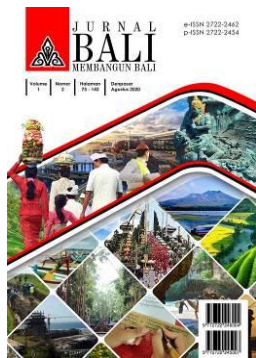




Contradiction of *Upakara* Price and Harmony: The Philosophy of Economic Perspective

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the phenomenon of rising prices of *upakara* facilities ahead of religious holy days that always increase every year. This problem is explored in three perspectives of economic philosophy: (1) pancasila economy, (2) capitalist economy and (3) socialist economy. Finally, this research provides recommendations for solutions to existing problems.

Research methods: This study used a qualitative approach with a narrative review method and a literature study of mass media coverage.

Results and discussion: This study found that the ideal approach is the pancasila and socialist economy. The importance of the government's role as a key policy to suppress price increases, along with collaboration from producers to create people's cooperatives.

Implication: This research provides implications for stakeholders (government) to evaluate the people's market or cheap market policies that are still ineffective in suppressing the price of *upakara* facilities every holiday. The government can also pay attention to the lower middle class so that they can joyfully celebrate holy days as a noble heritage.

Keywords: *upakara*, economy, Pancasila, capitalist, socialist, holidays

Abstrak

Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi fenomena naiknya harga sarana upakara menjelang hari raya suci kegamaan yang selalu naik setiap tahunnya. Permasalahan ini dikupas dalam tiga perspektif filsafat ekonomi: (1) ekonomi pancasila, (2) ekonomi kapitalis dan (3) ekonomi sosialis. Terakhir, penelitian ini memberi rekomendasi solusi atas permasalahan yang ada.

Metode penelitian: Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode revidi naratif dan studi literatur dari pemberitaan media massa.

Hasil dan pembahasan: Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa pendekatan yang ideal digunakan adalah ekonomi pancasila dan sosialis. Pentingnya peran pemerintah sebagai kunci kebijakan menekan kenaikan harga disertai kolaborasi dari produsen hingga menciptakan koperasi rakyat.

Implikasi: Penelitian ini memberi implikasi kepada pemangku kepentingan (pemerintah) untuk mengevaluasi kebijakan pasar rakyat atau pasar murah yang masih belum efektif menekan harga sarana upakara setiap hari raya. Pemerintah juga dapat memperhatikan masyarakat kalangan menengah kebawah agar mereka dapat dengan suka cita merayakan hari raya suci sebagai warisan adiluhung.

Kata kunci: *upakara*, ekonomi, Pancasila, kapitalis, sosialis, hari raya.

INTRODUCTION

Today culture is very often forgotten in the midst of scientific development (science). In modern life, which is dominated by the rapid development of technology, culture has been eroded over time. Culture is not considered as something important, even those related to history are considered "boring" things and seem old-fashioned. Talking about culture in the development of Balinese culture is inseparable from art and religion, in fact it has been intertwined so closely like a unity. Art is full of aesthetic values, religion as a way of life that is full of meaning, values, ethics, norms whose purpose is to form a person based on the teachings of dharma in forming a moral person (Ludji et al., 2020; Suadnyana, 2018). Culture continues to develop, but development does not always lead to goodness because of a lack of understanding of the essence of a culture, the state of society that wants everything to be available practically raises the author's anxiety to criticize the daily life of Balinese people. The anxiety in looking at the socio-cultural phenomena that have changed around them, say in the "sense of religion" but contrary to human values.

The erosion of religious and moral values in society affects how a person's character makes decisions. Mistakes in interpreting the essence of religious life and what a culture is for cause new problems in society that need to be resolved for the common good. Bali is certainly an island that has many unique values, both uniqueness in religion, traditions, and habits of its people (Adwitya Sanjaya, 2018; Desky, 2022; Rai, 2023). However, the uniqueness of the community seems to make the author focus on a problem that has become something that is often discussed and seems classic, even until now it has never been resolved. An interesting fact is that the Island of the Gods, which is famous for the philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana* and the noble value of *Tat Twam Asi*, seems to contradict the phenomenon that occurs amid its society, namely the increase in the price of *upakara* facilities that soar high at the time of the holy religious holidays. A familiar phenomenon is heard in the ears when someone complains about the soaring materials used as *upakara* means that the community is forced to go with the flow that not a few people feel burdened by this situation. Sadly, it sounds as if the holidays are used to reap more benefits by irresponsible people who do not realize that when this is allowed to happen, it will affect the concept of religion which will lead to unrest in the community (Budiasih, 2019; Saitya & Adnyana, 2021).

From the phenomena that occur, it seems as if the spirit of religion and culture seems lame. Therefore, this research tries to explore the dynamics of the price of *upakara* facilities that always increase every religious holiday in Bali, especially Galungan and Kuningan. If examined more deeply, the implementation of the holiday is full of joy, but the facts show otherwise. This research further explores the level of

economic philosophy perspective in three big glasses: (1) Pancasila economy, (2) capitalist economy, and (3) socialist economy. Based on this exploration, it is hoped that it can provide a solutive recommendation for the problems that arise.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research aims to analyze the phenomenon of price increases for *upakara* facilities at every holiday in Bali Province through the lens of economic philosophy. The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon from the perspective of economic philosophy (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This research will also summarize news related to the phenomenon to get a more comprehensive perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Balinese Economy: Democracy, *Menyama Braya*, and Harmony

As the cornerstone of the Balinese people's economy, the idea of "*Yadnya*" is crucial to the country's economic health. The populist economic system has established itself as a defining feature of daily life in Bali Province. The "*Yadnya*" concept refers to the attitude of giving completely without expecting excessive rewards, whether they take the shape of material goods or personal advantages. Numerous facets of Balinese culture, including *upakara* and *upakara* facilities, are based on this idea. There is a direct connection between religion, culture, and the economics in Balinese society (Ludji et al., 2020; Suadnyana, 2018). Order to show respect to the spirits of ancestors and gods, people perform numerous ceremonies at major occasions like *upakara* and feast day festivities. During these celebrations, the community contributes in the form of donations of both money and goods to prepare the *upakara* facilities.

The notion of "*Menyama Braya*" is another idea that guides Balinese socioeconomic behavior. This idea places a strong emphasis on the value of fraternity, interdependence, and helping one another out in daily life. Regardless of inequalities in social or economic standing, the spirit of "*Menyama Braya*" promotes cooperation and sharing among community members in the economic sphere. The community will get together to plan an *upakara* and contribute in accordance with their own skills to make the event successful (Divayana et al., 2022; Rai, 2023). Citizens develop a sense of community and trust because of this spirit.

The Balinese economic system is similarly founded on the idea of harmony (Haryati & Junaidi, 2023; Marsudi & Purbasari, 2022). A balance of spiritual, social, and economic life is necessary for harmony. In the context of this study, community organization and the use of economic resources for the common benefit are examples

of harmony. Upakara is seen as a significant occasion when the economics of the people and the spirit of harmony coexist. The difficulty of keeping this balance may be reflected in the growing costs of upakara amenities, thus it is important to find solutions that can guarantee economic fairness for all community members.

The principles of "*Yadnya*," the spirit of "*Menyama Braya*," and harmony in the Balinese economic system have a significant impact on socio-economic welfare and stability (Adwitya Sanjaya, 2018; Desky, 2022; Rai, 2023). With the spirit of giving sincerely and cooperation, economic balance can be well maintained. However, the phenomenon of rising prices of *upakara* facilities may pose a challenge in maintaining this harmony.

Contradiction of Price Increase and Market Capitalization

Even though Balinese adhere to the "*Yadnya*" principles, the "*Menyama Braya*" ethos, and harmony in a populist economic system, price rises for upakara amenities may run counter to these ideals. These phenomena of price hikes can be brought on by a few things, including inflation, excessive demand during the holidays, or a dearth of specific commodities (Fuchs, 2021; Pearson et al., 2021; Woodcock, 2021). As a result, market capitalization may take place, when traders or sellers exploit the holidays to boost their profits by sharply increasing prices.

The community is negatively impacted by this discrepancy, particularly those who are less fortunate financially. Community members who want to take part in upakara and holiday celebrations may face unexpected financial hardships because of rising costs. Due of the greater costs of upakara products, citizens, particularly those with modest means, may find it hard and challenging to meet their social and religious duties. In addition, rising prices may create economic injustice among Balinese. Those with access to greater economic resources may not feel overly burdened by the rising prices, while the less well-off may find it difficult and unable to fully participate in feast day events. This inequality can create social divisions and disrupt the harmony that has characterized Balinese society.

As a result of market capitalization, the effort to maximize profits often trumps the spirit of "*Yadnya*" and the spirit of "*Menyama Braya*." The high financial burden on the community can disrupt the sacredness of the *upakara* and reduce the sincerity of the contribution, as they may feel forced to give more than they can afford (Adwitya Sanjaya, 2018). This contradiction with the rising prices of *upakara* facilities resulting in market capitalization is a challenge for the people's economy in Bali Province.

Although Balinese people apply the principles of "*Yadnya*" the spirit of "*Menyama Braya*," and harmony in their economic system, rising prices can cause a financial burden

to the less well-off and create economic injustice. To maintain the sustainability of a people's economy based on cultural values and economic philosophy, there is a need for awareness and appropriate measures to overcome this contradiction. Efforts to regulate prices wisely, ensure the accessibility of *upakara* for all levels of society, and maintain the spirit of togetherness and economic justice will be key in overcoming the burden on Balinese people due to rising prices and market capitalization.

Pancasila and Capitalist and Socialist Economics

The increase in the price of upakara facilities has become an increasing problem. The prices of flowers, incense sticks and other paraphernalia are rising rapidly. Unexpected financial burdens began to envelop some people, especially the less well-off. The spirit of "*Yadnya*" and the spirit of "*Menyama Braya*" gradually began to be eroded by market capitalization in pursuit of profit alone. Amidst these concerns, Balinese people began to look for solutions so that the beauty and meaning of holiday celebrations could be restored (Haryati & Junaidi, 2023; Marsudi & Purbasari, 2022). They realized that change must come from collective action. Through deliberation and representation, religious leaders, community leaders, and government representatives came together to find a solution.

In a lengthy debate, three perspectives of economic systems were put forward. The first was the Pancasila economic system, which places the welfare of the people as the top priority (Haryati & Junaidi, 2023; Marsudi & Purbasari, 2022). The government, as the frontline, is committed to controlling market prices to keep them affordable for all citizens. The values of fairness and equality are the main pillars in this approach. The second perspective is the capitalist economic system, which emphasizes market freedom and personal initiative (Fuchs, 2021; Pearson et al., 2021; Woodcock, 2021). Some argue that market prices should be determined by supply and demand. However, amidst the spirit of togetherness and cultural values, many are concerned that market capitalization could tarnish the sacred spirit of religious ceremonies.

Finally, there is the perspective of the socialist economic system, which offers solutions based on collectivity. Common ownership and resource management are the cornerstones (Nutti, 2023b, 2023a, 2023c; Saratchand, 2022). With a strong partnership between the government and the community, prices can be regulated in a way that is fairer and more equitable. With the spirit of *gotong royong* and unity, the Balinese people once again welcome the holidays with joy. The price of upakara facilities is now more stable and affordable for all citizens. The spirit of "*Yadnya*" and "*Menyama Braya*" shines brightly again, reflecting the noble values of their culture.

Table. 1 Summary of Mass Media Coverage (News of Price Increases Every Year)

| News Channel | Year | News Summary |
|--|------|--|
| Bali.antaranews.com (Antara Bali, 2023) | 2023 | Groceries have increased at Badung Market. Egg price IDR 56,000 per kilogram |
| Detik.com (Detik Bali, 2023) | 2023 | The price of a few basic necessities in Jembrana, Bali, began to creep up. One of them is cayenne pepper, which now costs IDR 75 thousand per kilogram from the previous IDR 40 thousand per kilogram. |
| Balipost.com (Bali Post, 2022) | 2022 | The price increase of busung ibung is getting higher |
| Tribunbali.com (Tribun Bali, 2022) | 2022 | The price of pigs from farmers is IDR 40 thousand at traders to IDR 95 thousand |
| Kilasbali.com (Kilasbali.com, 2021) | 2021 | Pig prices rise, mepatung tradition not implemented |
| Tribunbali.com (Tribun Bali, 2021) | 2021 | The price of staple food needs naim around 10-15% |
| Tribunbali.com (Tribun Bali, 2020) | 2020 | Chili prices skyrocket as holiday approaches |

(Source: mass media news, processed by researchers 2023).

Based on the summary of mass media coverage above, every year there is a price increase that has become a public secret. The question is, what anticipation has been done? To what extent is the effectiveness of the people's market or cheap market to reduce prices? This phenomenon is interesting from a psychological perspective. For people who can afford it, this may not be a problem, but many people in the middle and lower classes will think twice about celebrating this holiday with joy. Let alone celebrating, even buying may be difficult. This is the government's concern to pay attention to the conditions of the grassroots community so that they celebrate the great cultural traditions happily and harmoniously.

The phenomenon of price increases for upakara facilities when welcoming holidays in Bali Province has a significant impact on society. Price increases that occur due to market capitalization can cause financial burdens for the community, disrupt the spirit of togetherness, and damage social harmony. However, to find a sustainable solution, there is a need for market control efforts by the government to keep prices stable and affordable.

The relevant economic philosophy perspectives to address this phenomenon are the Pancasila and socialist economic approaches. In the context of Pancasila economics, the role of government is central in ensuring social justice and public welfare. The government can prioritize the interests of the community by regulating market prices and implementing policies that support economic justice, so that upakara facilities can be accessed more affordably by all citizens.

Meanwhile, the socialist economic perspective emphasizes the importance of joint ownership and management of economic resources for common welfare. In this case, the government can play an active role in controlling market prices and ensuring price stability so that people are not burdened by unreasonable price increases during the holidays.

Through market control by the government with a Pancasila and socialist economic approach, it is hoped that the phenomenon of market capitalization during the holidays can be minimized. Balinese people can welcome the celebration happily, contribute sincerely, and maintain the spirit of *Menyama Braya* and harmony in living their daily lives.

In looking at the economic situation and holiday celebrations in Bali Province, policies that combine cultural values, Pancasila and socialist economic philosophy will provide optimal benefits for the welfare of the community. The role of the government as a market regulator for the common good must be balanced with the active participation of the community in maintaining noble cultural values and the spirit of gotong royong. Thus, it is hoped that the phenomenon of price increases for upakara facilities during holidays can be mitigated, and religious ceremonies can be celebrated with meaning, pleasure, and harmony in accordance with the values upheld by the Balinese people.

CONCLUSION

The government can take an active role in controlling market prices by implementing appropriate regulatory policies. One step that can be taken is to identify goods that often experience drastic price increases during holidays and set a reasonable maximum price limit for these goods. In addition, the government can strictly supervise and monitor market capitalization practices that are not in accordance with the values of economic justice. With good regulation, market prices can remain stable and affordable for the people.

The government can play an important role in encouraging producers and traders to conduct business ethically and transparently. Through educational campaigns and strict supervision, producers are reminded of the importance of not raising prices

unreasonably and prioritizing the quality of goods sold. Encouraging honest and fair business practices will help prevent market capitalization that harms the community.

The government can play a role in ensuring the availability of upakara facilities that are affordable for the entire community. One step is to encourage local production and cooperation with producers in order to expand the supply of upakara facilities. In addition, the government can also provide incentives or subsidies to producers who produce upakara facilities at affordable prices for the community.

Public education and awareness about local cultural and economic values will be key in maintaining the spirit of "*yadnya*" and "*menyama braya*." The government can support education and socialization programs on Pancasila and socialist economic philosophies and the importance of actively participating in maintaining noble cultural values. With a deeper understanding of the common good, people can be more aware and responsible in maintaining economic stability and market prices.

The government can encourage the formation of partnerships and cooperatives among traders, producers, and communities. Through partnerships and cooperatives, relevant parties can work together to regulate the production, distribution, and prices of upakara facilities more efficiently and fairly. Cooperatives can be a platform for the community to actively participate in the people's economy and jointly find solutions to price problems associated with the holidays.

By taking the above steps, it is hoped that the phenomenon of rising prices of upakara facilities during the holidays can be better managed. The government and producers must jointly prioritize the interests of the community, ensure stable and affordable market prices, and maintain the cultural and local economic values that are the noble heritage of the Balinese people. With the spirit of cooperation and togetherness, Balinese people can welcome the holidays with sincerity and pleasure, strengthening the spirit of "*menyama braya*" and harmony in everyday life.

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