

The Role of Adat Leadership in Mediating Religious Conflicts: The Case of Puri Agung Klungkung in a Multicultural Bali Context

Fajri Zulia Ramdhani

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Denpasar Bali, Indonesia

e-mail: zulia@staidenpasar.ac.id

Abstrak

Penelitian ini meneliti peran kepemimpinan adat, khususnya Puri Agung Klungkung, dalam mengelola ketegangan agama antara komunitas Hindu dan Muslim di Bali, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana tata kelola tradisional, berdasarkan hukum adat dan dialog antaragama, berkontribusi dalam menyelesaikan konflik dan menjaga kohesi sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif, dengan wawancara mendalam bersama tokoh agama, tokoh masyarakat, dan otoritas adat. Observasi langsung terhadap upacara adat dan pertemuan lintas agama juga dilakukan, didukung oleh analisis data sekunder dari teks-teks sejarah dan laporan pemerintah. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa Puri Agung Klungkung memainkan peran penting dalam menyelesaikan konflik agama melalui praktik berbasis adat, mendorong dialog antaragama, dan memanfaatkan otoritas simbolisnya. Penerapan Tri Hita Karana, sebuah filosofi Bali tentang harmoni, juga muncul sebagai faktor kunci dalam mempromosikan kerukunan agama di berbagai komunitas. Temuan ini menyarankan bahwa kepemimpinan adat dapat menjadi pelengkap efektif bagi kerangka hukum formal di masyarakat multikultural, terutama di mana sistem hukum modern gagal menangani ketegangan agama atau budaya lokal. Penelitian ini menyoroti kebutuhan akan kebijakan yang mengintegrasikan tata kelola tradisional dengan hukum nasional untuk memperkuat strategi penyelesaian konflik. Penelitian ini mengisi kesenjangan dalam literatur dengan memberikan analisis mendalam tentang bagaimana kepemimpinan adat, yang berakar pada tradisi dan praktik keagamaan Bali, berkontribusi dalam mencegah konflik agama. Studi ini menawarkan model unik yang dapat diadaptasi di wilayah lain yang menghadapi ketegangan agama serupa.

Kata Kunci: Hukum Adat; Dialog Antaragama; Puri Agung Klungkung; Penyelesaian Konflik; Tri Hita Karana.

Abstract

This study examines the role of adat leadership, specifically that of Puri Agung Klungkung, in managing religious tensions between Hindu and Muslim communities in Bali, Indonesia. It investigates how traditional governance, based on adat law and interfaith dialogue, contributes to resolving conflicts and maintaining social cohesion. The research employs a qualitative design, utilising in-depth interviews with religious leaders, community figures, and traditional authorities. Direct observations of adat ceremonies and interfaith gatherings were also conducted, supported by secondary data analysis from historical texts and government reports. The study reveals that Puri Agung Klungkung plays a crucial role in resolving religious conflicts through adat-based practices, fostering interfaith dialogue, and leveraging its symbolic authority. The application of Tri Hita Karana, a Balinese philosophy of harmony, also emerges as a key factor in promoting religious harmony across diverse communities. The findings suggest that adat leadership can serve as an effective supplement to formal legal frameworks in multicultural societies, particularly where modern legal systems fail to address local religious or cultural tensions. The study highlights the need for policies that integrate traditional governance with national laws to strengthen conflict resolution strategies. This research fills a gap in the literature by providing an in-depth analysis of how adat leadership, grounded in Balinese traditions and religious practices, contributes to preventing religious conflict. The study offers a unique model that can be adapted in other regions facing similar religious tensions.

Keywords: *Dat Law; Conflict Resolution; Interfaith Dialogue; Puri Agung Klungkung; Tri Hita Karana*

Introduction

Interfaith relations in Bali, particularly between the Hindu and Muslim communities, have long been characterised by cooperation and mutual respect, stemming from historical interactions through trade and intermarriage between Hindu kingdoms in Bali and Islamic kingdoms from outside the island.¹ The integration of Muslim communities in Bali, who actively participate in Hindu religious activities, has fostered a strong sense of mutual support and collaboration.² However, modern challenges such as globalisation, social changes, and religious identity have introduced new tensions that threaten this longstanding harmony.³ Traditional conflict

¹ I K Wisarja and I K Sudarsana, 'Tracking the Factors Causing Harmonious Hindu-Islamic Relations in Bali', *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2259470>.

² Wisarja and Sudarsana.

³ A Rasyid et al., 'Local Wisdom Recognition in Inter-Ethnic Religious Conflict Resolution in

resolution practices, such as interfaith dialogue and consultations with religious leaders, rooted in the concept of *islah*, have proven effective in peacefully resolving disputes.⁴ Yet, challenges related to interfaith marriages and the complexities of Indonesia's legal framework often exacerbate tensions within interfaith relations.⁵ These legal complexities affect the recognition of rights for interfaith couples, which can undermine social stability in Bali. Additionally, Bali's inclusive cultural identity, as seen in the Chinese community's ability to transcend ethnic boundaries through the influence of Balinese culture, demonstrates the local society's capacity to accommodate diversity.⁶ It is crucial to further examine these phenomena, both academically and practically, to safeguard cultural values and social harmony, and to propose more inclusive policy solutions amidst the modern challenges facing Bali and other multicultural societies.

The region of Klungkung, Bali, has a rich historical and cultural legacy, marked by the presence of diverse religious communities, including Hindu and Muslim populations. Over the centuries, the Muslim community, particularly in Kampung Gelgel, has coexisted with the Hindu majority⁷, creating a unique social fabric. However, the historical harmony between these groups has been challenged in recent decades by religious tensions and conflicts, including notable incidents involving the Islamic Village Lebah and surrounding Hindu communities. The influence of globalization, modernization, and political factors has further complicated these interreligious dynamics, raising concerns about the potential for increased conflict. In this context, Puri Agung Klungkung has played a significant role in

Indonesia from *Islah* Perspective', *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 13–26, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i1.8432>.

⁴ Rasyid et al.

⁵ A Rajafi, A Sugitanata, and V Lusiana, 'The "Double-Faced" Legal Expression: Dynamics and Legal Loopholes in Interfaith Marriages in Indonesia', *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (2024): 19–43, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v5i1.2153>; J Koschorke, 'Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: The Case of Interfaith Marriages Involving Muslims', in *Studies in Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 49, 2019, 199–229, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004398269_010.

⁶ D Olszewska, 'Local Deities, Traditions, and Regional Identity of the Chinese Community in Bali. Introduction to the Problem', *Siberian Historical Research*, no. 1 (2015): 98–109, <https://doi.org/10.17223/2312461X/7/6>.

⁷ Mahmud Arif and Zulkipili Lessy, 'Another Side of Balinese Exoticism Local Wisdom of the Muslim Community in Gelgel Village, Klungkung Regency, for Preserving Harmony between Religious Communities in Bali', *INFERENSI: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 15, no. 2 (13 February 2022): 185–216, <https://doi.org/10.18326/infsl3.v15i2.185-216>.

mediating these tensions and maintaining social harmony through its traditional leadership.

While several studies have focused on the history of Islam in Bali⁸, limited research has explored the role of adat leadership in managing religious tensions and conflicts. Previous works, such as those by Sulistiono et al., have highlighted the historical coexistence of Muslim enclaves in Bali, but the mechanisms by which traditional authorities like Puri Agung Klungkung actively mediate contemporary conflicts remain underexplored.⁹ Existing literature also emphasises the importance of religious tolerance in Bali, but there is a gap in understanding how traditional leadership, grounded in Balinese adat, contributes to preventing the disintegration of religious harmony.

Recent analyses have also recognised that various socio-economic and cultural factors influence inter-religious conflict in Bali. Economic disparities and perceived injustices have been identified as root causes of inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts in Bali.¹⁰ Despite such provocations, including the Bali bombings, the local response has demonstrated effective conflict resolution strategies. Hindu Balinese leaders and politicians called for restraint and employed cultural and religious methods, such as inter-religious worship and capacity building in village security, to manage the crisis.¹¹ Moreover, the local wisdom of *islah*, which involves reconciliation through religious and traditional means, has been successfully applied in Bali, including interfaith dialogues, consultation with traditional and religious leaders, and community prayers.¹² Although rumours of ethnic cleansing and

⁸ Aditama Yaditama, Bagus Wirawan, and Rai Wahyuni, 'Eksistensi Desa Muslim Kampung Kusamba Tahun', *Humanis: Journal Arts and Humanities* 26, no. 1 (2022): 147–56, <https://doi.org/10.24843/JH.20>; D Mashad, *Muslim Bali: Mencari Kembali Harmoni Yang Hilang* (Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2014); F Amalia, 'Ngaminang: Adaptasi Budaya Makan Megibung Bali Pada Masyarakat Islam di Desa Kampung Gelgel, Kabupaten Klungkung', *Vidya Wertta* 6, no. 1 (2023): 1–12, <https://ejournal.unhi.ac.id/index.php/vidyawertta>.

⁹ B Sulistiono, A Yusuf, and I Hidayat, 'Local Wisdom in Muslim Social Community in Bali Province: A Study of Tolerance', 2019.

¹⁰ Rasyid et al., 'Local Wisdom Recognition in Inter-Ethnic Religious Conflict Resolution in Indonesia from Islah Perspective'.

¹¹ M Hitchcock and I N Darma Putra, 'The Bali Bombings: Tourism Crisis Management and Conflict Avoidance', *Current Issues in Tourism* 8, no. 1 (2005): 62–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500508668205>.

¹² Rasyid et al., 'Local Wisdom Recognition in Inter-Ethnic Religious Conflict Resolution in Indonesia from Islah Perspective'.

forced repatriation of non-Balinese surfaced during tensions, these were ultimately unfounded due to the proactive conflict management measures implemented by local leaders.¹³

Further, the renegotiation of religious identities, particularly between Hindus and Muslims, has been a significant factor in shaping inter-religious relationships in Bali.¹⁴ In summary, while economic and social disparities have contributed to inter-religious tensions, Bali has effectively leveraged local wisdom, religious practices, and community leadership to resolve conflicts and maintain social harmony. By examining Puri Agung Klungkung's adat-based leadership, this study aims to fill a critical gap in understanding the role of traditional leadership in managing contemporary religious tensions in Bali.

This study seeks to address the gaps identified in the existing literature regarding the role of adat leadership in managing religious tensions and conflicts in Bali. Specifically, the research aims to explore how Puri Agung Klungkung, as a traditional authority grounded in Balinese adat, mediates contemporary religious conflicts between Hindu and Muslim communities. This research will provide new insights into how adat-based conflict resolution practices—such as interfaith dialogues, the application of local wisdom (*islah*), and consultations with religious leaders—help maintain religious harmony in a multicultural society. Additionally, the study will examine how these traditional mechanisms prevent religious harmony's disintegration, particularly in response to modern challenges such as economic disparities, social change, and legal complexities. Through this exploration, the study will offer a deeper understanding of how traditional leadership models can be adapted to address inter-religious tensions in the modern context of Bali, and potentially provide a framework for other regions experiencing similar conflicts.

This research posits that the adat leadership of Puri Agung Klungkung plays a crucial role in mediating and resolving inter-religious conflicts in Bali, particularly through adat-based practices rooted in local wisdom and

¹³ Hitchcock and Darma Putra, 'The Bali Bombings: Tourism Crisis Management and Conflict Avoidance'.

¹⁴ Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin and David D Harnish, *Between Harmony and Discrimination: Negotiating Religious Identities within Majority-Minority Relationships in Bali and Lombok* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

traditional Balinese values. The study hypothesises that Puri Agung Klungkung's leadership, through its application of religious and cultural strategies, effectively addresses contemporary religious tensions by fostering dialogue and cooperation between Hindu and Muslim communities. Furthermore, the research argues that the success of these conflict resolution strategies is largely due to the inclusiveness and cultural flexibility embedded in Balinese adat, which allows for the peaceful coexistence of diverse religious groups. This argument will be tested by analysing specific cases of conflict in Klungkung and examining the extent to which Puri Agung Klungkung's interventions have maintained social stability and prevented the escalation of religious tensions. The study will also explore the role of economic disparities and legal complexities as contributing factors to these conflicts, and how traditional leadership helps mitigate these challenges.

This research focuses on Puri Agung Klungkung's leadership in mediating religious conflicts, specifically examining how traditional leadership based on Balinese adat contributes to maintaining social harmony. The unit of analysis in this study includes individuals and stakeholders directly involved in religious tensions and conflict resolution in Klungkung, Bali. The study also analyses specific conflict events between Hindu and Muslim communities, using qualitative methods to capture the depth and complexity of social interactions. A qualitative design was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of conflict resolution's nuanced and culturally embedded practices. This approach is essential for understanding how traditional leadership, as well as religious and adat customs, are applied in real-world conflict scenarios.

Data sources for this research include primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, such as religious leaders, community figures, and traditional authorities involved in the conflict mediation process. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility to explore various aspects of adat leadership and its impact on conflict resolution. Additionally, the researcher conducted direct observations of adat ceremonies and interfaith gatherings at Puri Agung Klungkung to witness how traditional practices contribute to fostering inter-religious dialogue. Secondary data included documentation such as historical texts, local government reports, and scholarly articles on religious tolerance in Bali. The collected data were then analysed using

thematic analysis, where transcripts were coded to identify recurring themes related to adat leadership, religious harmony, and conflict resolution strategies. The iterative process of data collection and analysis enabled the researcher to refine the study's focus and draw meaningful conclusions about the role of traditional leadership in preventing religious disintegration.

Results and Discussion

1. The Role of Puri Agung Klungkung in the Relationship Between Adat and Religion

Puri Agung Klungkung plays a pivotal role in the governance system of Klungkung, Bali, where it manages both political and religious affairs. As the central institution, the *Puri* (royal palace) operates through a hierarchical structure, with authority cascading from the king to subordinate officials, such as *Punggawa* (royal administrators) and *Manca* (regional rulers). The king's dual role as both a political and religious figure enables him to oversee not just the administration of the region but also the maintenance of religious harmony. This governance model, deeply rooted in adat (customary law), gives Puri Agung Klungkung the necessary influence to mediate religious and social affairs effectively.

The study highlights that Puri Agung Klungkung has long been engaged in activities that bring together both the Hindu and Muslim communities within Klungkung. This involvement is particularly evident in the *adat-based* religious ceremonies and community events that regularly take place. For instance, during the *Takbir Parade* (a Muslim celebration marking the end of Ramadan) and the *Ramadan Safari* (a communal event where fasting is broken together), Puri Agung Klungkung actively participates alongside local religious and community leaders. Through these events, the Puri not only acknowledges the region's religious diversity but also fosters an inclusive atmosphere where both communities can gather and interact harmoniously.

Puri Agung Klungkung's consistent involvement in these religious and social gatherings exemplifies its role as a bridge between Hindu and Muslim communities. By promoting joint participation in events like the *Takbir Parade* and *Ramadan Safari*, the Puri creates a shared space that transcends religious boundaries, reinforcing social cohesion and mutual respect. This inclusive leadership ensures that religious diversity is celebrated, and potential community tensions are minimised. Puri Agung Klungkung's ability to integrate religious and cultural elements into its governance has been

crucial in maintaining peace and harmony in a region known for its religious diversity.

The significance of Puri Agung Klungkung's participation in religious events is symbolic and practical in fostering interfaith harmony. As one local leader expressed,

“The presence of Puri Agung Klungkung at our religious events, such as the Ramadan Safari, sends a strong message of unity. It shows that both Muslims and Hindus can coexist peacefully, especially when our leaders actively participate in these events” (Interview, August 2023).

This statement highlights the critical role of visible leadership in reinforcing community values of mutual respect and tolerance.

The Puri's involvement in such events goes beyond ceremonial appearances; it actively demonstrates a commitment to preserving the religious harmony that has long defined Klungkung. By attending and participating in Islamic celebrations like the *Ramadan Safari*, Puri Agung Klungkung reinforces the idea that religious diversity is not a cause for division but an opportunity for cultural and social integration. This proactive approach by the Puri is seen as a key factor in preventing tensions from escalating into conflicts, as it visibly promotes cooperation and solidarity between the Hindu and Muslim communities.

Table 1. Participation of Puri Agung Klungkung in Interfaith Activities

Activity	Participants	Role of Puri Agung Klungkung	Outcome
Ramadan Safari	Muslim and Hindu leaders, local community	Facilitated discussions, supported fasting-breaking events	Strengthened interfaith relations
Takbir Parade	Muslim community, general public	Inaugurated the event, led procession	Promoted religious harmony and respect
Halal bi Halal	Muslim and Hindu leaders	Opened ceremony, shared in dialogue	Fostered mutual understanding and cooperation

Table 1 illustrates the participation of Puri Agung Klungkung in various interfaith activities aimed at promoting religious harmony between Muslim and Hindu communities. The table details events such as the *Ramadan Safari*, the *Takbir Parade*, and the *Halal bi-Halal gathering*, where the Puri played significant roles, such as facilitating discussions, inaugurating events, and leading dialogues. These actions strengthened interfaith relations, promoted harmony and respect, and fostered mutual understanding and cooperation.

The involvement of Puri Agung Klungkung in these interfaith events goes beyond symbolic gestures. The Puri acts as a bridge between the Hindu and Muslim communities, using its authority to create a platform for interaction, dialogue, and shared religious experiences. This active participation has contributed significantly to maintaining religious harmony in the region.

The data reveals three key patterns in how Puri Agung Klungkung maintains religious harmony within the community. First, the Puri's leadership is rooted in *adat* (customary law), which it skillfully integrates into various religious activities. This *adat-based* leadership is inclusive, allowing both Hindu and Muslim communities to coexist peacefully and participate in shared cultural and religious practices. The second pattern is interfaith participation, where events like the *Ramadan Safari* and the *Takbir Parade* show the Puri's active role in fostering collaboration and interaction between different religious groups. By encouraging such participation, the Puri strengthens a sense of communal belonging among both Hindu and Muslim residents, reducing feelings of division. Lastly, the symbolic unity created by the Puri's presence at these events, whether through inaugurating ceremonies or facilitating dialogues, fosters an environment of shared cultural and religious values. This helps reduce the potential for interfaith tensions and reinforces a cohesive, harmonious community.

These findings underscore the critical role of Puri Agung Klungkung as a unifier in interfaith relations. The Puri's active participation in religious events serves as a powerful tool in bridging the gap between the Hindu majority and Muslim minority. By integrating both religious and *adat* practices, Puri Agung Klungkung not only preserves traditional values but also fosters an environment where religious diversity is respected and celebrated. This role is essential in preventing the disintegration of religious harmony, especially in a multicultural society like Bali, where both religious and ethnic diversity are integral to the social fabric.

2. Conflict Resolution Mechanisms by Puri Agung Klungkung

Several conflicts between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Klungkung have been successfully mediated by Puri Agung Klungkung, often through the use of adat-based (customary) mechanisms and interfaith dialogue. One notable incident occurred in 2007, when a violent altercation between the youth from Islamic Village Lebah and Banjar Lebah escalated into broader communal conflict. Social differences exacerbated tensions, but the intervention of Puri Agung Klungkung, through adat-based mediation, facilitated productive dialogue between the conflicting parties. Another incident took place in the same year between Islamic Village Lebah and Akah Village, following a disagreement at a local market during Ramadan. Here, the Puri played a central role in organizing peace talks, resulting in a swift de-escalation of the conflict.¹⁵ Additionally, a two-night clash between Islamic Village Lebah and Banjar Pande was resolved through a combination of religious dialogue and symbolic gestures facilitated by the Puri, demonstrating the Puri's critical position in resolving disputes across religious divides.

Puri Agung Klungkung has employed several conflict resolution mechanisms in response to these conflicts, primarily through adat-based approaches and interfaith dialogue. The Puri's involvement in interfaith events such as the Ramadan Safari and Takbir Parade has allowed it to build bridges between the Hindu and Muslim communities. During periods of tension, the Puri has played a mediating role, ensuring that both sides can engage in constructive dialogue. For example, following the Islamic Village Lebah-Banjar Lebah conflict, Puri Agung Klungkung facilitated discussions between the leaders of both communities, which ultimately led to a peaceful resolution.

A local community leader remarked, "Without Puri Agung Klungkung's intervention, these conflicts could have escalated much further. They act as a neutral party, bridging the communities through the lens of adat (customary law) and religious dialogue. Their presence always brings both sides together in discussion" (Interview, August 2023). **Table 3** illustrates the mediation steps taken by **Puri Agung Klungkung** in these conflicts, detailing the stages of resolution and the outcomes of the peace processes.

¹⁵ G M Swardhana, *Kajian Pemetaan Daerah Rawan Bencana Sosial Di Denpasar, Badung, Klungkung, Dan Jembrana, Propinsi Bali*, 2014.

Table 2. Conflict Resolution Steps by Puri Agung Klungkung in Key Incidents

Conflict Incident	Mediation Steps by Puri Agung Klungkung	Outcome
Islamic Village Lebah vs Banjar Lebah (2007)	Facilitated dialogue through adat law; organized peace talks with community leaders	Peaceful resolution, prevention of further escalation
Islamic Village Lebah vs Akah Village (2007)	Interfaith dialogue arranged after market dispute; symbolic unity through joint religious events	Conflict de-escalated, community reconciliation
Islamic Village Lebah vs Banjar Pande (2007)	Religious mediation; organized community meetings; Puri leaders led the reconciliation process	Two-night clash resolved, restoration of social harmony

The data in Table 2 highlights three significant conflicts between Islamic and Hindu communities in Klungkung, all of which were successfully mediated by Puri Agung Klungkung. Each conflict involved differing sources of tension, from disputes at local markets to social clashes between youth groups. In every instance, the Puri stepped in to mediate, utilising adat law (customary law) and interfaith dialogue to facilitate peaceful resolutions. The table showcases the role of the Puri as a trusted mediator, and in each case, the conflicts were de-escalated, preventing further violence and restoring harmony between the communities involved.

From the data, three key patterns emerge in the conflict resolution strategies employed by Puri Agung Klungkung. First, the use of adat law as a mediation tool has been pivotal in addressing disputes. By grounding the resolution process in local traditions, the Puri ensured that both Hindu and Muslim communities respected and accepted the outcomes. This reliance on adat fostered a sense of legitimacy, which was essential for community buy-in and maintaining peace. Second, the Puri facilitated interfaith dialogues, creating a platform for communication between religious leaders of both communities. These dialogues enabled open discussions, allowing both parties to express their grievances and promoting mutual understanding. Lastly, the symbolic leadership of the Puri played a significant role in promoting unity. By organising and participating in events like the Takbir Parade, the Puri demonstrated its commitment to interfaith harmony, helping to foster a shared sense of belonging among the communities. This symbolic

participation not only resolved immediate conflicts but also prevented future tensions, reinforcing the Puri's role as a unifying force in Klungkung.

The findings in Table 2 demonstrate that the Puri Agung Klungkung plays a critical role in maintaining social cohesion in Klungkung. Through a combination of adat law and interfaith dialogue, the Puri provides a culturally and religiously relevant framework for resolving conflicts. Its dual role as a political and religious authority enables it to mediate disputes effectively, reinforcing social bonds and ensuring that tensions are quickly addressed before they escalate into larger issues. These results suggest that traditional leadership can be instrumental in maintaining peace in multi-religious societies, especially where long-standing tensions are present.

3. Discussion

This research investigated the critical role of Puri Agung Klungkung in mediating interfaith conflicts between Hindu and Muslim communities in Klungkung, Bali, through adat-based leadership and interfaith dialogue. Three main findings emerged from the study. First, adat law was consistently used by Puri Agung Klungkung as a primary tool in conflict resolution. The reliance on this traditional system provided legitimacy and community buy-in, ensuring peaceful resolutions. Second, interfaith dialogues arranged by the Puri fostered open communication between the conflicting parties, creating a platform for mutual understanding and reducing tensions. Third, the symbolic leadership of the Puri played an important role in reinforcing social harmony. By participating in events like the Ramadan Safari and Takbir Parade, the Puri provided a visible example of unity that transcended religious divisions, which was essential in preventing further conflicts.

The success of Puri Agung Klungkung's conflict resolution strategies can be attributed to its integration of *adat law* with religious dialogue, both deeply rooted in Balinese cultural practices. The use of *adat* created an atmosphere of respect, as both Hindu and Muslim communities respect the traditional law. Combining this with interfaith dialogue helped de-escalate conflicts quickly by providing both sides a space to voice their concerns. The study highlights that when conflicts arise, the Puri uses its authority to mediate, offering both religious and customary solutions, which resonate with the community. These mechanisms are effective because they align with the region's cultural values and the deeply embedded notion of *Tri Hita Karana*, the Balinese philosophy of harmony between humans, nature, and the divine.

Tri Hita Karana is pivotal in fostering religious harmony in Bali, reinforcing the island's ability to manage its multicultural dynamics. As a

guiding philosophy, *Tri Hita Karana* emphasises the importance of balance in three fundamental relationships: *Parhyangan* (humans with God), *Pawongan* (humans with other humans), and *Palemahan* (humans with nature). Through *Parhyangan*, religious activities such as temple rituals at significant spiritual hubs like *Ulun Danu Batur* and *Tirta Empul* strengthen communal worship and enhance the spiritual connection of Balinese Hindus.¹⁶ Meanwhile, *Pawongan* underlines the necessity of social harmony and cooperation, fostering mutual respect among Bali's Hindu and Muslim communities through shared cultural and religious events.¹⁷ Finally, *Palemahan* encourages environmental conservation, aligning with Hindu and Islamic stewardship values over nature, further solidifying the common ground between different faith groups.¹⁸ This philosophical foundation has proven to be a vital tool for maintaining religious harmony in Bali, offering a model of coexistence and sustainable peace that other regions facing religious tensions could emulate.

Compared to previous research on intergroup leadership and the role of traditional leaders in managing social structures, this study builds on the understanding of *adat* leadership in religious conflict resolution. While past studies, such as those addressing the impact of large-scale oil palm land acquisition on *adat* communities in East Kalimantan, have highlighted the weakening of *adat* authority, they still suggest the potential for *adat* leadership to manage internal and external tensions.¹⁹ This notion parallels the findings of this research, which demonstrate that *adat* leaders, particularly at Puri Agung Klungkung, maintain significant influence in preventing religious tensions through culturally grounded conflict resolution methods.

¹⁶ I W Wiwin, 'The Implementation of Tri Hita Karana in Ecotourism Development Towards Sustainable Tourism in The Bukit Cemeng Bangli Regency', *Jurnal Kajian Bali* 11, no. 2 (2021): 353–68, <https://doi.org/10.24843/JKB.2021.v11.i02.p06>.

¹⁷ C P Kubontubuh, 'Tri Hita Karana, a Spiritual Connection to Nature in Harmony', *Journal of the Siam Society* 111, no. 2 (2023): 247–52, <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85174611037&partnerID=40&md5=6c8d0f10fc01de0fcd7a4b11ae20b16e>; Wiwin, 'The Implementation of Tri Hita Karana in Ecotourism Development Towards Sustainable Tourism in The Bukit Cemeng Bangli Regency'.

¹⁸ A Royo, W Dharmiasih, and Y Arbi, 'Forum Pekaseh in the Management of Subak Landscape of Catur Angga Batukaru, Unesco World Heritage Sites in Bali', in *Asian Sacred Natural Sites: Philosophy and Practice in Protected Areas and Conservation*, 2016, 118–30, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676272-19>.

¹⁹ E Fujiwara, 'The Impact of the Oil Palm on Adat Social Structure and Authority: The Case of the Medang People, Indonesia', *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 21, no. 2 (2020): 140–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2020.1734069>.

Additionally, insights from studies on intergroup leadership highlight that effective leaders foster a shared identity and avoid bias towards any subgroup.²⁰ This principle is highly relevant to the role of Puri Agung Klungkung, where leadership transcends religious differences, creating a unified community identity through participation in both Hindu and Muslim religious events. The research presented here extends this idea by showing that *adat* leaders can promote peace and reduce conflict not only through neutrality but also by symbolically participating in interfaith events that strengthen communal bonds.

Moreover, the qualities of effective religious leaders identified in previous studies on interfaith dialogue in Malaysia²¹—knowledge, experience, personality, and relationship-building skills—also apply to *adat* leadership in Bali. The study of Puri Agung Klungkung aligns with this framework, as the Puri leaders have exhibited these qualities in their role as mediators between religious communities. Their ability to build relationships and trust between groups, combined with their authoritative presence, enhances their effectiveness in maintaining religious harmony. This comparison suggests that *adat* leadership, when applied in interfaith contexts, can serve as a powerful mechanism for social cohesion and conflict resolution, consistent with findings in other regions.

The findings of this research reveal that traditional leadership in Bali, particularly that of Puri Agung Klungkung, continues to play a crucial role in maintaining social cohesion and preventing religious conflicts in a multicultural society. The successful application of *adat* law and interfaith dialogue demonstrates that traditional conflict resolution methods are relevant and highly effective in the modern context. The Puri's role in bridging religious divides exemplifies how local customs and authority figures can create a sustainable framework for peace, where modern legal systems might fail to resonate. This study underscores the importance of local wisdom in managing religious diversity, which could serve as a model for other regions experiencing similar tensions.

The positive impact of *adat* leadership in managing religious tensions highlights the potential for traditional governance systems to supplement modern legal frameworks in areas where ethnic or religious divisions exist. However, while these systems have proven effective in Klungkung, it is

²⁰ C Kershaw et al., 'Battling Ingroup Bias with Effective Intergroup Leadership', *British Journal of Social Psychology* 60, no. 3 (2021): 765–85, <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12445>.

²¹ K M Karim, S A Saili, and K M Khambali, 'Religious Leader: Model Agent for Inter-Faith Dialogue Implementation in Malaysia', *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 6, no. 1 (2016): 87–100, <https://doi.org/10.7187/gjat10620160601>.

crucial to recognise the challenges that may arise if traditional leadership becomes politicised or if economic disparities between religious groups deepen. There is also a risk that over-reliance on adat leadership could undermine efforts to build more inclusive legal frameworks at the national level, particularly in addressing the legal complexities surrounding interfaith marriages and property rights in multicultural societies like Bali.

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations emerge. First, local governments should work closely with traditional leaders, such as Puri Agung Klungkung, to formalise their role in conflict mediation. This could include creating legal frameworks that integrate *adat* law with national legislation, ensuring that traditional practices are preserved while also aligning with broader human rights standards. Second, interfaith dialogue platforms should be institutionalised at the community level, with regular meetings and events to foster communication between religious leaders and residents. Finally, efforts to educate local communities on the importance of religious tolerance and conflict resolution strategies should be prioritised, using successful case studies like those of Puri Agung Klungkung as models for promoting peace in other regions of Indonesia.

Conclusion

The research demonstrates that Puri Agung Klungkung plays a pivotal role in mediating religious conflicts between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Klungkung, Bali. The application of adat law and interfaith dialogue by the Puri has proven to be highly effective in resolving tensions, creating peace, and fostering social cohesion. The findings reveal that Puri Agung Klungkung's authority, grounded in traditional values and religious inclusivity, is instrumental in preventing the escalation of conflicts. The research highlights the integration of adat leadership with religious practices as a mechanism for addressing contemporary religious tensions, something that has been underexplored in previous studies. Additionally, the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana plays a crucial role in promoting harmony across religious and social divides by advocating for balance between humans, nature, and the divine.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature by providing new insights into the role of adat leadership in mediating inter-religious conflicts. It highlights the continuing relevance of traditional governance in modern contexts, particularly where formal legal systems may not

sufficiently address local religious or cultural tensions. By examining how Puri Agung Klungkung has successfully employed a combination of adat law and interfaith dialogue, the study offers a valuable framework for other multicultural regions grappling with similar challenges. Furthermore, the research underscores the potential for traditional leadership systems to supplement formal governance structures in promoting peace and religious tolerance.

One of the primary limitations of the study is its focus on a single case—Puri Agung Klungkung—which may not fully capture the diversity of adat leadership models in other parts of Bali or Indonesia. Future research could expand to include comparative studies of adat leadership across different regions to explore the broader applicability of these conflict resolution strategies. Additionally, the study's qualitative approach provides in-depth insights but may benefit from a mixed-methods approach in future studies, incorporating quantitative data to measure the long-term impacts of adat-based conflict resolution on social cohesion and peacebuilding. Future research should also consider the impact of politicisation of traditional leadership, and the interaction between adat law and national legal frameworks, particularly in addressing contemporary challenges such as interfaith marriages and economic disparities.

References

- Amalia, F. 'Ngaminang: Adaptasi Budaya Makan Megibung Bali Pada Masyarakat Islam di Desa Kampung Gelgel, Kabupaten Klungkung'. *Vidya Wertta* 6, no. 1 (2023): 1–12. <https://ejournal.unhi.ac.id/index.php/vidyawertta>.
- Arif, Mahmud, and Zulkipli Lessy. 'Another Side of Balinese Exoticism Local Wisdom of the Muslim Community in Gelgel Village, Klungkung Regency, for Preserving Harmony between Religious Communities in Bali'. *INFERENSI: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 15, no. 2 (13 February 2022): 185–216. <https://doi.org/10.18326/infs13.v15i2.185-216>.
- Fujiwara, E. 'The Impact of the Oil Palm on Adat Social Structure and Authority: The Case of the Medang People, Indonesia'. *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 21, no. 2 (2020): 140–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2020.1734069>.
- Hauser-Schäublin, Brigitta, and David D Harnish. *Between Harmony and Discrimination: Negotiating Religious Identities within Majority-Minority*

- Relationships in Bali and Lombok*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014.
- Hitchcock, M, and I N Darma Putra. 'The Bali Bombings: Tourism Crisis Management and Conflict Avoidance'. *Current Issues in Tourism* 8, no. 1 (2005): 62–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500508668205>.
- Karim, K M, S A Saili, and K M Khambali. 'Religious Leader: Model Agent for Inter-Faith Dialogue Implementation in Malaysia'. *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 6, no. 1 (2016): 87–100. <https://doi.org/10.7187/gjat10620160601>.
- Kershaw, C, D E Rast, M A Hogg, and D van Knippenberg. 'Battling Ingroup Bias with Effective Intergroup Leadership'. *British Journal of Social Psychology* 60, no. 3 (2021): 765–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12445>.
- Koschorke, J. 'Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: The Case of Interfaith Marriages Involving Muslims'. In *Studies in Islamic Law and Society*, 49:199–229, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004398269_010.
- Kubontubuh, C P. 'Tri Hita Karana, a Spiritual Connection to Nature in Harmony'. *Journal of the Siam Society* 111, no. 2 (2023): 247–52. <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85174611037&partnerID=40&md5=6c8d0f10fc01de0fcd7a4b11ae20b16e>.
- Mashad, D. *Muslim Bali: Mencari Kembali Harmoni Yang Hilang*. Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2014.
- Olszewska, D. 'Local Deities, Traditions, and Regional Identity of the Chinese Community in Bali. Introduction to the Problem'. *Siberian Historical Research*, no. 1 (2015): 98–109. <https://doi.org/10.17223/2312461X/7/6>.
- Rajafi, A, A Sugitanata, and V Lusiana. 'The "Double-Faced" Legal Expression: Dynamics and Legal Loopholes in Interfaith Marriages in Indonesia'. *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (2024): 19–43. <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v5i1.2153>.
- Rasyid, A, R F Lubis, M W R Hutagalung, M A Lubis, M R Mohd Nor, and A Vinandita. 'Local Wisdom Recognition in Inter-Ethnic Religious Conflict Resolution in Indonesia from Islah Perspective'. *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 13–26. <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i1.8432>.
- Royo, A, W Dharmiasih, and Y Arbi. 'Forum Pekaseh in the Management of Subak Landscape of Catur Angga Batukaru, Unesco World Heritage Sites in Bali'. In *Asian Sacred Natural Sites: Philosophy and Practice in Protected Areas and Conservation*, 118–30, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676272-19>.

- Sulistiono, B, A Yusuf, and I Hidayat. 'Local Wisdom in Muslim Social Community in Bali Province: A Study of Tolerance', 2019.
- Swardhana, G M. *Kajian Pemetaan Daerah Rawan Bencana Sosial Di Denpasar, Badung, Klungkung, Dan Jembrana, Propinsi Bali*, 2014.
- Wisarja, I K, and I K Sudarsana. 'Tracking the Factors Causing Harmonious Hindu-Islamic Relations in Bali'. *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2259470>.
- Wiwin, I W. 'The Implementation of Tri Hita Karana in Ecotourism Development Towards Sustainable Tourism in The Bukit Cemeng Bangli Regency'. *Jurnal Kajian Bali* 11, no. 2 (2021): 353–68. <https://doi.org/10.24843/JKB.2021.v11.i02.p06>.
- Yaditama, Aditama, Bagus Wirawan, and Rai Wahyuni. 'Eksistensi Desa Muslim Kampung Kusamba Tahun'. *Humanis: Journal Arts and Humanities* 26, no. 1 (2022): 147–56. <https://doi.org/10.24843/JH.20>.