CROSSROADS OF FAITH: ADAPTATION OF LOCAL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN THE FLOW OF GLOBALISATION

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Abstract
This study aims to examine the forms of adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation and its impact on the cultural and religious identity of the community. Using a literature review method, this study analyses various literature discussing the dynamics of change, influencing factors, and strategies for preserving religious traditions amid the challenges of modernisation and globalisation. The results of the study indicate that the adaptation of local religious traditions is carried out through ritual modifications, the use of digital technology, innovations in presentation, and the integration of more universal religious values. This adaptation process is influenced by factors such as education, media, cultural interaction, the role of the younger generation, and government policy support. Although there is a risk of shifting meanings and authenticity of traditions, adaptation carried out wisely and participatively has proven to be able to preserve traditions while strengthening the cultural and spiritual identity of the community. This study recommends the importance of cross-sector collaboration and the involvement of the younger generation in efforts to preserve local religious traditions so that they remain relevant and contribute positively in the era of globalisation.
Keywords: Intersection of Faith, Adaptation, Local Religious Traditions, Globalisation.

Introduction

The development of globalisation has brought various changes to all aspects of society around the world, including in the field of religion (Amin et al., 2025). The religious sector encompasses various aspects such as religious education, community development, religious services, religious-based economic development (e.g., zakat and waqf), strengthening religious institutions, conflict resolution and interfaith harmony, as well as the preservation of local religious culture and traditions, all of which are carried out by official religious institutions such as the Ministry of Religion, the Indonesian Ulema Council, the Indonesian Christian Council, the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, the Indonesian Hindu Dharma Council, and the Indonesian Buddhist Council, in accordance with the religions recognised in Indonesia (Aslan & Ningtyas, 2025); (Dwi Rahayu, 2022).

The globalisation trend that connects various cultures and values from different parts of the world presents challenges and opportunities for local religious traditions to adapt and survive. This phenomenon is interesting to study because local religious traditions are an important part of the cultural and spiritual identity of the community (Amanah Nurish, 2024).

In Indonesia, the diversity of local religious traditions is rich and varied, reflecting the plurality of cultures that coexist. Traditions such as Mappacci in Parepare, Sekaten in Yogyakarta, and traditional rituals in Toraja demonstrate how religious beliefs and practices are deeply ingrained in the lives of the community. However, the tide of globalisation has brought influences that cannot be ignored on the continuity and form of these traditions (Walters, 2021).

Globalisation not only introduces technology and information but also new values that sometimes conflict with traditional values. This requires communities to adapt so that local religious traditions remain relevant and acceptable to younger generations who are increasingly open to global changes. Adaptation can take the form of ritual modifications, the use of digital media, or the reinterpretation of religious values (Aslan & Putra, 2020).

One aspect that needs attention is how local religious traditions maintain their spiritual essence despite changes in form. For example, in the Mappacci tradition, although there are adjustments in the implementation of rituals, the values of faith and togetherness are still maintained as the core of the tradition. In addition, the factors driving the adaptation of local religious traditions are diverse, ranging from technological developments, social changes, to cross-cultural interactions (Peter Beyer, 2021). The role of the younger generation as agents of change is also crucial in this adaptation process, as they serve as a bridge between old traditions and modern values. However, the adaptation of religious traditions in the globalisation process also presents challenges, such as the risk of losing the authenticity and meaning of traditions. The tension between preserving traditions and the need for innovation often leads to debates within religious and cultural communities (Massimo Introvigne, 2023).

In this context, literature review is an appropriate method to collect various perspectives and findings from previous studies on the adaptation of local religious traditions. Thus, this study can provide a strong theoretical basis for understanding this phenomenon in depth.

This study will also examine relevant sociocultural theories, such as the concepts of acculturation, cultural appropriation, and social integration, which can explain the mechanisms of religious tradition adaptation in the face of globalisation. This approach helps to view adaptation as a complex and multidimensional process.

Research Method

The research method used in this study is library research with a qualitative approach, in which the researcher collects, examines, and analyses data from various relevant primary and secondary literature sources, then conducts thematic, historical, and critical content analysis to understand the process of adaptation of local religious traditions in the flow of globalisation (Booth, 2020); (Paré & Kitsiou, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Forms of Adaptation of Local Religious Traditions in Facing Globalisation

The adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation is a dynamic process involving change, adjustment, and innovation to ensure that traditions remain relevant amid the changing times. A clear example can be seen in the Mappacci tradition in Parepare, which has undergone significant modifications due to the influence of modernisation and globalisation, yet it still retains its core elements as the cultural and religious identity of the local community (Aslan, 2019).

Changes in religious traditions are often triggered by factors such as education, media, and interaction with foreign cultures. Younger generations exposed to global values tend to modify certain aspects of traditions, such as replacing ritual elements deemed inconsistent with religious teachings with simpler symbols that align with contemporary values (Massimo Introvigne, 2023). Transformation also occurs in the visual and aesthetic aspects of traditions, for example in the use of traditional clothing, which is now designed to be simpler and more fashionable in order to appeal to the younger generation. The use of social media and digital platforms to document and promote religious traditions has also become an effective form of adaptation in attracting the attention of the digital generation (Kaya & Ünal, 2020).

In addition to changes in form, adaptation also touches on the substance of rituals. In the Mappacci procession, for example, some elements considered contrary to Islamic teachings have been removed and replaced with Islamic prayers, without diminishing the spiritual and social meaning of the tradition. A similar phenomenon occurs in pesantren traditions, where religious study sessions and tahlilan are maintained, but the methods of delivery and the media used have adapted to technological advancements (John Mbiti, 2021).

Traditional rituals and ceremonies in various regions, such as Sekaten and Grebeg Sudiro in Yogyakarta, are now also influenced by the addition of modern elements, such as music concerts or artist performances, aimed at attracting the interest of the general public and foreign tourists. This adaptation creates a blend of tradition and modernity, ensuring that traditions remain alive in an increasingly open society (Azmil Tayeb, 2022). In the culinary field, traditional foods are now often presented with a modern and more 'Instagrammable' appearance, making them acceptable to younger generations without losing their original taste. This demonstrates that adaptation is not only

occurring in rituals but also in cultural products that are part of religious traditions (Made Suwitra, 2023).

Holistic religious education is one of the key strategies in maintaining the continuity of religious traditions in the era of globalisation. Education that integrates religious values with contemporary learning and involves young people in traditional activities can strengthen their cultural and religious identity. Public awareness of the importance of preserving traditions is also driven by support from the government, cultural institutions, and non-governmental organisations.

This collaboration creates an ecosystem that supports the sustainable adaptation of traditions amid social change (Aslan & Hifza, 2020). The internet and social media are used as a means of promoting and educating people about local religious traditions, expanding their reach and introducing cultural heritage to the global community.

Digital content about local traditions, cuisine, and arts has become an effective tool in the preservation and development of traditions in the era of globalisation (Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, 2021).

Although adaptation brings many benefits, there is a risk of losing authenticity and cultural identity if changes are made excessively. Therefore, a balance between conservation and innovation is key to ensuring that traditions remain meaningful and relevant today. Young people play an important role as guardians and drivers of change in traditions. With a good understanding of cultural roots and the ability to utilise technology, they can serve as a bridge between tradition and modernity, ensuring that local religious traditions remain alive and thrive (Nurul Aini, 2024).

In summary, the adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation includes ritual modifications, innovations in presentation, the use of technology, values education, and cross-sectoral collaboration. Adaptations made wisely and contextually not only preserve traditions but also strengthen the cultural and religious identity of communities in the global era.

Factors Affecting the Adaptation of Local Religious Traditions

The factors influencing the adaptation of local religious traditions are diverse and interrelated. One of the main factors is modernisation, where technological advances and changes in people's lifestyles encourage adjustments in the practice of traditions to remain relevant in the face of changing times. People who are increasingly exposed to information technology and social media tend to adopt new elements into traditions, whether in the form of symbols, rituals, or event presentations (Dalia Hossain, 2025).

Education is also an important factor influencing the adaptation of local religious traditions. Younger generations with greater access to education tend to be more critical of traditional elements that are considered inconsistent with religious values or current social developments. They prefer to modify or even eliminate elements deemed

irrelevant, ensuring that traditions remain acceptable to the broader community (Ishtiaq Ahmed, 2024).

Interaction with foreign cultures through migration, tourism, and travel also has a significant influence on changes in local religious traditions. People who have lived or interacted with other cultures often bring back new perspectives and practices that are then integrated into local traditions. This creates new variations in the practice of traditions that are more inclusive and modern (Salma Naz & Shahid Raza, 2022).

The influence of globalisation in general is the main driver of the adaptation of local religious traditions. Globalisation brings in values, lifestyles, and technologies from various parts of the world, which then influence people's mindsets and behaviour. As a result, religious traditions undergo transformations in both form and meaning to remain relevant to the demands of the times (Donald K. Swearer, 2021).

Mass media and social media play a significant role in accelerating the adaptation of local religious traditions. Through media, information about traditions and cultures from various regions and countries can be easily accessed, enabling people to compare and adopt elements deemed interesting or relevant. Media also serves as an effective means of promoting local religious traditions at the national and international levels (Madri et al., 2021); (Judijanto & Aslan, 2024).

Religious factors and spiritual values also influence the adaptation of local religious traditions. In some cases, the integration of more dominant religious values, such as Islam in Indonesia, has led to changes in elements of traditions that were previously animistic or syncretic. These adjustments are made to ensure that traditions remain consistent with the religious teachings embraced by the majority of the community (Donald K. Swearer, 2021).

The younger generation plays a central role in the adaptation of local religious traditions. They are not only the main actors in preserving traditions but also agents of change who bring innovation and creativity to the practice of traditions. The younger generation tends to be more open to change and able to integrate modern values without completely abandoning their cultural and religious roots (Jose Mario Francisco, 2024).

Social and economic conditions also influence the adaptation of local religious traditions. Changes in economic structure, urbanisation, and social mobility cause shifts in values and lifestyles, which ultimately impact how religious traditions are practised. Traditions considered economically burdensome tend to be simplified so that they can still be practised by all segments of society (Fiqri et al., 2023).

The influence of local culture and local wisdom remains an important foundation in the adaptation process. Despite changes, communities continue to strive to preserve the core values that define their cultural identity. Efforts to preserve local wisdom are carried out through education, socialisation, and the periodic revitalisation of traditions (Nurhayati & Muhammad Ridwan, 2022).

Lastly, political factors and government policies can also influence the adaptation of local religious traditions. Government support or regulations related to the preservation of culture and religion can strengthen adaptation efforts, while policies that are less supportive can lead to the marginalisation of local traditions. Synergy between the community, religious leaders, and the government is essential for the harmonious and sustainable adaptation of local religious traditions (Yayan Sopyan, 2025).

Thus, the adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation shows that the adaptation process is an inevitable necessity. Globalisation, with all its challenges and opportunities, encourages communities to adjust their religious traditions to remain relevant and accepted by the current generation without losing the essence and core values inherited from their ancestors. The forms of adaptation that occur are very diverse, ranging from ritual modifications, the use of digital technology, innovations in the presentation of traditions, to the integration of more universal religious values.

This process is influenced by various factors such as modernisation, education, cultural interaction, media development, the role of the younger generation, socio-economic conditions, local wisdom, and government policy support. Although adaptation carries the risk of shifting the meaning and authenticity of traditions, with a wise and participatory approach, local religious traditions can be preserved and even develop into a dynamic cultural force.

It is important for all elements of society to maintain a balance between preservation and innovation so that local religious traditions do not merely become a legacy of the past but also an integral part of the present and future lives of society. Thus, the adaptation of local religious traditions in the globalisation process is not merely a form of compromise but an active effort to strengthen the cultural and spiritual identity of the nation amid changing times.

The Impact of Adapting Local Religious Traditions on the Cultural and Religious Identity of Communities

The adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation has had a significant impact on the cultural and religious identity of communities. This adaptation process, as seen in the Mappacci tradition in Parepare, shows changes in the form and meaning of traditions due to the influence of modernisation, education, and interaction with foreign cultures. However, despite these changes, the main elements of the tradition are still preserved as an effort to maintain the cultural and religious identity of the local community (Manullang et al., 2021).

One positive impact of this adaptation is the preservation of the relevance of religious traditions in the modern era. When rituals and symbols of tradition are adapted

to more dominant religious values and contemporary aesthetics, these traditions can still be practised by younger generations without losing their spiritual meaning.

This can be seen in the replacement of elements considered incompatible with religious teachings with Islamic prayers in the Mappacci procession (Rini Oktaviani, 2023). Adaptation also strengthens the integration between local cultural values and religious teachings.

In many regions, local traditions are not replaced by new religious values but harmonised to create synergy between Nusantara culture and Islam. For example, traditional ceremonies honouring ancestors are combined with Islamic teachings on respect for parents and environmental sustainability (Wiwik Setiyani et al., 2021).

Another impact is the formation of a more inclusive and tolerant religious identity. The integration of moral, ethical, social, and spiritual values into the daily lives of the community enriches cultural identity while strengthening social relations among citizens. Adjustments to forms of worship, such as the use of local languages in sermons or the inclusion of local cultural elements in religious celebrations, make religion more down-to-earth and acceptable to the local community (Nurul Aini, 2024).

Adaptation of traditions also plays a role in preserving cultural heritage. By adapting to the times, local religious traditions remain alive and are passed on to the next generation. This fosters a sense of pride and strengthens social bonds among community members. However, the adaptation process is not always smooth. There are concerns that excessive modifications may threaten the authenticity and original identity of the traditions. Cultural homogenisation resulting from globalisation can erode the uniqueness of local traditions if communities are not selective in their adaptations (Aslan et al., 2020).

On the other hand, globalisation also opens opportunities for local communities to introduce their traditions to the national and international levels. Traditions that are adapted and promoted through digital media can enrich local cultural identity with new elements, while strengthening the position of local culture in the global mainstream (Thomas J. Csordas, 2021).

The role of the younger generation is vital in this process. They become agents of change who are able to balance the preservation of cultural and religious values with the need to adapt to contemporary social and aesthetic developments. The increasing interest of the younger generation in local traditions indicates a positive shift in the cultural identity of the community (Manfred B. Steger et al., 2023).

Additionally, adapting local religious traditions can strengthen social solidarity and cohesion. Traditions that involve active community participation, such as mutual aid and communal celebrations, strengthen interpersonal relationships and foster a strong sense of togetherness (Ikechukwu O. Onuoha & Francis C. Odeke, 2020).

Overall, the adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation is not merely a survival mechanism but also a dynamic strategy to strengthen the cultural

and religious identity of communities. By maintaining a balance between preservation and innovation, communities can ensure that local religious traditions remain alive, relevant, and a source of shared pride amidst changing times.

Conclusion

The adaptation of local religious traditions in the face of globalisation is an inevitable process that presents both challenges and opportunities for communities to preserve their cultural and religious identities. Traditions are an integral part of a nation's identity and must be preserved amid the overwhelming influence of global culture.

This adaptation process does not mean closing oneself off from change, but rather integrating traditional values with the developments of the times so that they remain relevant without losing the essence and uniqueness of the local culture. The impact of globalisation on local religious traditions is twofold. On the one hand, globalisation provides access to knowledge, technology and opportunities for collaboration that can enrich and promote traditions to a wider level. However, on the other hand, globalisation also has the potential to erode noble values and weaken traditional cultural practices if not balanced with serious preservation efforts. Therefore, it is important to find a balance between preserving traditions and adapting to social, economic, and technological changes. The role of the younger generation is crucial in maintaining and developing local religious traditions in the era of globalisation.

Through the use of technology and social media, the younger generation can become both preservers and innovators, ensuring that traditions remain alive, appealing, and relevant to modern society. Collaboration between the community, religious leaders, and the government is necessary to ensure that the adaptation of local religious traditions not only preserves cultural identity but also contributes positively to the future of the nation.

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