



## *Megibung* Tradition as a Media of Solidarity between Religious Communities in Budakeling Village

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### Abstract

Bali has strong Hindu nuances, but the fact is that Balinese society is very diverse. Diversity includes religion, ethnicity, race, and culture, which develop and live side by side. This article aims to answer the problems of how Megibung tradition is used as a media of solidarity between religious communities. The research method in this article used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The subject of the study was Hindu and Islamic communities in Budakeling Village, Karangasem, Bali. The results of the study showed that the community in Budakeling Village still maintains the Megibung tradition that contains social, mutual cooperation, and ethical values to maintain solidarity so that it can create a harmonious society between religions.

**Keywords:** Budakeling Village; Megibung Tradition; Solidarity.

### **Abstrak**

*Tradisi Megibung sebagai Media Solidaritas Antar Umat Beragama di Desa Budakeling.* Bali memiliki nuansa Hindu yang kental, namun faktanya masyarakat Bali sangat beragam. Keberagaman tersebut meliputi agama, suku, ras, dan budaya yang berkembang dan hidup berdampingan. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjawab permasalahan bagaimana tradisi Megibung digunakan sebagai media solidaritas antar umat beragama. Metode penelitian dalam artikel ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Subjek penelitian adalah masyarakat Hindu dan Islam di Desa Budakeling, Karangasem, Bali. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat di Desa Budakeling masih mempertahankan tradisi Megibung yang mengandung nilai-nilai sosial, gotong royong, dan etika untuk menjaga solidaritas sehingga dapat menciptakan masyarakat yang harmonis antar umat beragama.

**Kata kunci:** Desa Budakeling; Solidaritas; Tradisi Megibung.

#### **A. Introduction**

The strategic route of world trade influences the diversity of Indonesians (Atmadja 2017, 283). The diversity includes religions, ethnicities, cultures, races, and groups that live side by side. If maintained properly, diversity will create a peaceful and harmonious society. Understanding the meaning of pluralism will provide a dynamic, harmonious, and tolerant life structure. As social beings, humans require relationships and cooperation with others to meet their needs, either material or spiritual needs (Mashad 2014, 10). In maintaining a harmonious relationship between different religions, certain practices of solidarity can bridge the two different communities. Without the practices of solidarity that they create, harmonious relationships between different religions will not be achieved.

Solidarity is an attitude of mutual trust between individuals or groups in society (Soekanto 2014, 63). According to Emile Durkheim, solidarity is a form of togetherness referring to a state of relationship between individuals or groups based on moral feelings and embraced beliefs that are strengthened by emotional experiences (Beilharz 2016, 101). With strong solidarity, a harmonious community will be created and able to realize common goals. It cannot be denied that solidarity has a significant role in maintaining social harmony, where without the practices of solidarity, individuals or groups will be vulnerable to conflict, especially related to religions (Mirtanty et al. 2021, 81). Thus, the aim of the study is to answer the

problems of how *megibung* tradition is used as a media of solidarity between religious communities.

So far, a similar study has been conducted by Riza Wulandari (2017) entitled "*Tradisi Megibung: Studi Kasus Sinkritisme Agama Di Kampung Islam Kapaon Bali*." This study focused on describing the syncretism of the Kapaon Islamic Village, created by carrying out the *megibung* tradition. This study used qualitative and case study methods. The findings showed that *the megibung* tradition is carried out to maintain the local wisdom of the Balinese people. The *megibung* process is held during Ramadan so that it creates togetherness between Hindu and Islamic communities.

Moreover, another study was conducted by Amira Anindita Rafi'I (2022) entitled "*Tradisi Megibung Pada Budaya Hindu dan Muslim di Desa Tumbu, Kecamatan Karangasem, Kabupaten Karangasem*." This study aims to observe the process of the *megibung* tradition on Hindu culture in Tumbu Village, Karangasem, Karangasem Regency, and the process of *the megibung* tradition on Muslim culture in Tumbu Village, Karangasem, Karangasem Regency. This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The results of the study showed that Hindu culture consists of a preparation stage, including determining the type of the event, determining *megibung* participants, and preparing dishes consisting of white rice, *lawar* (a mixture of vegetables, coconut, and minced meat mixed with rich herbs and spices), satay dishes, and soup dishes. Second, the implementation stage includes *megibung* participants being invited to sit in a circle to eat a meal of 4-6 people, and the next stage for participants is to clean *the megibung* area. Furthermore, Muslim culture consists of preparation stages, including determining the type of the event, determining *megibung* participants, and preparing dishes that will be served consisting of white rice, meat dishes, satay dishes, and vegetable dishes. Second, the implementation stage includes *megibung* participants being invited to sit in a circle to eat the meal consisting of 2-3 people, and the next stage for participants is to clean *the megibung* area.

Moreover, the next study was conducted by Fitria Amalia (2023) entitled "*Ngaminang: Adaptasi Budaya Makan Megibung Bali Pada Masyarakat Islam di Desa Kampung Gelgel, Kabupaten Klungkung*." This study aims to examine *the ngaminang* tradition holistically and deeply as a form of acculturation of Balinese Hindu and Islamic community cultures in Gelgel Village, which adopts *megibung* culture and then adapts according to Islamic religion's values and norms. This study used a qualitative method and an ethnographic approach, examining human behavior from the perspective of religious anthropology and culinary anthropology. The

results of the study showed that *the ngaminang* tradition has the same essence as the *megibung* tradition as a form of togetherness between religious communities.

## B. Method

This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The aim of the qualitative method was to obtain a comprehensive overview of the *megibung* tradition as a media of solidarity between religious communities in Budakeling Village. The subjects of this study were Hindus and Muslims who participated in the *megibung* tradition.

The researcher took these subjects because they were considered able to provide data information regarding *the megibung* tradition as a media of solidarity between religious communities in Budakeling Village. Moreover, data collection techniques were observations, interviews, and documentation, with data analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

## C. Demografi of Bali

Bali, with all its natural beauty, has always been an attraction for foreign and local tourists. Behind its enchanting natural beauty, Bali also has various colors of religions, cultures, and traditions. The majority of Bali's population is Hindu, and it can be clearly seen that there are sacred buildings decorated with offerings along the streets. However, this does not mean that Muslims are sterile from Bali Island. Various religions can be found there, but they are the minority. Islamic society has become an integral part of Balinese life, starting from the kingdom era until this time (Mashad 204, 12).

Bali has an area of 5,780 square kilometers and a population density of 739 people per square kilometer. Administratively, Bali consists of 8 regencies and one municipality, which is divided into 57 *kecamatan* (district) and 636 villages. Referring to the data of the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the population in Bali Island reached 4.29 million populations in June 2021, where from this number, there are 432.25 thousand people (10.08%) of the population who are Moslem. Therefore, Islam becomes a minority in Bali.

## D. Portrait of Inter-Religious Harmony

Religion is an absolute belief system that influences human thinking and behavior. Different human experiences create different belief systems, which, in turn, make them diverse.

Talking about religion in its function as human behavior means reviewing differences regarding the perspective of religion caused by different understandings and appreciations of someone.

The portrait of harmony between Hinduism and Islam can be seen by the existing evidence, for example, the phenomenon in Bangli Regency, specifically in Pura Dalem Jawa, which is the existence of a prayer room within the temple area. This temple has a long history between Hindu and Islamic communities and has been in physical and spiritual contact for a long time. The building, called *langgar* (prayer room), is characterized by two steps, four doors, and a two-story roof. The existence of Pura Langgar or Pura Dalem Jawa shows gradual acculturation between Hinduism and Islam. This acculturation is firmly held by the Bangli community until this time.

Another portrait of harmony can be found in the Nyepi ceremony celebrated by the Hindu community. Islamic community also participates in this event to maintain solemn and orderly conditions. Likewise, when the Islamic community celebrates Eid Al-Fitr, the Hindu community takes part in maintaining orderliness. Even though they have different religions, the communities live side by side without any gaps among them. Living together builds tolerance by having mutual cooperation and discussion because they really uphold the harmony that has existed for a long time.

On the other hand, the portrait of harmony between religious communities in Bali can be seen when the two religions carry out their religious ceremonies. They usually carry out *ngejot* activity. *Ngejot* is an activity where people give each other food such as rice, side dishes, and snacks. After religious ceremonies such as Galungan, Kuningan, and Nyepi, the Hindu community will carry out *ngejot* activity to closest relatives and Islamic neighbors. Meanwhile, after celebrating Eid Al-Fitr, the Islamic community will carry out *ngejot* activity with the Hindu community. This is a form of harmony between religious communities still preserved by the Balinese.

Explicitly, every religion teaches mutual respect and tolerance with other religions. There is no religion that teaches adherents to behave criminally. The attitude of tolerance between religious communities is managed to minimize religious conflicts. One form of harmony shown by the community in Budakeling Village is *the megibung* tradition. *Megibung* activity does not look at each other's religious background; they sit together in a circle without any social barriers.

Social solidarity between religions is built through *the megibung* tradition to strengthen religious harmony. For example, *the megibung* is held when the Hindu community holds

religious ceremonies such as Galungan, Kuningan, Pawiwahan, Nyepi, and so on, where the Muslim community is invited to participate in enlivening the event. However, when the Hindu community invites the Muslim community to the *megibung* event, they are not served dishes from pork but are replaced with other meats, such as chicken, duck, and goat. Furthermore, when the Muslim community has a *megibung* event, they will also invite the Hindu community; they sit together in a circle and serve food in front of them.

This shows that the *megibung* tradition generates solidarity between religious communities, and its existence must be preserved and maintained. This is related to inherited traditions from ancestors that aim to create social harmony.

#### **E. *Megibung* Tradition as a Media of Solidarity**

In a multicultural community, the potential for division becomes stronger. However, the community also has interests in maintaining their social bonds in various differences. Long community experience in managing differences to maintain togetherness is manifested in various local traditions that are able to strengthen social bonds among them. A society that still preserves various communal traditions and traditions involving the surrounding community will tend to create a strong impact on social relations. Traditions preserved by the community contain local wisdom that becomes a guide for the community's life.

The model of local culture-based harmony can be found in Budakeling Village, Karangasem, Bali. Although its society consists of two different religions, Hinduism and Islam, Budakeling Village continuously maintains religious harmony, either internally or between religious communities. This is because the community has traditional customs that can unite them and strengthen their solidarity through religious bonds.

The Budakeling Village community still maintains their ancestors' traditions and cultures until this time, one of which is *the megibung* tradition. *Megibung* comes from the word *gibung*, which has the prefix *me-gibung*, which means activity carried out by involving many people and sharing with each other. The use of *megibung* technically and physically to strengthen solidarity is a factual phenomenon found in various societies. A solidarity attitude between religions is needed to create a harmonious society. Therefore, a solidarity attitude is necessarily instilled in every person. *Megibung* event is carried out by inviting each other, which means increasing togetherness and strengthening solidarity between religions.

*Megibung* tradition actually existed for a long time among Balinese Hindus, long before the arrival of Islamic society on this island (Mashad 2014, 173). Initially, the Hindu community

only carried out *megibung* with the Hindu community. However, after the arrival of Islam in Bali, *megibung* was eventually carried out with Islamic communities, so until this time, Hindu and Islamic communities used *megibung* as a means of respecting religions. Almost all people follow the *megibung* tradition, and no one from these two religions refuses to come. *Megibung* is believed to be one of the ways to maintain solidarity between religions. Thus, carrying out *the megibung* tradition will maintain solidarity between religious communities in Budakeling Village.



**Figure 1** *Megibung* Tradition between Hindu and Islamic Communities in Kampung Saren Jawa (Source: Komang Januryanto, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2023)

## F. Values Contained in *Megibung* Tradition

### 1. Social Values of *Megibung*

*Megibung* is an activity in which the participants sit together to eat dishes served in front of them or share dishes with other residents. *Megibung*, as a tradition, has a specificity that can be seen from a social perspective. There is a very close sense of family because, during *the megibung tradition*, there are no differences in high or low levels of society, especially in religious differences. Thus, everyone participating in *the megibung tradition* in their group has the same position.

The atmosphere of close family during *the megibung tradition* is not only attended by adults but children also eat the dishes together. Through *the megibung* tradition, parents indirectly have taught their children about the values of togetherness and family contained in *megibung* events, and parents indirectly have passed on this *megibung* tradition to their children so that social values can continue to develop among them (Windya 2022, 125).

## 2. Mutual Cooperation Values

Before carrying out *megibung*, there is certainly a preparation stage, such as cooking and so on. Participants will prepare the dishes for *megibung* together. The ingredients are prepared, such as rice, meats, and so on. The dishes made are *lilit* satay, *lawar*, and *komoh*. If the Hindu community carries out *megibung* and invites the Muslim community, the dishes usually do not use pork because pork is forbidden to be eaten by the Muslim community. Moreover, when *the megibung* event has finished, they also clean up the *megibung* area (Farhaeni 2021, 11).

## 3. Etichal Values

Ethical values contained in the *megibung* tradition are in the form of unwritten regulations applicable to all *megibung* participants, both Hindu and Muslim communities. Ethically, the participants must obey stages from the preparation stage to the serving stage, which is ethics in food hygiene and so on. In *the megibung* stages, every participant must consider eating etiquette. The first etiquette that must be implemented by *megibung* participants, either Hindu or Muslim, is that everyone prays according to their beliefs before starting to eat. Second, when taking food, one thing that must be considered is to not take other people's portions. Third, the remaining mouthful of rice must not be put back into *gibungan* (rice placed in a container) but should be left in the lap. Likewise, when biting satay, the remaining must not be put back into *gibungan* but should be thrown away in the same place as the rice. This aims to not be considered as putting *carikan* (leftover food) into food that is still eaten. The last, after *the megibung* tradition, one rule that the participants must obey is that if someone in a group has finished eating, the participant must remain seated, waiting for other participants to finish eating (Dewi 2021, 53).

## G. Conclusion

*Megibung* tradition is an activity carried out by Balinese in general. However, after the arrival of Islam in Bali, especially in Budakeling Village, *the megibung* tradition is also carried out by Islamic communities. Gradually, the existence of Islamic society in Hindu society creates social bonds, one of which is proven in Budakeling Village between Hindu and Muslim communities to invite each other to hold the *megibung* tradition. Directly, *the megibung* tradition has a really strong impact on maintaining solidarity between religions. By preserving



*the megibung* tradition in Budakeling Village, solidarity relations are expected to be maintained to create harmony between religious communities.

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