MANAGING POTENTIAL CONFLICTS AND MAINTAINING TOLERANCE OF INTER-RELIGIOUS RELATIONS IN MULTI-RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES: CASE STUDIES OF EKASARI VILLAGE, JEMBERANA DISTRICT, BALI PROVINCE

A A. Ngurah Anom Kumbara* ; A.A. Sagung Kartika Dewi**

*Doctoral Program of Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Udayana
**Faculty Economy and Bussines, University of Udayana
*anom_kumbara@unud.ac.id ; **kartikadewi@unud.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Globalization becomes the hegemonic power of the vast transformation of the world's life of the nation state in the world which leads to the homogenization of Western culture on the one hand and local cultural resistance based on ethnic, religious and racial on the other side The national policy of autonomy which is expected to overcome the problem of ethnicity and multiculturalism in Indonesia, turned into a hyperotonom based on primordialism so as to bring up ethnic an religious prejudices. This condition is then a factor the rise of cases of social conflict in several regions in Indonesia. Indeed social disharmony or such conflicts can occur at any time and between groups, therefore tolerance and harmony of inter-ethnic and religious relationships in a multi-faith community need to be developed continuously. Because interreligious tolerance and multiculturalism is not something given, but takes place in social construction. The purpose of this research is to understand how the multi-religious and multicultural peoples of Ekasari village managing potential conflicts and maintaining tolerance of interreligious relationships in their daily lives. This study used critical ethnography approach. The data was analyzed qualitatively. The study found that the strategy used to manage the potential conflicts between people in Ekasari village by applying the priciple of equality, participation, legetimate, and multiculturalism. Maintaining the harmony and tolerance of interreligious relationships by applying the concpt of *penyama-berayaan* and *pesilih-asihan* base on the value of *Tri Hita Karana* and the historical experience of the formation of Ekasari village by their ancestors.

Keywords: managing conflict, tolerance, multi religious, *pasuka-dukaan* and *pasilih-asihan*

BACKGROUND

Multiculturalism in Indonesia still remains a problem that never ends. Globalization as an inevitable force of socio-cultural transformation leads to a paradoxical phenomenon, the occurrence of Western cultural homogenization on the one hand and the localism of local identity as a resistance to the pressure of globalization on the other. The awakening of the local cultural identity, precisely not to consolidate diversity in unity, but tends to be the symbols of resistance to distinguish between we and they ("*kekitaan-kemerekaan*"). The policy of regional autonomy in Indonesia after the national political reform that is expected to overcome the problems of multiculturalism, turned into a hyper autonomy that led to regional politics that increasingly sharpen ethnic, religious and cultural prejudices, then bring inharmony even social conflicts in some areas.

Indeed, social disharmony or such conflicts can occur at any time and between groups, therefore tolerance and harmony between interethnic and interfaith relationships in community life need to be developed continuously. This is based on the assumption that interethnic, racial, and religious harmony is not something that is given but continues in multilinear and multidimensional

social constructions. On the other hand, the growing understanding of radicalism and exclusivism of religious and ethnic identities lately due to globalization becomes a crucial issue for Indonesia. If the notion of radicalism and exclusivity is not anticipated early will be able to cause social disharomony or interfere with harmonious relations between religious communities in a region that has been well preserved.

Ekasari is one of the villages in Jemberana district that has unique so interesting to be the object of research. The uniqueness in question, historically the village was originally a non-inhabited forest area which was later built by Catholic Missionaries and local Balinese transmigrants into new settlements in 1934. As time progresses from the colonial period and the independence revolution of the Republic of Indonesia, Ekasari village becomes the destination of the transmigration of local Balinese, from outside of Jembrana Distric,ei from Badung, Buleleng and Karangasem regencies, as well as Javanese ethnic and Floresnese transmigrants brought by Catholic Missionaries. On the other hand, the poor economic conditions of the local population at the time were used by Catholic missionaries to spread Christianity caused some Hindu Balinese in the village of Ekasari to convert their religion to Catholicism. Such a phenomenon then forms the structure of the community of Ekasari into a multi-religious, multi ethnic, and multicultural one. Based on the data of the potential of Ekasari Village in 2016, the total population is 5,120 people, of which 3,762 are Hindus, Catholics 1,249, Islam 99 and Protestant 10.

Theoretically acknowledged widely by social scientists, the higher the heterogeneity of a society coupled with the exclusivity of the different groups, the greater the potential for the occurrence of atheism which then leads to social disharmony and even conflict. However, in Ekasari village it is quite different from the theoretical view, that although the structure of the community of Ekasari is quite ethnically religious, ethnic and cultural, intolerance between religious and social conflicts of ethnic background is almost unprecedented and so far the potential for conflict can be managed well. Based on this background, the focus of the study is to understand how the Ekasari villagers manage conflict and build tolerance among religious people in their daily lives.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was designed using qualitative analysis, with a critical ethnographic approach (Medison, 2012). Methods of data collection is done by in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis is done through three cycle stages, namely data redusksi, exposured, and the conclusion or verification (Miles and Huberman, 1992). Theories used as a perspective to analyze data is the theory of cultural adaptation and multiculturalism. In this context adaptation is a cultural mechanism by which an individual or social group adapts to the environment in which it lives in various social activities and interactions (Bennet, 19 76).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategy for Managing Conflict and Building Interfaith Tolerance in Ekasari Village

The strategy developed by religious, ethnic, and cultural pluralistic communities of Desa Ekasari manages conflict and maintains tolerance among religions is by applying the concept of *Pasuka-dukaan and Pasilih-asihan* (to helf each other in happy and unhappy moment and receprocal lovely). This concept is derived from the value of the local wisdom of Hindu Bali called Tri Hita Karana, which means that in order to achieve happiness in the community life of fisical and soul, then humans must always apply the principle of harmonious relationship with God, among humans, and with the environment. Practically the form of articulation of the in the daily life of the people of Ekasari Village is done in the moment of good activity which is like and sorrow.

The concept of harmonization of religious relations has meaning in harmony with efforts to improve social cohesion in plural society. Social cohesion is generally defined as the glue that unites society, building harmony and community spirit, and a commitment to realizing common goals (Colletta, et.al., 2001: 2). Social cohesion is a basic requirement for a society (Shiddique, 2001: 18). There is no universally agreed definition of social cohesion. The Council of Europe defines social cohesion as the ability of a society to secure the welfare of its members, suppress differences and avoid polarization. A cohesive society is a community of free individuals who support each other to achieve a common goal democratically. In contrast, Ritzen et al. (2000) emphasizes the social capital aspect in social cohesion, that is, the state of a group of people demonstrates the ability to collaborate and produce a climate for change.

The five main dimensions of social cohesion contained in the four policy documents of the governments of France and Canada, the OECD and the Rome Group include (a) togetherness (shared values, identity, feeling of commitment), (b) participation (equal opportunity to gain access), (c) participation (in political, economic, social and cultural life), (d) acceptance (respect and tolerance of differences in plural society) and (e) legitimacy (institutions acting as mediators in conflicts in plural societies) (Berger-Schmitt, 2000). These five dimensions will be used to examine strategies for managing potential conflicts and harmonizing relationships among religious believers in Ekasari Village as follows.

First, togetherness includes shared values, identity, and feelings of commitment. According to Karnawa (44 years old, interview September 28, 2017) that the common values referred to by the people of Ekasari Village are *manyama-braya* or fraternal fellow humanity. The spirit of brotherhood among the community members is also confirmed by the informant Susanto (48 years old, interview September 28, 2017) that "all Catholics in Ekasari Village always keep the concept of *nyama-braya* maintained in the community. Therefore, we always invite Catholics to maintain a good relationship with Hindu and Muslim ether in this village area. "The value of togetherness is actualized in religious social activities built with the spirit of brotherhood or grief and passion."

The value of *Pesilih-asihan* is primarily shown in the equity activity. *Pasuka-dukan* is a community activity, both of which are like and sorrow. Activities are categorized into activities like, marriage ceremony and cut tooth (mapandes) for Hindus. Meanwhile, the activities are classified as grief, such as ceremonies of death and other calamities. In such activities, every religious people of Ekasari Village invite each other and help each other so that they also feel the joy and sorrow as a member of the group. The involvement of religious people in *Pasuka-dukan* activity is a form of sympathy and empathy of humanity. In marriage ceremonies for example, other religious people not only come as an invitation, but also help sincerely the implementation of ceremonial activities. Likewise in the ceremony of death or there is a disaster that befell a family, then all citizens of Ekasari will come to help with carrying luggage, such as rice, coconut, and money to the funeral home.

Second, participation is interpreted as an equal opportunity for every religious person to gain access, especially in development. This is confirmed by Puja (49 years old, interview September 28, 2017) that Ekasari Village since the beginning has already shown a plural society. All religious communities in Ekasari Village have contributed equally in building the village and even historically our ancestors worked together through the forest to become a new village. Therefore, there is no reason not to involve religious people in rural development. One of the activities that can include all elements of religious communities in the village of Ekasari is working togather (gotong-royong). If it has been implemented gotong royong, both in banjar, environment, and village, then all members of the community must go down regardless of religion. Generally, the gotong royong activity is the work of cleaning the environment and the village hall for preparation of the celebration of independence day of Indonesia or improvement of irrigation water channel for agriculture. Forms of participation of all citizens in other joint activities, the most common is the moment of organizing the celebration of Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia. In this independence day celebration, almost all religious elements in Ekasari Village are included. Similarly, in village development, religious leaders and community leaders are always included by giving them the positions as members of the Village Development Board (BPD) and the Institution of Community Inforcemet (LPM) Desa Ekasari. By involving all elements of the diverse community, the Ekasari Village achievement of Second Prize of National Village Competition.

In the economic field, all religious people in Ekasari village also get the same access. Each individual has the same opportunity in the economic field to achieve a certain position on the basis of his abilities and services. In such an economic system, it will facilitate the assimilation because it can neutralize the different opportunities given by different cultures. The participation of all religious elements also occurs in the field of security and order. Public security and order (kamtibmas) is a situation and condition of society that is absolutely created for the sake of community life. Soekanto (2004: 84) states the creation of security and public order can accelerate the process of assimilation. In such circumstances, minority and majority groups will seek a form of compromise in order to be able

to face together threats that endanger the whole society. In order to create security and order, religious people in Ekasari Village are actively involved in various.

Third, participation in political, economic, social, and cultural life. In politics, there is never any obstacle for Ekasari Village community to channel its political participation. There is an interesting point in the local political context that the Head of Desa Ekasari who was elected directly through the Village Head Election, was alternately won by Hindus and Catholics, although the majority Hindu population in Ekasari Village. This phenomenon is described by an informant named Karnawa:

> "As there is a 'mystical' power that governs. Any change of village head who has expired and can not nominate again, then each newly elected village head must have different religions. For example, now the head of Hindu village, after two periods should not run again, then held again Pilkades, definitely selected from Catholic. Yet if according to the number of voters, Hindus can always win the Pilkades. But in fact the community is very objective in choosing candidates for village head, not based on religion ".

The most obvious socio-economic participation of the community is the participation of all farmers in the Subak Ekasari organization. As a peasant organization, subak has functions related to agriculture, such as irrigation arrangements, rice planting schedules, and procurement of rice fertilizers. Each subak has a place to hold a meeting called bale subak. Hindu, Catholic, Muslim, and Christian communities who became farmers in Ekasari Village were all members of subak. In subak organizations they participate in organizing and managing work related to agricultural activities. All subak members have the same rights and obligations to clean the irrigation canal and regulate the distribution of fertilizer for their rice crops. In addition they must also follow the arrangement of cropping patterns and timing arrangements begin to plant rice.

However, they do not conduct ceremonial activities associated with Hinduism in the Ulun Suwi Temple that belongs to Hindus. As revealed by Mendra informants, that "Catholics, Moslems and Christians who participated in subak members (krama) do not participate in ceremony in the tample of Ulun Suwi (Pura Ulun Suwi). However, they always help with the preparation of limits that may be done. They also carry out their own worship in their respective places of worship separately but remain connected with the series of subak ceremonies.

Fourth, acceptance means respecting and tolerating differences in a plural society. The principle of reward among religious believers and freedom of worship in accordance with their religion and belief has become a historic part in the life of Ekasari community, especially between Hindus and Catholics. Narka informants (46 years old) and Madra (51 years) stated that in religious life between Hindus, Catholics, and Muslims in performing their respective worship there is no significant problem. It further emphasized that "in our social life we always help each other". We also always keep religious people to do their respective religious activities in a state of calm, safe and comfortable do not feel disturbed. The attitude of tolerance in religious social life, without interfering in the internal affairs of each religion is the essence of the application of multiculturalism.

Fifth, legitimacy includes institutions that act as mediators in conflicts in plural societies. In this regard, Puja (interview September 27, 2017) states that in order to overcome the many possible conflicts in religious life in Ekasari Village, the approach emphasizes dialogue. Any problems that are deemed to potentially interfere with the harmony of religious life in Ekasari Village have always been initiated with the involvement of village apparatus, village police, religious leaders and community leaders. Thus, the strategy applied is in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 84 of 1996 on Guidelines for the Implementation of the Prevention of Insecurity in the Field of Harmony of Religious People, whose contents are: (a) Counseling and socialization of legislation especially related to the development of religious life; (b) the formulation of a code of ethics for the interaction of religious persons; (c) Fostering and fostering a harmonious attitude; (d) the establishment of religious; and (e) Forum of religious leaders. This is where the role of government and religious leaders gain legitimacy to resolve conflicts that may arise in religious life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the strategies implemented by the multi-religious and multi-ethnic ecosystem of Desa Ekasari to build harmonious relations and tolerance among religious people in their daily life is by applying the principle of *Pesuka-dukaan,* (Happyness and Sorrowness) *Penyama-brayaan* (Brotherhood and Fealowness) and *pesilih-asihan, (*Lovelyness)*,* which is articulated in the activity and good events that are grief or calamity as well as ceremonial activities that are happyness. While strategies for managing and / or preventing conflict, is to apply the principles, equality, followers, participations, legitimate, and acceptance.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestion to government, community, and stakeholder to keep harmony of religious relationship with strengthening local wisdom. Ekasari village can made model for multiculturalism development in Indonesia.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

Agger, Ben. 2003. *Teori Sosial Kritis: Kritik, Penerapan, dan Implikasinya*. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana.
Bennet, John. 1976. *The Ecological Transition, Cultural Anthropology & Human Adaptation*. New York: Pergamon Press.
Berger-Schmitt. 2000. *Social Cohesion as an Aspect of the Quality of Societies: Concept and Measurement. EuReporting Working Paper No 14.*
Hardestry, Richard W. 1977. *Ecological Anthropology*. New York: John Wiley & Suns.

Hidayat, Komaruddin. 2008. *The Wisdom of Life Menjawab Kegelisahan Hidup dan Agama*. Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas.

Liliweri, Alo.2005. *Prasangka dan Konflik, Komunikasi Lintas Budaya Masyarakat Multikultur*. Yogyakarta: LkiS.

Majid, Nurcholis. 1994. Indonesia: Sebuah Contoh Pluralisme dan Toleransi Agama. Jakarta: Dharma Santi Nyepi Tingkat Nasional.

Medison, Sayoni, D. Critical Ethnography, Method, Ethics and Performance. (2012), Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: Sage Publication, Ins, (pp.1-41).

Miles & Huberman.A. 1992. Analisis Data Kualitatif. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia.

Prekh, Bhiku. 2007. *Rethinking Multikulturalism Keberagaman Budaya dan Teori Politik*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

Ritzen et al. 2000. "Good" Politicians and "Bad" Policies: Social Cohesion, Institutions and Growth. World Bank. Jo Ritzen,William Easterly, dan Michael Woolcock (September) Policy Research Working Paper 2448.

Siddique, Sharon, 2001. "Social Cohesion and Social Conflict in Southeast Asia" dalam "Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention in Asia: Managing Diversity through Development" Washington D.C.: The World Bank.

Soekanto, Soerjono. 2004. *Sosiologi: Suatu Pengantar*. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada.

Tilaar, H.A.R.2004. *Multikulturalisme Tantangan-tantangan Global Masa Depan dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Nasional*. Jakarta: Grasindo.