



Inter - Ethnical Conflict in Multiple Societies in Indonesia: A Socio-cultural Overview (A Study on Ethnical Conflict Between Samawa and Balinese)

Syaifuddin Iskandar and H. S. Heri Kurniawansyah^(✉)

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Samawa, Sumbawa Besar,
Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia
herikurniawan332@yahoo.co.id

Abstract. This research aimed to dig and comprehend the cause of ethnical conflict of Samawa and Balinese in which it is evaluated from socio-cultural perspective. To do so, applied qualitative method was used in this research that was intended to observe the ongoing ethnical conflict between Samawa and Balinese. In order to fully grasp the root problem of the ethnical conflict, a grounded theory was built which is based on the perspective of the perpetrators and the conflict of eyewitnesses. A First Order Understanding and Second Order Understanding were also used in this research in which FOA is used to analyzed the actors of the conflict and then the result of FOA is analyzed and interpreted by using SOA. The data were collected through observation, documentation, circumstantial and in-depth interview. The data regarding the location of the research (secondary data) were collected by using documentation process. For the aspects related to the cause of ethnical second conflict and integration process (primary data), observation and interview were used. The collected data were analyzed by using interactive model analysis, which was simultaneously conducted through data collection, data reduction, data comparison, data presentation, and drawing conclusion. The data collecting processes involved encoding (open coding) - (axial coding) - (selective coding) - (core category) which were done simultaneously and systematically. The results, then, were formulated to become proposition/theory as research finding. Based on the data analysis, the cause of conflict from socio-cultural aspect and also the pattern of integration between both ethnics, that are: 1) if cultural factors are used as reasons to highlight and defend themselves, then cultural clashes and ethnic conflicts will occur in a multi-cultural society; and 2) conflict is part of the life of a society and conflict can only be managed to maintain balance (integration) among the various ethnic groups that live in the community.

Keywords: Conflict · Ethnic · Socio-Cultural · Integration

1 Introduction

Indonesia which is the largest archipelagic country in the world and has a variety of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and races that are maintained as values that apply in the social order in their respective territories. Uniquely, its diversity, culture, ethnicity,

religion, and race coexist as a force of values within the framework of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, which is referred to as a pluralistic society (Frederick, 1988) [1].

On the other hand, the strong values of each ethnic group, religion, and race have their own sensitivity when certain groups try to disrupt this diversity. As a result, there are not a few conflicts between ethnic groups that have a dark and bloody history in Indonesia. This very high sense of belonging to their respective tribes and races is what causes the existence of various races, ethnicities, and religions to be very sensitive [2].

One example of a local inter-ethnic conflict in Indonesia is the Samawa and Balinese ethnic conflict in Sumbawa Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Geographically, Sumbawa Regency is located in a strategic position, which is in the golden triangle of the tourism area between the islands of Bali, Lombok and Komodo islands. Sumbawa Regency also has a wealth of potential natural resources in the form of agriculture and livestock and has been designated as a rice barn and livestock development area in NTB. In addition, it also has a wealth of forests, flora and fauna, minerals, gold and copper mining, industry, and marine resources with a beach length of 900 km. The land area is 8,493 km² and the sea area is 4912.46 km². The total population is 452,746 people (228,717 men and 224,029 women). While the number of indigenous people (Ethnic Samawa) reached 68.66%, the rest of the ethnic came from Balinese, Sasak (Lombok), Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Mbojo (Bima/Dompu), Bugis Makasar, Minang, Sumba/ Timor, and Arab [3].

With the various potentials possessed by Sumbawa Regency, it is enough to attract newcomers, especially Balinese ethnic residents who come to try their luck and work in Sumbawa Regency. The presence of Balinese in Sumbawa Regency is motivated by migration, transmigration, and because of the urgency of economic and geographical conditions in the area of origin, with the motivation to migrate, improve living standards, look for work, become farmers, breeders, traders/businesses, employees transfer, officials, and so on [4].

In a period of 10 years (1970–1980) Balinese ethnic managed to excel in accessing economic resources, important positions in the bureaucracy (government/private/BUMN) as well as in the appearance of their customs and culture in the life of the Sumbawa people. Gradually, the existence of the Balinese ethnicity brought its own color to the lives of the Sumbawa people, where the Balinese people began to display the behavior and social activities of Balinese culture and customs which were considered conspicuous by the Samawa ethnic people. All of these conditions eventually became the source and trigger of conflict between the Samawa ethnicity and the Balinese ethnicity, which peaked on November 17, 1980.

2 Methods

To observe the phenomena being studied, qualitative research is used which was intended to understand the patterns of interaction and conflict that occur according to the emic perspective of the actors and witnesses of the conflict, so that in the end some propositions or theories are found which are developed based on the facts on the ground (grounded theory). The proposition or theory developed is based on the first order understanding

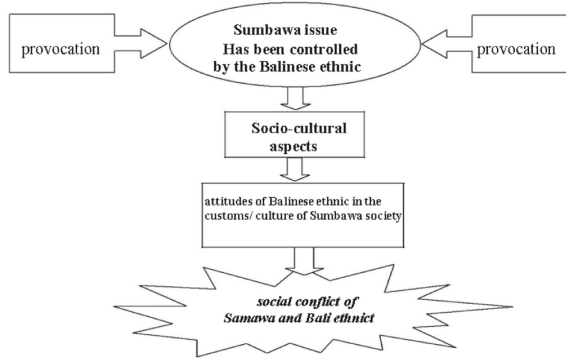


Fig. 1. Observation Unit Framework for Conflict Events.

from the perspective of the conflict actors/witnesses. Furthermore, the second level of interpretation (the second order understanding) was carried out using raw materials from the first level of interpretation. In this study, a qualitative approach was used to collect exposure data in the form of speech or writing and observed behavior (from both Samawa and Balinese ethnic groups), including all events related to the Samawa ethnic conflict with Balinese ethnicity and the background that influenced it.

The data obtained in the field were then analyzed using an interactive analysis model that was carried out simultaneously, starting from data collection, data reduction, data comparison, data exposure, and drawing conclusions. During data collection, open coding was carried out to detail, test, compare, develop concepts, and categorize. Several important categories (data) are then given a special code (axial coding), which is to determine the relationship and suitability between categories and then combined into propositions that need to be developed. Next, selective coding which was conducted to systematically compile core categories that are linked to other categories so that they become propositions as research findings.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 The Socio-cultural Conflict Between Samawa and Balinese

Based on data analysis, it can be understood that the factors causing conflict in the socio-cultural perspective of the Sumbawa people are conflicts caused by a cultural clash between the two ethnic groups. Residents of Balinese ethnicity as immigrants in Sumbawa Regency have customs, behavior and appearance of customs and culture that are attached to the Hindu religion. However, there are also traditions that are often confused with Balinese customs/culture that are often carried out by a group of Balinese people, namely the habit of cockfighting while gambling, drinking/selling wine and so on, convoys in carrying out traditional ceremonial processions, elopement which often occurs throughout the year, and others, all of whom are considered by the Samawa ethnic group to have crossed the boundaries of traditions, customs and the Islamic religion which they mostly adhere to (Fig. 1).

The factors causing the Samawa ethnic conflict with the Balinese ethnicity in the socio-cultural aspect occur because of differences in understanding and cultural interests of the conflicting parties [5]. Likewise, as stated by Atmadja (2002), that this socio-cultural factor is considered a dominant factor in expanding conflict. This can be identified from several indicators that influence it, namely: (1) because it involves religious identification media (ethnic-religio identification), (2) the character of social movements, (3) the relationship between religious attitudes and views on the existence of natural resources and human dignity, and (4) there is a gap between the cultural value system adopted and the realities of the life of the local community [2]. Thus, the socio-cultural factors by giving rise to this ethnic-religious identification, together then form a pattern of conflict with an increased sense of solidarity and awareness within the Samawa ethnic group.

Socio-cultural factors that became the cause of the conflict then developed and gave rise to ethnic identification based on religion, where the Samawa ethnicity is Muslim and the Balinese ethnicity is Hindu. And this turned out to have contributed significantly to the conflict in Sumbawa Regency. This self-identification of the Samawa ethnic group has become widespread, followed by other ethnic groups who feel they have the same interests and religion, namely Islam. On the other hand, Balinese who are identified as non-Islamic are considered an outside group and a threat to them. So, Islam in this case is used as an identification medium that directly or indirectly has been able to “attract and influence” the emotions of the masses widely and is considered a forum for providing an effective cultural space for members of other ethnic groups who feel that Islam is part of the amok movement without being able to clearly identify them.

In the reality of Balinese ethnic life in Sumbawa Regency, where almost all Balinese traditional/cultural processions are directly related to the teachings of the Hindu religion they profess. In this case the occurrence of what is called a cultural clash with the local community (the Samawa ethnicity), which then raises the religious aspects in it. However, it should also be understood that according to the teachings of Hinduism, all activities related to rituals of religious ceremonies are manifestations of the religious orders they profess. Thus, it can be understood that the implementation of various ritual ceremonies carried out by Balinese Hindus, in this case is closely related to the function and role of Hindus who live in very prominent traditional village communities. This traditional village oversees several traditional banjars. The pattern of the relationship between the traditional banjar and the traditional village is structural and functional, but in certain contexts it is sometimes difficult to distinguish.

Conceptually, it is necessary to understand that religion is a type of behavior that can be classified as beliefs and rituals related to supernatural beings and powers. Religion includes a socially organized set of rituals or beliefs imposed by members of a society or some segments of a society. Koentjaraningrat (2002) calls it in a more neutral terms by the name of religion as part of culture [6].

Balinese Ethnic are part of the population of Sumbawa who are Hindu, also have a priestly foundation called *Panca Srada*, namely believing in (1) *Shang Hyang Widhi*, namely a place for humans to surrender and ask for protection; (2) *Atman*, namely his life which is the spark of the high *Prama Atman*; (3) *Karma Phala*, namely the belief that all forms of action will bring results and traces of that action which is called

Karmawasana; (4) *Punarbhawa*, namely rebirth according to the karma that has been done; and (5) Moksha means liberation and not being reborn into the world because there is nothing binding it. *Atman* is united with *paratman* because it is called *Aham Brahma Asm*.

According to Hinduism, getting closer to God is taken in four ways, namely; (1) through *Bhakti Marga* which is manifested in the form of love and a deep longing to meet, make sacrifices with various offerings to Him; (2) through *Karma Marga*, namely selfless work for self-interest. The work done is based on deep love because no work is free. Everything will come to fruition whether we realize it or not; (3) *Jnana marga*, namely the way to achieve perfection by using a philosophical policy which emphasizes that humans are part of the universe that originates from a power called *Brahman*; (4) *Marga Yoga* which is carried out with the ability and strength of the mind directed to the oneness of God.

The persistence of Balinese ethnicity in working in all fields such as being farmers, traders and so on in order to improve their standard of living and their families so that they are able to buy agricultural land and dry land for residence, place of business, place of worship and carry out prayers diligently. A manifestation of the teachings of Hinduism which obliges its people to always devote themselves to their God, to their environment and to their fellow human beings.

On the other hand, the customary/cultural and religious traditions of the Samawa ethnic, who are predominantly Muslim, rely on Islamic religious law and the Qur'an and Hadith as a way of life, namely: "customs based on *syara'* which is based on the book of Allah". If the community members deviate from the recommended customary and *syareat* laws, there will be moral sanctions and sins for those who do so. In general, Islam also teaches its people about good and evil, about right and wrong, about lawful and unlawful, about obligatory and sunnah, and so on. In this case, Islam can be seen as *rahmatan lil alamin* (bearer of mercy for the entire universe).

As the implementation of religious orders, it is recommended for Muslims to maintain *hablum minallah* and *hablum minan nas* (relationships with God and relationships with fellow human beings). The relationship with God is implemented through the five daily prayers as well as through other sunnah. Meanwhile, relationships with others are implemented through social services such as helping each other, taking care of each other, caring for each other, including maintaining the surrounding natural environment and so on. All things that govern the universe have actually been written in the Holy Qur'an.

Al-Qur'an as a revelation of Allah, in the view and belief of Muslims is the source of truth and absolute truth. However, the absolute truth will not appear if the Qur'an is not implemented and interacts with social reality, or in Quraish Shibab's terms "earthed: read, understood and practiced". If the absolute truth is addressed and interpreted by its adherents in different ways (because of different cultural backgrounds and knowledge), then this is where the partial truths will emerge which become a source of conflict. For example, in the Qur'an it is stated "to you your religion, to me my religion", (Q.S. 109:6). If this verse is interpreted literally, it is as if Muslims were ordered to attack other religions, when in fact Rasulullah S.A.W. using religion as the main source of moral strength in religious behavior rather than just a religious formality.

On the other hand, the Qur'an also refers to the conflict factor, which explains that "damage can take the form of riots, demonstrations and others caused by human hands", (Surat Ar-Rum, verse 41). Likewise, as mentioned in Surah Yusuf verse 5, about the power in humans who always try to withdraw themselves to deviate from religious values and norms. In addition, in another verse it states that "if you see an evil on the earth, then rebuke it with the tongue, if not with the hand, or with the heart". There is also a mention in the Qur'an which reads "fight those who do not believe in Allah" (Q.S. 9:29), for the sake of commanding *mahruf nahi munkar*. If this verse is understood textually, then of course it will bring the potential for conflict that endangers the harmony of life between religious communities. According to Sayyid Quth [5], that this verse is temporal and periodic, meaning that in an era of peace it must be juxtaposed with other verses that advocate love and help one another.

3.2 Integration Between Samawa Ethnic and Balinese Ethnic

The ideal integration in Indonesian society, including for the multi-ethnic Sumbawa community, is the one with *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, multicultural or pluralistic pattern [2]. Achieving these goals requires some aspects, namely that those with different interests, goals, religions, and ethnicities who live in the same space and time must be able to develop a social climate that is accommodating, cooperative, tolerant of differences, and is accompanied by the ability to adapt to the dominant culture, as reflected in the fluency of language and fluency of culture. The achievement of this goal cannot be separated from the basic components of the sociocultural system prevailing in society, which includes their agreement on a coordinating fundamental cultural system, the availability of crossing and intersecting social groups, and complementary life patterns [7].

Rex (2002) calls it as the term of citizenship culture which is very important in the context of the formation of a multicultural society. It takes the form of a national culture or a single culture as well as a set of individual rights that govern the public sphere based on equality between individuals and on the other hand accept various cultures and customs in the private domestic sphere. The public domain includes the world of law, politics, and economics, as well as education in relation to the selection, transmission of skills and strengthening of citizen culture. While the private sphere, including moral education, primary socialization, and involvement of religious beliefs. A single culture is a generally accepted culture that accommodates the diversity of cultures that exist in Indonesian society so that a society that resembles a mosaic is formed. Thus, the Indonesian people who are united in diversity are no longer in the form of ethnic and cultural diversity, but the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesian society. Coordinative fundamental cultural systems such as Pancasila, Indonesian language, national anthem, national flag, national law, national political system, national education system, and others.

Local wisdom also cannot be ignored, for example, the Sumbawa people know the *rapang* land of Samawa, the Balinese have the ideology of *tri hita karana*, the motto of *desa-kala-patra*, *linggih manul sesana* and *sesana manut linggih*, the doctrine of *suvadharma*, and others. All of which emphasize the harmony of life among others. For this reason, this is where a means of social control is needed so that community groups do not venture into conflict, namely a culture of shame and a culture of fear [8]. The

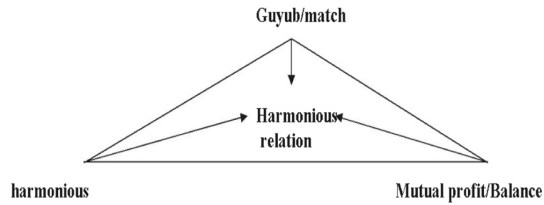


Fig. 2. The Quality of Harmony Between Ethnic Relations.

various forms of local wisdom have the same function, namely as a recipe for action so that humans do not like conflict, and on the contrary, they try to create harmony by acting in accordance with their status and role in a pluralistic social and cultural life.

The culture of shame in Sumbawa society is known as the concept of *to dan ila* (self-knowledge and shame). This concept usually applies to:

“*Ila, boat lenge*”, (shame to do inappropriate behavior)

“*Ila no dadi boat*”, (shame of the unfinished work),

“*Ila ya capa leng with*” (embarrassed to be underestimated by others).

Another concept that is always put forward in building a pattern of harmonious relationships with the Samawa ethnicity, which is seen in the philosophy reads: “Give each other (love to love), care for each other, mutual sakiki (togetherness), satingi (raise each other/to uphold)”.

Theoretically, the harmony of inter-ethnic relations can be interpreted as a condition of living together between ethnic groups that is dynamic, friendly/harmonious, harmonious and mutually beneficial/balanced. The quality of inter-ethnic harmony can be seen in the chart (Fig. 2):

Based on the above diagram, related to the pattern of relations between the Samawa ethnicity and the Balinese ethnicity before the conflict and even after the conflict after the situation became normal, it can be said that outwardly there appears to be a harmonious pattern of life in everyday interaction, such as in economic activities., social, by visiting each other at every religious holiday, funeral ceremony, visiting each other, giving each other, participating in various cultural activities on national holidays, and so on. Everything leads to positive relationships (improvement of relationship quality), mutual benefit and balance and living in harmony and harmony in an integrative way.

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that the factors causing conflict from the socio-cultural aspect and the pattern of integration between the two ethnicities, namely:

1. If cultural factors are used as reasons to highlight and defend themselves, then cultural clashes and ethnic conflicts will occur in a multi-cultural society.
2. Conflict is part of the life of a society and conflict can only be managed to maintain balance (integration) among the various ethnic groups that live in the community.

4 Conclusion

The factor causing the conflict between the Samawa ethnicity and the Balinese ethnicity in terms of socio-cultural aspects is due to the existence of cultural disagreements among

the Samawa ethnic people, where the Balinese people always display habits, behaviors and customs/culture that are striking in the socio-cultural life of the Samawa people, which then gave rise to conflicts and cultural clashes between the two ethnic groups. Efforts to integrate the two Samawa ethnics with Balinese ethnicity were carried out by building mutual understanding through formal and informal meetings, interacting with each other through socio-economic and social activities, by visiting each other at every religious holiday, funeral ceremonies, visiting each other, mutual assistance. Giving, participating in various cultural activities on national holidays, and so on.

Acknowledgment. The author would like to thank colleagues who have helped, both as discussion partners, resource persons, and colleagues who have provided illustrations of data, as well as suggestions.

References

1. Bart, F. (1988). *Kelompok Etnis dan Batasannya*. University Press.
2. Atmadja, N.B. (2002). *Manajemen Konflik pada Masyarakat Desa Adat Multi-etnis di Kabupaten Buleleng Bali*. IKIP Negeri Singaraja: M.M.S.K.
3. Badan Pusat Statistik. (2005). *Sumbawa Dalam Angka*, Sumbawa Besar: BPS dan Bappeda Kab. Dati II Sumbawa.
4. Mantja, L. (1984). *Sumbawa di Masa Lalu: Suatu Tinjauan Sejarah*. Rinta. Miall, Hygh Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, (1999). *Resolusi Damai Konflik*
5. Kusnadi, H.H.M.A. (2002). *Masalah, Kerjasama, Konflik dan Kinerja (Kontemporer & Islam)*. Penerbit Taroda.
6. Koentjaraningrat. (1980). *Kebudayaan, Mentalitet dan Pembangunan*. Gramedia.
7. Usman, P. (1994). *Interaksi Antar Suku Bangsa dalam Masyarakat Majemuk*. Depdikbud.
8. Suseno, F. M. (1998). *Mencari Makna Kebangsaan*. Kanisius. Tangdaliling, Makalah Pengukuhan Guru Besar, 2000.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

