

# Analysis of Hindu–Islam Community Relations in Batu Gambir and Their Influence on Socio-Economic Structure as a Source for Developing Social Studies Learning in Junior High School

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**Abstract:** *This study analyzes the dynamics of interreligious relations between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Batu Gambir, Julah Village, Tejakula District, Buleleng Regency, Bali. The focus of this research lies in understanding how the social, spiritual, and moral-economic practices of the community create sustainable social harmony and how these conditions can be utilized as a source for developing Social Studies (IPS) learning in Junior High Schools (SMP). This study employs a qualitative approach with an interpretive ethnographic method. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The findings indicate that social harmony in Batu Gambir is formed through symbolic interactions involving interreligious rituals, trust-based economic cooperation, and adaptive local leadership. The local social structure and spirituality function as cohesive mechanisms that reinforce interreligious solidarity. These values hold high relevance for social studies education, particularly in fostering multicultural awareness, tolerance, and a spirit of mutual cooperation among students.*

**Keywords:** *Social Harmony, Hindu-Islam, Batu Gambir, Local Spirituality, Social Studies Education*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with a high level of plurality, both in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religion. In the socio-religious context, such plurality often gives rise to two possible situations: the potential for conflict and the opportunity for harmony. In various regions, interreligious relations experience complex dynamics some marked by identity tensions, while others demonstrate strong social cohesion. One particularly noteworthy example is Batu Gambir Hamlet in North Bali, where Hindu and Muslim communities have coexisted peacefully for centuries.

The social phenomenon in Batu Gambir affirms that interreligious harmony is not solely formed by formal policies but also grows out of everyday social practices rooted in local cultural and spiritual values. In this community, interfaith participation in social activities such as mutual cooperation, religious celebrations, and economic endeavors serves as a concrete manifestation of mutual respect. Here, social harmony appears not as an abstract concept but as a living reality that is preserved and passed down through generations.

This study is significant because Batu Gambir represents a plural society that has successfully built a social order based on local and religious values. From a sociological perspective, life in Batu Gambir demonstrates the existence of social relations founded upon symbolic interaction and social structuration (Giddens, 1984), wherein the community's repeated actions reproduce a stable order of harmony. Religious values function not as distinguishing factors but as sources of moral solidarity.

This research aims to analyze the forms of social relations between Hindu and Muslim communities in Batu Gambir, examine the influence of these relations on the community's social and economic structures, and explain the implications of these values of social harmony for the development of Social Studies learning in

junior high schools. By presenting this case study, the research is expected to realistically contribute both theoretically to the fields of education and sociology and practically to the development of multicultural education in Indonesia.

## **2. METHOD**

This section describes how the research was conducted. The primary materials of this section are (1) research design; (2) population and sample (target of research); (3) data collection techniques and instrument development; (4) and data analysis techniques. For research using tools and materials, it is necessary to write down the specifications of the tools and materials. The tool specifications describe the sophistication of the tools used, while the material specifications describe the types of materials used. Qualitative research such as classroom action research, ethnography, phenomenology, case studies, and others, it is necessary to add the presence of researchers, research subjects, informants who helped during the research and ways to explore research data, location and duration of research as well as descriptions of checking the validity of research results.

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative approach using the interpretive ethnographic method. This approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth and detailed exploration of the meanings, values, and social practices of the community, particularly in the context of interreligious relations and cultural life in rural society (Spradley, 1980; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The primary purpose of this method is not merely to describe phenomena but to interpret how the people of Batu Gambir perceive and give meaning to social harmony in their daily lives. Interpretive ethnography, as explained by Geertz (1973), positions culture as a system of symbols rich in meaning. In the context of this research, social practices, religious rituals, and economic interactions between the Hindu and Muslim communities are analyzed as symbolic expressions of local spirituality and social solidarity values. Thus, this method allows the researcher to understand social reality not only empirically but also hermeneutically through the interpretation of complex meanings that are vividly present within the collective consciousness of the community (Ricoeur, 1976).

The research was conducted in Batu Gambir Hamlet, Julah Village, Tejakula Subdistrict, Buleleng Regency, Province of Bali. This location was purposively selected because it possesses the characteristics of a plural society, where Hindu and Muslim communities have coexisted for more than two centuries. The uniqueness of Batu Gambir lies in its harmonious pattern of social life, interfaith participation in traditional activities, and the significant role of community leaders who are capable of bridging interreligious relations. These conditions make Batu Gambir a representative social laboratory for studying forms of interreligious harmony at the community level (Sutarto, 2012; Subagiasta, 2020).

### **Data Collection Techniques And Instrument Development**

The data sources in this research consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through participatory observation, and in depth interviews, and field documentation studies. Participatory observation was carried out during various socio-religious events such as piodalan ceremonies, mutual cooperation (gotong royong), and Islamic celebrations (Eid al-Fitr and the Prophet's Birthday), which were attended by members of different faiths. Interviews were conducted with traditional leaders, religious leaders, the hamlet head, Social Studies (IPS) teachers, and residents from both communities to understand their perspectives on the values of social harmony (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Secondary data were obtained through literature studies of academic manuscripts, local archives, village government documents, and previous research on the reality of interreligious relations in Bali. This documentation was used to substantiate field findings and provide a historical context for the formation of social harmony in Batu Gambir (Susanto, 2015; Hermansyah, 2019).

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously from the data collection process through the interpretation stage (Miles et al., 2014). The stages of analysis included: (1) data reduction, which involves selecting, simplifying, and categorizing field data; (2) data display, which presents information in the form of matrices, narratives, or conceptual diagrams to facilitate the understanding of social relationship patterns; and (3) conclusion drawing and verification, which entails deriving meaning from the data through examination against theoretical and empirical contexts.

The analysis was carried out using the principle of thick description (Geertz, 1973), whereby the researcher interprets social actions not only from observable behavior but also from the meanings embedded

within them. This interpretive approach helps to explain how social harmony in Batu Gambir is formed through cultural symbolism and the community's reflective actions.

The validity of the data was tested using triangulation techniques that include source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation (Denzin, 1978). Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from traditional leaders, religious leaders, and ordinary residents. Method triangulation was conducted by combining the results of observation, interviews, and documentation, while time triangulation was implemented through observations conducted during various periods of socio-religious activities. In addition, a member checking process was carried out by confirming the interpretative results with key informants to ensure the alignment of meaning between the researcher and the community. To maintain credibility, the researcher applied the principle of reflexivity, namely awareness of the researcher's position, values, and biases throughout the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This approach is essential to ensure that the interpretive results are not only descriptive but also ethical and contextual in accordance with the lived experiences of the Batu Gambir community.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study of social harmony among religious communities cannot be separated from major sociological theories that explain patterns of social action, symbolic interaction, and the context of societal structuration. In the reality of social life in Batu Gambir, Hindu–Islam relations not only represent peaceful coexistence but also demonstrate a continuous social process in which individuals and groups mutually negotiate meanings within the same social and religious space.

#### **1. Anthony Giddens' Structuration Theory**

Anthony Giddens (1984), through his structuration theory, asserts that society is fundamentally formed by the dialectical relationship between structure and agency. Structure is not something rigid but rather the result of social practices continuously reproduced through human actions. In the context of Batu Gambir, social harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities is the result of social practices repeatedly carried out through joint participation in rituals, social activities, and the local economy. The seemingly stable social structure is, in essence, a product of the reproduction of everyday social actions grounded in shared norms, values, and beliefs. In this perspective, social harmony in Batu Gambir can be understood as the outcome of a structuration process in which the religious and social practices of both communities interact to form an adaptive social order. Joint religious rituals, the system of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), and inclusive local leadership serve as tangible expressions of the mutually reinforcing relationship between structure and agency. Thus, social harmony is not merely a product of historical coincidence but the result of the community's reflective actions, consciously recognizing the importance of social cohesion.

#### **2. Herbert Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism**

The realized theory of symbolic interactionism proposed by Herbert Blumer (1969) originates from George Herbert Mead's thought that social meaning is constructed through interaction. Individuals act toward things based on the meanings they attribute to objects, and such meanings are formed through social processes. In the relations between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Batu Gambir, social symbols such as religious greetings, forms of *gotong royong*, and interfaith participation in traditional ceremonies serve as means for the creation of shared meanings. Through repeated symbolic interactions, the people of Batu Gambir build a collective understanding of tolerance and harmony. This process emphasizes that social and religious identities in the region are fluid and adaptive, thus preventing conflicts. The shared awareness of the values of brotherhood (*pawongan*) and balance with nature (*palemahan*) in Balinese Hindu philosophy harmonizes with the values of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and social justice in Islam, creating a productive symbolic space for peaceful interaction.

#### **3. Social and Spiritual Values as Social Capital**

Social harmony in Batu Gambir cannot be separated from the presence of strong social capital. Coleman (1990) and Putnam (1993) explain that social capital consists of networks, norms, and trust that enable individuals to act collectively to achieve shared goals. In Batu Gambir, social capital is manifested in the form of interfaith networks, intercommunity trust, and social norms that uphold equality. Spiritual values such as *ngayah* (selfless service) and *silaturahmi* (affectionate bonding) serve as cultural strengths that sustain the community's social cohesion. These values demonstrate that religion and local culture are not necessarily in

opposition but instead function as shared moral sources. The integration of Hindu and Islamic values within the social context results in a form of hybrid spirituality that further emphasizes balance, peace, and cooperation. In the context of Bourdieu's theory (1986), these values can be viewed as habitus that shape the community's collective dispositions toward harmony.

Based on the theoretical review above, the conceptual framework of this study seeks to position social harmony as the result of a dynamic interaction between social structure, cultural symbolism, and social capital. The Hindu–Islam relationship in Batu Gambir is built upon social practices that are reflective and adaptive to change, where religious, cultural, and economic structures interact to create social stability. This framework integrates Giddens' structuration concept, Blumer's symbolic interactionism, and Putnam's social capital theory to explain how the people of Batu Gambir have successfully maintained long-term interreligious harmony. At the same time, this framework serves as the foundation for developing a contextual Social Studies curriculum in which local social values are used as teaching materials to foster multicultural awareness and the spirit of gotong royong among students. Thus, this research not only contributes to sociological theory but also provides practical implications for developing local wisdom-based education that aligns with the profile of Pancasila students.

#### 4. Social Dynamics and Patterns of Interreligious Interaction in Batu Gambir

The research findings indicate that social life in Batu Gambir is characterized by active coexistence between the Hindu and Muslim communities. These two groups do not live separately either socially or spatially, but instead interact with one another across various aspects of daily life. The community carries out social, ritual, and economic activities on the basis of mutual trust and respect. This pattern of relations was formed through a long history of migration and cultural assimilation since the 19th century, when the Muslim community began to settle in a territory predominantly inhabited by Hindus (Subagiasta, 2020).

Social interaction in Batu Gambir is both symbolic and practical, wherein the meaning of harmony is constructed through concrete everyday actions. In social activities such as mutual cooperation to repair village roads, maintain water sources, or support religious ceremonies, interfaith participation is a common occurrence. A Hindu resident, for example, helps prepare food during the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday, while a Muslim resident helps maintain security when Hindus conduct piodalan at the village temple. These actions demonstrate that social harmony in Batu Gambir is rooted in local cultural values such as *menyama braya* (brotherhood) and *ngayah* (voluntary service), which function as collective habitus in Bourdieu's (1986) terms.



Figure 1. Mutual Cooperation in Planting Makau Trees (Brown) and Durian Trees

In addition, the social structure in the Batu Gambir area also reflects a model of structural pluralism (Geertz, 1960), in which religious identity does not serve as a distinguishing factor in public life. Both communities share economic, educational, and social spaces in an egalitarian manner. The hamlet head, for example, is often selected from any community through residents' deliberation, not based on religious background. This demonstrates that the social system in Batu Gambir operates on the principles of social meritocracy and shared trust (Putnam, 1993).

In the context of Giddens's structuration (1984), this social harmony is the result of the reproduction of longstanding social practices. Through reflective actions and repeated engagement in social routines, the people of Batu Gambir unconsciously create a value system that supports interreligious stability. The social structure

and customary norms that exist are derived from everyday social practices, not solely from formal institutions or external policies.

### 5. Dimensions of Local Spirituality and the Symbolic Meaning of Harmony



Figure 2. Distribution of Qurban Meat during the Islamic Holiday to Hindu Community Members

The field findings show that spirituality in Batu Gamber is inclusive and crosses religious boundaries. In various customary ritual contexts, religious symbols not only represent group identity but also serve as a medium for social unity. For example, in the *ngusaba desa* ceremony, Muslim and Hindu residents participate together without regard to differences in belief. Muslim residents help prepare offerings, while Hindu residents join in communal prayers with adapted procedures. This practice reflects what Geertz (1973) refers to as religion as a system of symbols that functions to strengthen moods and motivations within society.

Local spirituality in Batu Gamber blends with a social ethic that emphasizes balance and harmony. Hindu values such as *Tri Hita Karana*, harmonious relations between humans, God, and nature coexist with Islamic values such as *ukhuwah insaniyah* (human brotherhood). This syncretism of values does not create theological tension; rather, it becomes a shared moral foundation for maintaining social life. Thus, the rituals of Batu Gamber demonstrate a form of social spirituality, namely piety that emphasizes benefit and togetherness above doctrinal exclusivity (Muhaimin, 2001; Tilaar, 2004).

Complex social symbols such as *selamatan*, *ngayah*, and *gotong royong* carry meanings that transcend religious boundaries. They function as a “symbolic language” in social interaction that strengthens community cohesion. From the perspective of Blumer’s symbolic interactionism (1969), the meanings of these symbols emerge through processes of collective negotiation and interpretation, not unilateral determination. This process explains why interreligious relations in Batu Gamber are relatively free from conflict, as the meaning of harmony is continually renewed through reflective social interaction.

### 6. Moral Economy and Social Solidarity

Another dimension of social harmony in Batu Gamber is apparent in the moral economy that develops within the community. Economic relations between Hindu and Muslim residents are based on principles of trust, honesty, and social responsibility. In the buying and selling of agricultural and livestock products, transactions are often conducted without binding written agreements due to the strong foundation of trust. This phenomenon shows that the economic patterns in Batu Gamber are not entirely controlled by market logic, but by social norms that emphasize balance and ethics (Thompson, 1971; Scott, 1985).



Figure 3. Cooperation in the Moral Economy, Especially in Agriculture

Mutual cooperation in the economic sphere is also evident in the practices of subak and the banjar system, where Muslim residents are allowed to participate even though these institutions are rooted in Hindu traditions. The presence of interreligious participation in agrarian production systems demonstrates the existence of structural inclusivity within local economic institutions. Thus, the moral economy in Batu Gambir is not only a means of fulfilling material needs but also a medium for strengthening social solidarity. In Durkheim's (1912) terms, this practice reflects mechanical solidarity based on shared social experience and collective consciousness. The moral economy also functions as a social mechanism for conflict resolution. When disputes arise, the community tends to resolve issues through deliberation and familial approaches known as mebarung (restoring relationships). This principle aligns with Islamic ethics of *islah* (reconciliation) and the Hindu concept of *tat twam asi*, which signifies empathy toward others. The integration of religious and social ethics becomes the foundation for sustainable social cohesion. This context fosters the emergence of interconnected economic solidarity.

### **7. Implications for the Development of Social Studies (IPS) Learning**

The research findings show that the values of social harmony in Batu Gambir have great potential as contextual sources for Social Studies (IPS) education. Within the paradigm of modern social education, learning grounded in local wisdom can strengthen students' character development, tolerance, and social participation (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and mutual respect can be integrated into IPS topics such as Indonesia's cultural diversity, community cooperation, and social interaction.



Figure 4. Implementation of Social Harmony in Social Studies Learning in the Context of Togetherness



Figure 5. Implementation of Social Harmony in Social Studies Learning in the Context of Religion Session

IPS teachers can utilize the Batu Gambir case study to foster multicultural awareness among students through contextual learning and place-based education (Gruenewald, 2003). Through this local narrative, students not only understand social concepts theoretically but also learn to apply them in real-life contexts. Moreover, the practice of social harmony in Batu Gambir aligns with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile faith, global diversity, and mutual cooperation. By incorporating local values as learning resources, IPS education can serve as a vehicle for nation-building rooted in the social realities of Indonesian society. The integration of social sciences with local wisdom strengthens the educational orientation toward nurturing civilized and tolerant human beings. Therefore, Batu Gambir is not merely a research object but also a practical model of multicultural education that can be replicated in other regions of Indonesia.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the social harmony between the Hindu and Islamic communities in Batu Gambir is the result of a complex social process, in which the social structure, local spirituality, and social capital interact with one another to form a peaceful and sustainable social order. This harmony was not born spontaneously, but is the result of the reproduction of repeated social actions, the symbolization of cultural values, and local leadership that is adaptive to change.

From the perspective of Giddens' structuration theory (1984), interreligious social practices in Batu Gambir demonstrate a dialectical relationship between agency and structure that consistently produces social order. Meanwhile, from the standpoint of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), the meaning of harmony is constructed through social symbols jointly created within everyday interactions. Strong social capital, as explained by Putnam (1993) and Bourdieu (1986), serves as the binding force that ensures values of trust and solidarity remain intact amid differences in belief.

The main implication of this study is the importance of integrating local values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation (gotong royong), and balance into Social Studies (IPS) education at the junior high school level. Learning based on local wisdom can strengthen students' character in facing the realities of globalization, which tends to weaken social cohesion. The Batu Gambir case study can serve as a model for Social Studies learning that emphasizes collaborative, multicultural, contextual, and reflective approaches.

For theoretical development, this study enriches sociological discourse by demonstrating that interreligious relations are not always determined by theological doctrine, but by social and cultural structures that cultivate trust and empathy. For social practice, this study affirms that local spirituality can function as a mechanism of social defense amid the massification of changing times. Meanwhile, for the field of education, this study strongly emphasizes the importance of grounding the values of social harmony within the curriculum and learning process, so that schools and educational institutions become spaces for forming generations that embody attitudes of tolerance, fairness, and civility.

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