interviews were conducted to gather insights into the views, experiences, and symbolic meanings each religious community holds regarding how to coexist harmoniously.[23] Documentation was used to complement the data obtained from observation and interviews, including historical records, artifacts, and documentation of religious and cultural activities involving multiple religions.

The data collected were then analyzed using an interactive model, encompassing three steps: data reduction, data display, and verification or conclusion drawing. Data reduction aims to simplify the data obtained, while data display helps organize information systematically to facilitate conclusion drawing. Verification was used to ensure data accuracy and precision in depicting social cohesion among the three religions.[24] A technical explanation is presented academically and objectively without using emotional words so that the result of research is relevant and useful in understanding social cohesion in Lombok Utara.

3. Results and Discussion

This research focuses on religious cohesion in Pemenang Timur Village, located in Pemenang Sub District, about 9 km from the center of Lombok Utara Regency. This area is well-known for its religion diversity, including Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, living adjacently in one region. The people of Pemenang Timur Village exhibit a lifestyle that emphasizes harmony and cooperation among religious communities, as indicated by social activities such as mutual assistance and cooperation in constructing worship places. The daily life in this village reflects good communication between religious communities, based on the values of togetherness and mutual respect. The number of religious adherents according to statistic data of Pemenang Timur Village in 2021 is presented in the figure below.

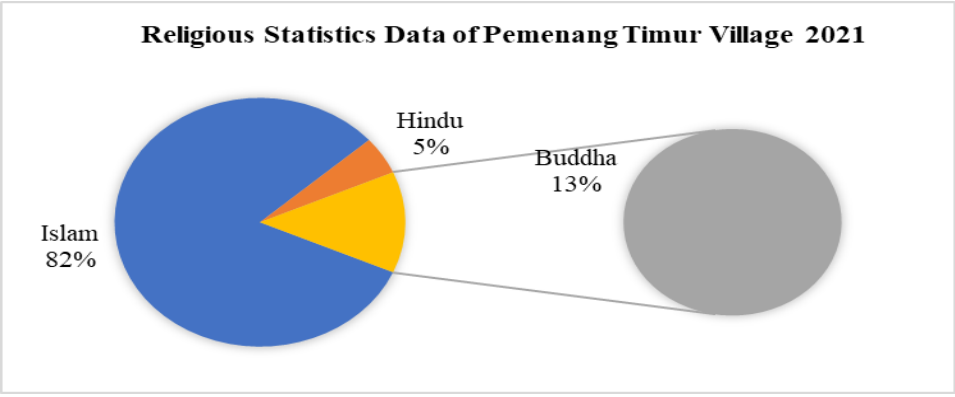


Figure 1. Population by Religious Belief

[22]J. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions* (California: Sage Publication, 2007), 121.

[23]L. Stephen, J. J. Schensul, and M.D. LeCompte, *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews, and Questionnaires* (California: Rowman Altamira, 2012).

[24]M. B. Miles, A. M. Huberman, and J. Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis A Methods Sourcebook Edition* (California: Sage Publications, 2014).

In this community, there are 7,671 Muslim adherents, 1,233 Buddhist adherents, and 460 Hindu adherents. Although the numbers of different adherents vary, Islam adherents, as the majority, build harmonious relation with Hindu and Buddhism adherents through religious values. In addition, it is also characterized by the presence of blood relation (social heredity) through mixed marriage and local wisdom value *mempolong merenten* manifested into *ngejot* tradition. This tradition allows members of all religious communities to share with each other and to show mutual appreciation and care, thereby strengthening social bonds between religious communities. Thus, people learn not only to appreciate difference but also to utilize it as the source of strength to achieve common goals.

3.1. Social Heredity

Heredity, or the inheritance of characteristics is a process of transferring physical characteristics from parents to their descendants through sexual or asexual reproduction,[25] enabling them to inherit genetic information.[26] In Pemenang Timur Village, the concept of inheritance involves not only biological aspects but also kinship relations and social values shared[27] by the communities of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Uniquely, in this village there are some families, the members of which have different faiths but bond in one family. Fraternity relations between siblings adhering to different religions instead trigger the growth of social and religious acceptance within the community. The following are 13 couples with mixed marriage cases (Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist).

Table 1. Case Study: Interfaith Marriages Among Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism

Name		Religion		Interfaith Marriage	Description
Future Husband	Future Wife	Husband	Wife		
YD	LU	Buddhism	Islam	Islam	Husband converted to Islam and still does so until today
RM	AR	Islam	Buddhism	Islam	The wife converted from Buddhism to Islam
IW	SB	Buddhism	Islam	Buddhism	The wife converted from Islam to Buddhism
IN	AN	Hindu	Islam	Hindu	The wife converted from Islam to Hindu
SA	YA	Islam	Buddhism	Islam	The wife converted from Buddhism to Islam
AN	ST	Buddhism	Islam	Islam	Husband converted from Buddhism to Islam
KP	ZB	Buddhism	Islam	Islam	They got married in the wife's home region using Islamic method
ME	IN	Buddhism	Islam	Buddhism	The wife converted from Islam to Buddhism
SU	ST	Buddhism	Islam	Buddhism	The wife converted from Islam to Buddhism
KI	SA	Buddhism	Islam	Islam	Husband converted from Buddhism to Islam

[25]W.C. Summers, "Heredity," *Reference Module in Life Sciences* (January 1, 2022): 1-110.

[26]P.A. Lombardo, "The Power of Heredity and the Relevance of Eugenic History," *Genetics in Medicine* 20, no. 11 (November 1, 2018): 1305–1311.

[27]J. Cook, *Heredity* (Germany: Outlook Verlag, 2023).

Name		Religion		Interfaith Marriage	Description
Future Husband	Future Wife	Husband	Wife		
AP	BT	Buddhism	Islam	Buddhism	The wife converted from Islam to Buddhism
JA	SN	Buddhism	Hindu	Buddhism	The wife converted from Hindu to Buddhism
KH	IK	Hindu	Islam	Hindu	The wife converted from Islam to Hinduism

The phenomenon of interfaith marriage between Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists is relatively common in Pemenang Timur Village.[28] Marriage is a physical and spiritual tie between a man and a woman recognized legally by the state's regulation intended to build a lasting family.[29] Interfaith marriage, specifically, refers to the union of two individuals from different religious backgrounds who continue to practice their respective faiths, all while sharing a belief in one God, with the goal of creating a harmonious and lasting household. In other words, it is the marriage between individuals different religions who continue practicing their faith[30] yet live together as one family.[31] Interfaith marriage has occurred for a long time and still occurs widely in this village today by legalizing the marriage of couple adhering to different religions. For example, one partner may choose to convert to the other's religion, as is often the case. This is as stated by the head of Pemenang Timur Village as follows:

> All religions are recognized and legalized by the State., it includes their right to getting married and to adhering to a religion guaranteed by the Law. Administratively, they should obey the regulation enacted. For example, the couple getting married in Religious Affairs Office (Indonesian: Kantor Urusan Agama) should be Muslim or adhere to Islam, but viewed from the right to the freedom to adhering to religion, an individual may choose to adhere any religion he/she believes in. They also added that the interfaith marriage occurs so far but the couples keep obeying the administrative rule and meet the administrative preconditions.[32]

This village is also known as the model of harmonious diversity, as various religious communities live adjacent to one another in harmony, and peace. Interfaith marriage is a form of interaction to strengthen the relation between religious communities,[33] particularly Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist communities. This phenomenon also results in new form of social heritage, enabling cultural and religious heritages to live adjacently in daily life. The close relationships established among the three religions in Pemenang Timur Village create a high solidarity tie among communities with different religious backgrounds. This sense of solidarity forms an essential foundation for strong unity and integrity among them. In a social and cultural context, there are two important values being

[28]M. A. Nasir, "Religion, Law, and Identity: Contending Authorities on Interfaith Marriage in Lombok, Indonesia," 131–150.

[29]E. Suhasti, S. Djazimah, and H. Hartini, "Polemics on Interfaith Marriage in Indonesia between Rules and Practices," *Al-Jamiah*: *Journal of Islamic Studies* 56 no. 2 (2018): 367-394.

[30]E. Ayse, "Interfaith Marriage in Islam: Classical Islamic Resources and Contemporary Debates on Muslim Women's Interfaith Marriages," *Religion*, no. 13 (2022): 1–21.

[31]J. Crespin-Boucaud, "Interethnic and Interfaith Marriages in Sub-Saharan Africa." *World Development* 125 (January 1, 2020): 104668.

[32]"Interview with the Head of Pemenang Timur Village," June 21, 2023. At 10.15 am at the Village office.

[33]J.V. Niekerk and M. Verkuyten, "Interfaith Marriage Attitudes in Muslim Majority Countries: A Multilevel Approach," *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 28, no. 4 (October 2, 2018): 257–70.

the key to social cohesion in this village: the philosophy of *Mempolong Merenten* and the practice of the *Ngejot* tradition. Both of them are integral parts of social cohesion still preserved by Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist communities in Pemenang Timur until today.

The *Ngejot* tradition is a prime example of interreligious shared practices between Muslim and Hindu communities in Pemenang Timur Village. This tradition is implemented in the form of sharing food with family, neighbours, and other interethnic and interfaith relatives during religious holidays. For example, during the celebration of *Eid el Fitr* for Muslim community and Vesak Day for Buddhist community, and *Galungan* and *Kuningan* for Hindu community, people share food and invite each other to eat together at their respective houses. Through this tradition, Pemenang Timur villagers not only show togetherness and concern with their fellows but also can strengthen social relation and sense of fraternity among religious communities. The *ngejot* tradition is practiced since ancient times and passed down from one generation to the next as a form of commitment to maintaining harmony among religious communities. This suggests that this ancestral heritage, replete with social solidarity values, remains relevant and upheld in this contemporary era, when tolerance and respect between religious communities is more necessary.[34] "We are like interfaith brothers with shared ancestors; we call this *mempolong* (brothers/sisters) *merenten* (tie or close relationship). Mutual help, for example, when we hold an event or *gawe,* we always share food with each other, and we call this practice *ngejot* tradition that has been held since a long time ago."[35]

In this case, the *Ngejot* tradition symbolizes the harmony between religious communities maintaining togetherness values and interreligious and interethnic fraternity.[36] This tradition prioritizes the important essence of passive tolerance values, tolerance manifested into active participation, and real solidarity. Thus, the group with different religious backgrounds feel respected, appreciated, and recognized for their religious identity. Local wisdom values, teach the importance of respecting and celebrating diversity and growing an in-depth sense of togetherness among the people, creating a foundation for peaceful life and respecting each other.

The presence of the Ngejot tradition and *the Mempolong Merenten value*[37] is not only cultural heritage but also a social identity inherent to Pemenang Timur villagers. *Ngejot* tradition – an activity of sharing food between neighbors with different faiths and ethics – has been a symbol of social cohesion and social solidarity. Similarly, the philosophy of *Mempolong Merenten* becomes a life value prioritizing togetherness and mutual support in undertaking daily life.[38] These values help realize peaceful life patterns among Islamic, Hindu, and Buddhist communities, indicating that harmony can be achieved not only in religious borders but also can be built through respect for local culture. This harmony model can strengthen the bond between individuals and groups and likewise

[34]M. Yuslih and A. Muhajir, "Portrait of Tolerance and Religious Harmony of Muslims and Hindus in Ngejot Tradition in Golong Village, West Lombok Regency," *Fenomena*, (2023): 135–148.

[35]"Interview with AM from the Muslim community," 19 June, 2023. At 15.05 in Pemenang Timur Village.

[36]P.S. Marselinawati, "The Ngejot Tradition the Ngejot Tradition Increases Religious Tolerance in Gelgel Village, Klungkung Regency, Bali: Ngejot Tradition in Klungkung," *International Proceeding on Religion, Culture, Law, Education, And Hindu Studies*, (2022): 11.

[37]M. Muchammadun, Z. Amrulloh, and R. Aditya, "Re-Vitalising Locality in Indigenous Tebango Buddhism: Social and Cultural Capitals for Community Wellbeing." *Jurnal Studi Sosial Keagamaan*, no. 2 (August 17, 2023): 66-86.

[38]P. Somiartha and M.S. Utama, "Polong Renten: In Improving the Welfare of Employees of Village Owned Business Institutions (Bumdes) in Lombok Utara Regency," *Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Studies*, (2021): 2582–92.

create harmony as the manifestation of the harmony model based on local wisdom and social heredity in North Lombok.

3.2. Religious Cohesion Among the Three Religions

The concept of diversity and harmony in religion. For example, in Islamic teaching, there is a concept of *Tasamuh*, and Tri Hita Karana in Hindu religion and Brahma Vihara *Welas Asih* [mercy], *Mudita* [happiness or being happy seeing others happy], and *Uppekha* [spiritual balance in facing worldly fate]) in Buddha religion. These three concepts are the form of social cohesion playing an important role in maintaining harmony and concord within society.

Table 2. Concept of Harmony in Islam, Buddhism and Hindu

Concept	Meaning
Tasamuh	The concept of tolerance in Islam encourages mutual respect for others' different tribes, ethnics, languages, religions, cultures, and opinion sourced from Qur'ān. This concept aims to realise harmony and peace without violence.
Welas Asih, Mudita, and *Uppekha*	*Welas asih* is affection relieving the burden of misery. *Mudita* means being happy for others' happiness without envy and jealousy. Meanwhile, *Uppekha* is the form of spiritual balance seeing everyone equally or equivalently without difference.
Tri Hita Karana	Tri Hita Karana involves a harmonious relation between human and God (Parahyangan), then between fellow human beings (Pawongan), and relation with nature (palemahan). This meaning realises sustainable life balance in spiritual, social, and ecological aspect, particularly for Muslim community.

Firstly, the concept of *Tasamuh*[39] is an essential value in Islam, encouraging the peaceful implementation of religious teachings, growing harmonious, quiet, and comfortable circumstances in religion. Literally, *tasamuh* means tolerance, peace, and mutual respect. This reflects tolerance and respect for other communities, including faith, habit, opinion, view, and behavior within communities. The concept of harmony in Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism prioritizes balance and peace in religious life in each of these communities. In Islam religion, the concept of *tasamuuh* (tolerance) is crucial for creating the sense of mutual respect and appreciation for different faiths, opinions, and cultural backgrounds.[40] In the Qur'ān, *Tasamuh* promotes social harmony by encouraging peaceful coexistence without violence and emphasizing the importance of respecting each other. Meanwhile, in Buddhist teaching, the concept of *welas asih* means affection, Mudita (joy or sympathy), and *Upekkha* (spiritual balance). These principles form the foundation for promoting social harmony in religion.[41] For example, *Welas Asih* encourages individuals to relieve the burden of misery and to behave well, while *Mudita* invite every individual to celebrate others' happiness without envy. Furthermore, *Upekkha* positions spiritual balance to view all individuals equally without discrimination and then encourages a peaceful and balanced approach to life. Meanwhile, in Hindu religion teaching, there is a philosophy, *Tri Hita Karana,* highlighting a harmonious relation between humans and three important elements: God (*Parahyangan*), humans (Pawongan), and nature

[39]I. Mandala and L.A. Putri, "Interpretation Concept of Tasamuh: Conflict Resolution in Multicultural Environment to Establishing Religious Moderation," *The Progress: Journal of Language and Ethnicity* (2022): 69.

[40]B.Z. Yanti, and D. Witro, "Self-Maturity and Tasamuh as a Resolution of Religious Conflicts," *Intizar* 25, no. 2 (2019): 87–94.

[41]G.D. Douglas, "Metta, Mudita, and Metal: Dhamma Instruments in Burmese Buddhism," *Yale Journal of Music and Religion* 6, no. 1 (2020): 1–18.

(*Palemahan*). This holistic approach encourages balance in spiritual, social, and ecological aspects, particularly in the Hindu community of the Balinese ethnic. This concept is very important to maintain life in doing sustainable daily activities. These concepts in Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism religious teachings can provide the same basis to build social harmony, *welas asih*, and balanced relations with the world.[42]

This concept of *Tasamuh* plays an important role in realizing the principle of *rahmatan lil'alamin*, or the idea that religion brings mercy to the entire world. This concept promotes the importance of creating welfare for all mankind on the earth, regardless of different ethnicities, cultures, and religions.[43] [44]Sociologically, this concept represents the openness to accepting different views and positions, and shows a positive attitude towards diversity. In this case, tolerance is not only about recognizing different views but also involves an ability to respect and allow space for every individual to practice their faith without compulsion or pressure.[45] Thus, *tasamuh* as the part of Islamic teachings, contributes to strengthening social cohesion within society. If this concept is practiced consciously, it will be able to build a peaceful and harmonious environment in which diversity no longer becomes a constraint but becomes a bridge that unites human beings in an intact humanity tie. In Pemenang Timur Village, although many people are accustomed to the concept of *Tasamuh,* the community's action is in line with the concept. *Tasamuh* refers to accepting and understanding different beliefs and practices. Muslim community's action reflects this concept.

Furthermore, Buddhism teaches tolerance through four noble traits, called Brahma Vihara. Buddhist virtues, *Metta* (universal love and affection for all creatures), *Karuna* (mercy), *Mudita* (sympathy), and *Uppekha* (spiritual balance), are the foundation of tolerance in this religion.[46] Buddhist teaching about love and affection instructs its followers to exude love without jealousy, to refrain from imposing their will on others, and to show their concern with all creatures. Love and affection, in this definition, surpasses categorization of human or animal, embracing all living creatures as deserving of care. *Welas asih* is a concept that encourages the adherents of religion to have faith and to find peace in life by expressing empathy to all living creatures. This approach implementation starts with having empathy inside, to be projected later on others in the surrounding neighborhood. *Welas Asih* is the concept for this context. *Welas asih* involves a broader aspect not only limited to the sense of compassion but also an attempt to understand and embrace various elements of life with full affection. Then, *Mudita* refers to the sense of similar happiness felt for others' happiness. This concept teaches the importance of the meaning of shared happiness and joy inside without envy and jealousy, and thereby creating a harmonious social relation. Thinking of *Uppekha* attitude, an individual can live his/her life quietly and peaceful, free from anxiety and worry. The combination of these three principles: *Welas Asih, Mudita*, and *Uppekha*, encourages an individual to develop *welas asih* (compassion), empathy, and a fair outlook in relation to oneself and

[42]Pratiwi et al., "The Effect of Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, and Role Overload in Burnout Government Internal Supervisors with Tri Hita Karana Culture as Moderation," *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences* 6, no. 3 (May 3, 2019): 61–69.

[43]M. Imam and N. Naamy, "Implementation of Tasamuh Concept in a Sociological Perspective in Multicultural Society," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, no. 7 (2023): 141-151.

[44]M. Tasrif, "Upholding Faith and Religious Freedom: An Interpretation of the Qur'ānic Story of Young Cave Dwellers as a Religious Minority," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization,* 14 no. 1 (March 1, 2024): 175–90.

[45]A.H. Syihab, and A. Muhamad, "Reviving the Wasatiyyah Values for Inter-Religious Harmony in Plural Societies," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 12.2 (2017): 13-16.

[46]O. Siddhi et al., "A Metta-Buddhist Integrated Method for Conflict Management in The Modern Societies," *The Journal of International Association of Buddhist Universities* (JIABU), no. 11 (2018): 24-48.

others. Thus, *welas asih* is not only a concept but a way of life focusing on developing empathy, joint welfare, and acceptance of diversity around us.

Tolerance in Hinduism can be found in the concept of *Tri Hita Karana,* containing Dharma teaching as guidance for life. *Tri Hita Karana* teaches that human welfare derives from three types of harmony:[47] the relationship between human and God, between human and natural environment, and between humans themselves. These three types of relations are considered as main foundation in achieving a balanced and happy life. By maintaining these relations, Hindus are believed to live in harmony with the Dharma teaching, including principles of truth, obligation, and justice as life guidelines. The values contained in *Tri Hita Karana* have played an important role in establishing social harmony, because through this concept the people are invited to respect their relation to spiritual power, to conserve nature, and to cultivate social solidarity. In a broader context, the concept of *Tri Hita Karana* is an important symbol in Hindu teaching about tolerance and respect for life. Understanding and applying this concept, the people are expected to respect existing diversity and to develop mutual respect either for nature or for fellow humans. Therefore, *Tri Hita Karana* not only strengthens the harmony between individuals and their God, but also inculcates responsibility for environment and social togetherness among various classes of society. This concept is a main guideline in realizing a harmonious, tolerant life and maintaining balance to support collective life welfare.

The three principles in *Tri Hita Karana* become the foundation for Hindus to perform social practice within society, connected to and in line with the philosophy of *Mempolong Merenten* as a life philosophy and the *ngejot* tradition in Pemenang Timur Village. This life philosophy is held tightly and practiced through the *ngejot* tradition in the people of Lombok Utara until today by living harmoniously, peacefully, and safely without discrimination and subordination. *Ngejot* tradition is to share food during the celebration of a religious holiday; this reflects the value of in-depth solidarity between religious communities, during either Eid al-Fitr for Muslims, Vesak Day for Buddhists, or *Galungan* and *Kuningan* for Hindus. Through this practice of sharing food, the people not only show care but also strengthen social ties and a sense of togetherness among religious communities. This tradition has been passed down from one generation to the next as the commitment to harmony among religious communities so as to keep relevant in a modern context. This tradition manifests proximity and strengthens a sense of fraternity among three religious communities.

The three religious communities uphold social order and control through the concepts of *Tasamuh*, *Tri Hita Karana*, and Brahma Vihara, as suggested in the doctrine of their respective religions. Islam, through the concept of *Tasamuh* or tolerance, teaches the importance of respecting difference peacefully and living adjacently without conflict. Meanwhile, in Buddhism, the principles of *Welas Asih* (love), *Mudita* (happiness), and *Uppekha* (peace of mind) are the basis for achieving social harmony, teaching its followers to minimize misery and to celebrate others' happiness without envy. On the other hand, Hindu philosophy, *Tri Hita Karana,* emphasizes the importance of harmonious relations with God, fellow humans, and the natural environment. These three concepts strengthen social ties and cohesion in Pemenang Timur villagers, indicating that tolerance is not merely the recognition of differences but also an active engagement in collective life. These principles are strong bases for creating harmonious life and strengthening social cohesion among various religious groups in the village.

4. Conclusion

Religious cohesion among the three communities – Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists – in Lombok demonstrates a positive relationship established through blood relation (social heredity) or

[47]I. Ermiana et al., "Meta-Synthesis: Tri Hita Karana a Philosophy of Harness and Life Harmony," Progres Pendidikan 4, no. 2 (2023): 109–16.

fraternity based on kinship. This bond strengthens harmony between religious communities, supported with social-cultural value *Mempolong Merenten* which serves as the foundational principle for living harmoniously side by side. In addition, the ngejot tradition is an important link in the life of interfaith communities, in which the values of togetherness are implemented through the activity of sharing occurring in harmonious circumstances conscious of mutual cooperation value.

This harmony is also rooted in the religious principles such as *Tasamuh, Welas Asih, Mudita*, and *Uppekha,* as well as *Tri Hita Karana,* encouraging and growing tolerance as reflected in the people's daily behaviour. In this case, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities in Lombok Utara can make religious diversity a source of shared power in maintaining peace and welfare. All members of society, regardless of different religions, are committed to maintaining peace jointly so that this value is very relevant to develop in the context of modern life. Thus, religious cohesion in Lombok not only shows the local people's ability to sustain harmony but also serves as a practical model for other communities in treating differences with mutual respect. This harmonious way of life proves that belief differences can be bridged through deeply rooted social and cultural values and a shared desire to create peaceful and prosperous environment for all.

Conflict of Interest

The manuscript author has absolutely no financial or non-financial conflict of interest regarding the subject matter or material discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data associated with this study will be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

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