

Social Capital in Developing Harmonious Coexistence: A Multicultural Islamic Education Perspective in Balun Village, Turi, Lamongan, Indonesia

Hartini^{1*}, Mas'ud Said², Djunaidi Ghoni²

¹ Doctoral Program of Multicultural Islamic Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia; hartinitrepan@gmail.com

² Multicultural Islamic Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: hartinitrepan@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Balun Village is renowned for its unique religious diversity, where Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism coexist peacefully. This harmonious coexistence has earned it the title "Pancasila Village." The daily life of the community reflects strong synergy in fostering tolerance, mutual respect, and social harmony. This study adopts a qualitative ethnographic approach, employing participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation for data collection. Informants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling methods. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings indicate that the social capital contributing to interreligious harmony in Balun Village includes: (1) familial ties, (2) trust in village leadership, (3) interfaith cooperation among religious leaders, (4) adherence to shared norms, (5) intercommunity social networks, and (6) a spirit of reciprocity rooted in recognition, kinship, and brotherhood. Furthermore, the values of multicultural Islamic education embedded in the community include democracy, tolerance (tasamuh), religious moderation (tawasuth), and mutual assistance (ta'awun). These values are reinforced through collective cooperation, transparency, trust-building, honesty, mutual understanding, and shared concern among community members.

Keywords: social capital, social harmony, multicultural Islamic education values.

INTRODUCTION

Communities are inherently multidimensional and multireligious. Each dimension interrelates and supports the formation of a comprehensive societal system, encompassing both social capital and human capital. Social development therefore requires a multidimensional approach.

According to Coleman (1988), as cited by Field (2010), social capital consists of "a variety of entities with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of actors...within the structure." In Coleman's view, social capital supports individual and group activities through networks, reciprocity, trust, and social norms.

The multidimensional character of social capital aligns with broader cultural dynamics. Stewart and Ribeiro (2023) argue that cultural systems—especially those situated on the social margins—shape forms of interaction that sustain cooperation and collective identity. Their analysis in the *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change* (JCASC) highlights that cultural diversity itself becomes a reservoir of social resources that strengthen cohesion and community resilience.

In the context of religiously diverse communities, socially toxic or weakened family and community bonds can erode the accumulation of social capital (Michalski, 2017). Thus, strong social ties and interfaith cooperation, as seen in Balun Village, serve as a counterbalance that reinforces harmony and decreases the potential for conflict.

Similar patterns of interfaith harmony have also been observed in other parts of Indonesia, where cultural and religious diversity is managed through mutual understanding and respect (Jubba et al. 2019). The ability to build trust and acceptance across different belief systems is not only a social imperative but is also aligned with broader cultural transformation processes (Stewart, 2018).

Social Capital Balun Village

The concept of social capital originates from the idea that individuals cannot face societal challenges in isolation; instead, collective action and cooperation among community members are essential. This idea was first introduced by Lyda Judson Hanifan, an American educator, in the early 20th century. In his work *The Rural School Community Center* (1916), Hanifan described social capital not as material wealth, but as metaphorical assets—trust, friendship, sympathy, and close cooperation among individuals and families within a social group.

Although Hanifan coined the term nearly a century ago, it gained prominence in academic discourse only in the late 1980s. Pierre Bourdieu, a prominent French sociologist, emphasized the importance of considering various forms of capital—economic, cultural, and social—when analyzing the structure and functioning of society. In *The Forms of Capital* (1986), Bourdieu argued that not all valuable transactions yield immediate material benefits, and that intangible assets often play a crucial role in shaping social behavior and power dynamics.

Bourdieu defined social capital as the sum of actual and potential resources linked to a durable network of institutionalized relationships based on mutual acquaintance and recognition. By being part of a group, individuals can access the collective capital of that group. The volume of social capital an individual possesses depends on the size and quality of their network, as well as the volume of economic and cultural capital they also hold.

In the context of Balun Village, social capital manifests in the community's strong familial ties, trust in local leadership, harmonious interfaith relationships, adherence to shared norms, extensive social networks, and reciprocal practices rooted in kinship and mutual respect. These elements collectively contribute to a cohesive and harmonious society where religious diversity is not only accepted but actively nurtured.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

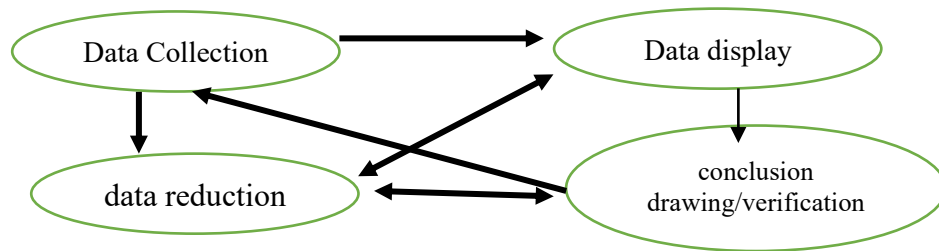
This study employs a qualitative approach with an ethnographic research design. According to Creswell (2014:4), qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Furthermore, Creswell (2014:19) defines ethnography as a research design rooted in anthropology and sociology, in which the researcher studies behavioral patterns, language, and actions of a cultural group within their natural setting over an extended period.

Spradley (2006) outlines several key characteristics of ethnographic research, including:

- **Cultural Themes:** Identifying unique cultural attributes practiced within a community;
- **Culture-Sharing Group:** Focusing on groups that share common behaviors, attitudes, and language;
- **Fieldwork:** Conducting data collection directly in the natural setting of the study;
- **Ethnographic Description:** Producing rich, detailed narratives about the group being studied;
- **Context Awareness:** Considering the environment and situations surrounding the community;
- **Researcher Reflexivity:** Recognizing the role of the researcher in building trust and interpreting findings responsibly.

Data were collected through interviews with key stakeholders, including village officials, religious leaders from Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism, and members of the general public. Document analysis was also employed to support and enrich the research focus. Fieldwork was conducted in Balun Village, Turi Sub-district, Lamongan Regency, where data related to social capital and its contribution to social harmony were gathered within the framework of multicultural Islamic education.

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations involving village authorities, interfaith community leaders, and local residents. Secondary data consisted of relevant documentation such as community activity reports, village profiles, and official records on the implementation of multicultural Islamic education.



Data Analysis

This study adopts the interactive data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman, as referenced by Sugiyono (2023:132–142). The data analysis process was carried out iteratively and continuously until data saturation was achieved. The model consists of three key components:

1. Data Reduction

This step involves selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data from field notes, interviews, and documents. The goal is to focus attention on relevant information while discarding irrelevant or redundant data.

2. Data Display

The reduced data are then organized and presented in a structured format such as narrative text, tables, or charts. These displays allow researchers to interpret the findings more clearly and identify patterns and relationships.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

At this stage, researchers draw conclusions based on the data presented and reduced. These conclusions are then verified through ongoing analysis, member checking, and triangulation to ensure their validity and reliability.

This interactive process emphasizes the cyclical nature of qualitative analysis, where researchers constantly move back and forth between data collection and interpretation to refine their understanding.

RESEARCH RESULT

Social capital consists of multiple elements that function as collective sources of power within a community. These elements serve as the foundation for fostering cooperation, enhancing social cohesion, and supporting shared goals. In Balun Village, the presence of strong social capital is evident through several interrelated components that contribute to religious harmony and mutual understanding.

The three primary functions of social capital identified in the village are:

1. As a **bond** that reinforces community solidarity;
2. As a **bridge** that connects diverse religious and social groups;
3. As a **linkage** that provides access to broader institutional support and collective action.

These functions optimize the community's potential to maintain a peaceful coexistence. This finding aligns with Aidoo et al. (2024), who highlight that community engagement and environmental awareness significantly contribute to sustainable development and visitor satisfaction in culturally diverse communities. The benefits of social capital in Balun Village are inclusive and accessible to all residents, as long as they align with the community's shared values.

The elements of social capital identified in Balun Village include:

- **Familial Ties:** Kinship bonds are deeply rooted and span across religious boundaries, with many families having members who follow different faiths.
- **Trust in Leadership:** Community members, regardless of religious affiliation, consistently support the decisions of village leaders.
- **Norms and Values:** Shared ethical principles and respect for religious practices guide social behavior.
- **Social Networks:** Interpersonal relationships and informal support systems connect individuals across different religious and social groups.
- **Reciprocity:** Acts of mutual assistance, particularly during communal or religious events, reinforce social unity and solidarity.

These components work synergistically to create an inclusive and tolerant environment where differences are not only accepted but celebrated. Religious events, community celebrations, and village meetings are carried out cooperatively by all religious groups, reflecting a strong sense of unity.

Care and Harmony Between Religious Leaders

The residents of Balun Village not only demonstrate social solidarity in everyday life but also exemplify strong interfaith collaboration. Religious leaders from Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism maintain open communication and mutual support, especially during significant religious events.

For example, during Eid al-Fitr, Christian and Hindu residents actively help prepare prayer areas outside the mosque and assist in maintaining security around the location. This gesture allows Muslims to perform congregational prayers in a peaceful and orderly environment, despite limited space in the mosque's parking area. Their involvement reflects the spirit of mutual assistance and respect for religious observance.

A local Hindu community leader from Lamongan stated, "We, Hindus, always try to blend in with our Muslim neighbors, especially during important events like Eid al-Adha. We participate in communal preparations and help distribute sacrificial meat. However, the slaughtering process itself is handled by Muslim residents due to religious dietary laws."

This example illustrates the village's deep-rooted culture of cooperation and shared responsibility, where religious differences do not serve as barriers but rather as opportunities for strengthening social unity. The mutual care shown by religious leaders fosters a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere in Balun Village.

Values/ Norms

In Balun Village, religious and social norms play a vital role in shaping harmonious interfaith interactions. Each religious community—Muslim, Christian, and Hindu—upholds core values that guide both religious practices and daily behavior. Education also plays a central role in shaping community values, just as pesantren-based character education has been found to foster moderation (Mujahid, 2021).

These values are not only expressed through worship but are also internalized in the social conduct of the villagers. Religious observance is carried out with full personal awareness, while social norms manifest in communal responsibilities such as attending funerals or supporting neighbors during critical events.

As explained by Mr. Titis, a local community figure, "Balun residents follow religious values with sincerity. Social norms are visible during times of death—family, relatives, and friends will attend the funeral and provide support. If someone is not related or personally connected, they may not participate from the beginning, but still respect the process."

This statement highlights how religious and social norms in Balun complement each other, fostering a sense of mutual responsibility and collective empathy. The harmonious coexistence is rooted in these shared values, which are consistently practiced across all religious groups.

Social Networks

Social networks in Balun Village reflect strong interreligious relationships built on mutual respect and cooperation. Although Muslims constitute the majority, their dominant status does not hinder the development of a tolerant and inclusive environment.

Muslim residents freely practice their religion with enthusiasm and without interference. Likewise, Christians and Hindus engage in their religious ceremonies and Sunday services peacefully, often supported by members of other faiths. This mutual respect is a long-standing tradition that contributes to the village's social cohesion.

Christian residents express their appreciation for religious diversity and experience no threats to their freedom of worship. Similarly, Hindu ceremonies—such as the *ogoh-ogoh* parade and Nyepi celebration—are conducted smoothly, with participation and assistance from Muslims and Christians alike.

This level of engagement across religious lines demonstrates a collective awareness of the importance of interfaith tolerance. As Mr. Sutrisno, a Christian leader, stated, "Here, tolerance is not just a word—it is lived. We help each other during religious celebrations and understand the meaning of harmony."

Such interwoven social networks, built on empathy, trust, and cooperation, serve as a cornerstone of Balun Village's peaceful multicultural society.

Reciprocal Relationship

Reciprocity among religious communities in Balun Village is a fundamental expression of social solidarity. Members of different faiths actively support one another during religious, cultural, and social events, creating a climate of mutual care and trust.

As Mr. Titis explained, reciprocal involvement is common: “During the celebration of National Santri Day on October 22, for example, all religious groups worked together in harmony to ensure the event's success. In Balun, religious identity is not a barrier—many women wear the hijab even though they are not Muslims, and some men wear traditional Muslim caps regardless of their faith.”

This dynamic reflects an environment where symbolic religious expressions are appreciated rather than contested. Such behaviors indicate a high level of cultural adaptation and a willingness to build shared meaning and cooperation beyond doctrinal boundaries.

The principle of reciprocity in Balun Village is also institutionalized in community initiatives, including shared security efforts, joint celebrations, and collective responses to crises or personal events (e.g., funerals, weddings). These reciprocal actions help cultivate an atmosphere of respect, inclusivity, and shared identity.

Implementation of Social Capital and Multicultural Islamic Values

The implementation of social capital in Balun Village is closely intertwined with the values of multicultural Islamic education. Kinship ties, inclusive leadership, ingrained social norms, and interfaith collaboration are reflected in various community and religious activities. These practices foster mutual trust, honesty, understanding, and care—cornerstones for a harmonious and tolerant society.

The multicultural Islamic values observed in the community encompass four key principles:

1. **Democracy**

Democratic values are evident in the family setting, where individuals are free to choose their religion without coercion. Interfaith differences within families are accepted and respected. As Mr. Titis, a former teacher, stated: “In Balun, changing religion is a personal matter. While family members may initially disagree, acceptance usually follows.”

2. **Tolerance (*Tasamuh*)**

Balun is known as the “Pancasila Village” for its strong commitment to interfaith tolerance. This value is practiced not only in public spaces but also within families and schools. Children from different faiths play and learn together, reflecting a society that upholds religious freedom and mutual respect.

3. **Religious Moderation (*Tawasuth*)**

Religious moderation is visible in the way families respect the rituals and practices of all members, regardless of belief. During celebrations such as the *Mbah Alum* pilgrimage, distinctions between religious groups disappear, and all community members participate together. This inclusivity fosters peaceful coexistence even in families with diverse faiths.

4. **Mutual Assistance (*Ta'awun*)**

The spirit of helping one another transcends religious boundaries. In moments of grief or celebration, such as funerals or feast days, all community members contribute, regardless of faith. As noted by Aqib and Ricky, both Muslims, “When someone dies, we help dig the grave and carry the body—even if the deceased is not Muslim. Worship is personal, but helping is universal.”

This is in line with Muzayanah, Maskuri, and Ghony (2024), who emphasize that multicultural Islamic education values—when internalized in daily life—can build social cohesion and minimize identity-based conflict. This finding resonates with Nasir and Rijal (2021), who show that Islamic higher education has also mainstreamed religious moderation by embedding similar values of tolerance, democracy, and cooperation.

These values are instilled through continuous practice, education, and cultural habituation. The process aligns with the three stages of value internalization outlined by Hakam et al.:

- **Value Transformation:** Building awareness through national and religious celebrations.
- **Value Transaction:** Practicing values in social interactions and daily life.
- **Value Trans-internalization:** Embedding values through habituation, modeling, and communal practices.

By integrating these values into village life, Balun has successfully minimized interreligious conflict and cultivated an inclusive community identity. This approach supports the formation of what is known in Islamic education as *ukhuwah*: social brotherhood (*ukhuwah ijtimai'iyah*), interfaith brotherhood (*ukhuwah imaniyah*), universal human brotherhood (*ukhuwah basyarayah*), and national solidarity (*ukhuwah wathaniyah*).

CONCLUSION

The social capital embedded in Balun Village is constructed through six interrelated elements: familial relationships, trust in local governance, intercommunal care, adherence to social norms, social networking, and reciprocal relationships. These elements work cohesively to support the development of a harmonious and inclusive society. This finding aligns with Hasbullah's framework of social capital, which identifies four essential components: social networks, trust, norms and values, and reciprocal exchanges. Among these, kinship emerges as a deeply rooted force inherited across generations and serves as a key pillar of social cohesion in Balun.

The multicultural Islamic values practiced in Balun encompass four primary principles: tolerance (*tasamuh*), religious moderation (*tawasuth*), democracy, and mutual assistance (*ta'awun*). These values play a significant role in minimizing conflict, maintaining harmony, and promoting peaceful coexistence among different religious groups. Their implementation follows a structured process comprising three stages: value transformation (awareness-building), value transaction (practical application), and value trans-internalization (internalization through habituation).

At the transformation stage, awareness of the importance of social harmony is cultivated through communal celebrations and religious commemorations. In the transaction stage, values are enacted in interpersonal interactions—for example, granting religious freedom within families or participating in interfaith events. Finally, during the trans-internalization stage, values become embedded in behavior through role modeling, conditioning, and enculturation—such as visiting sick relatives across religions or engaging in communal service regardless of belief.

The integration of these values into family, religious, and community life affirms multicultural Islamic education as a practical and effective approach to fostering peace, tolerance, and unity in a pluralistic society. As Ni'am (2015) argues, pesantren in Indonesia have long functioned as a miniature of moderate Islam, a role that parallels how Balun Village nurtures interreligious harmony.

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