



## Fighting stigma with Self-Image: The resistance strategy of the pegayaman muslim community in Bali

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### ABSTRACT

The stigmatization of the Pegayaman Muslim community has resulted in various forms of violence, both physical and symbolic. The aim of this study is, therefore, to examine how the Pegayaman Muslim community fights stigma by building a positive self-image in the structure of a pluralistic society in Buleleng, Bali. Furthermore, the data used in this study was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies by increasing the number of researchers on the field and analyzed using a three-phase interpretive-critical approach, namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The results revealed that the Pegayaman Muslim community faced stigmatization as a result of historical experiences; religious and ethnic ideological discourses; and the construction of reality for various interests. There were different forms of stigma ranging from labeling to discrimination in various social practices. The community responded to this stigma by building a positive self-image. Also, the inhabitants sought to improve their quality of life through economic empowerment, educational awareness, the establishment of Islamic values, building an image as an inclusive and tolerant Islamic community, creating a cohesive space for communication and interaction with the surrounding peoples, and optimizing the role of the media. In this situation, it was found that self-image is an effective strategy that can be used in curbing the inherent stigma while increasing the dignity of the inhabitants of a multicultural society.

### 1. Introduction

Bali has its own set of challenges in building ideal inter-ethnic and religious relationships. Regardless of the fact that the majority of the population in the area is Hindu, there are also other ethnic and religious groups living there, and one of the groups is made up of Muslims. Historically, the relationship between Hindu and Muslim in the area was built since the royal era, both for political, social, and economic

reasons (Sukiada, 2007). One of the outcomes of this built relationship is the Muslim community in Pegayaman Village, Sukasada District, Buleleng Regency. Fredrik Barth, in his book titled *Balinese Words* (1993), stated that the ancestors of the Muslim community in Pegayaman were warriors from outside Bali. Most of them were from Java and Bugis-Makassar during the reign of Ki Barak Panji Sakti. The people were gifted residential land in the Pegatepan forest, which is located in the southern part of the Buleleng Kingdom, after which they cleared the area and settled there. In exchange, they must help Buleleng Kingdom to ward off enemy attacks, specifically Mengwi Kingdom from the south and Gianyar from the east, as well as being a reserve force ready to be called upon at any time. The king also did not carry out a religious intervention, hence, the people were allowed to embrace their religion, Islam (Budarsa, 2020).

Over time, the number of the Pegayaman Muslim community has increased and this community have maintained their religious identity amidst the Hindu majority. In addition to historical and political factors, namely the patronage relationship with Buleleng Kingdom, the resilience of the Pegayaman Muslim community is also due to its ability to develop sociocultural adaptation strategies in a plural society (Budarsa, 2014; Kumbara and Dewi, 2021). However, post-independence socio-political developments made the relationship between the Muslim and Hindu in Pegayaman tenuous. The breakdown in this relationship was caused by various events, such as the involvement of Banser from Pegayaman in the killing of residents who were allegedly PKI participants in the G-30-S/PKI/1965 tragedy, as well as the Bali Bombings I and II which claimed more than 200 lives. These two events built the perception of some Balinese people that the Pegayaman Muslim community is affiliated with radical and Islamic fundamentalist groups. This perception disrupts the harmonious Hindu-Muslim relationship that has been previously established (Mashad, 2014).

Furthermore, the involvement of members of the Pegayaman Islamic community in several criminal incidents in Bali has worsened their image which has led to stigmatization. In certain situations, this stigma is capitalized on by agencies (mass media journalists and politicians) for various interests, and this makes it stronger from time to time (Budarsa, 2020). In addition to the previously developed stigma, which was as a result of radicalism and religious fundamentalism, this community was also stigmatized as a village of thieves, criminals, and a set of people who likes to fight and kill (Andrini, 2006). This sets a bad precedent for the social relations of Balinese Hindu and Pegayaman Muslim who are contradicting the spirit of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* in the development of multiculturalism in Indonesia. This stigma is also often accompanied by physical and symbolic violence, thereby creating psychosocial barriers in interfaith and cross-cultural harmonization.

Accordingly, the Pegayaman Muslim community seeks to respond to these stigmas through various discourses and actions. They have carried out resistance directly and openly, for example, demonstrations against criminal news that discredited members of their community, even though the real perpetrators were not Pegayaman residents. The community also often speak out loud against local government policies that are considered discriminatory against the Pegayaman Village (Kumbara and Dewi, 2022). This direct and open resistance appears to be less effective, and even strengthens the

stigma of the Muslim community as a trouble-making group. As a result, they make resistance efforts that tend to be softer and internal in nature by building a positive self-image in various aspects of life, specifically in religion, economy, and education. This effort turned out to be more effective and will be expanded from time to time. Admittedly, the fight against the stigma of self-image carried out by the Pegayaman Muslim community presents an interesting socio-religious phenomenon to be explored further. This study aims to examine this phenomenon to see whether it is relevant to the spirit of multiculturalism, considering the fact that the stigmatization of groups or sub-groups has the potential to hinder the realization of an inclusive, tolerant and harmonious social life. Practically, the results can be used as a guide, or reference in building a multicultural society that is free from discrimination, violence, and even social conflicts due to differences in ethnicity, culture, and religion.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

Studies of the Pegayaman Muslim community have been previously carried out by several studies, such as Barth (1983), Andriani (2006), Abadi (2012), Budarsa (2014; 2020), as well as Kumbara and Dewi (2022). However, only the study conducted by Andriani (2006) and Kumbara and Dewi (2022) were directly related to the stigmatization of the Pegayaman Muslim community. Andriani (2006) stated that stereotypes against this community are caused by three factors, namely (1) the historical factor that many Pegayaman youths are considered to be Banser members involved in the killing of residents (Balinese) who were allegedly PKI sympathizers in the G-30 tragedy - S/PKI/1965, (2) the social factor where it was considered that the poverty experienced by the community promotes them to commit various criminal acts, such as stealing, killing, etc, thereby building stereotypes as a 'crime village', and (3) the religious factor that after the first and second Bali bombings they were seen as affiliated with radical and Islamic fundamentalist groups who are fond of carrying out acts of terrorism. Furthermore, Kumbara and Dewi (2022) found that apart from these three factors, the stigmatization of the Pegayaman Muslim community was also caused by the formation of 'we' and 'they' identities to articulate various interests.

According to Goffman (1963), stigma is a signal attached to people or groups to show and inform the public that these people or groups have moral issues with their identity. The signs attached to stigmatized parties are expressions of inappropriateness and bad moral status. Furthermore, Goffman mentioned three types of stigma that are often assigned to a person and/or group, namely: (1) the stigma related to physical disability (physical disability); (2) one associated with moral character defects, for example, homosexuals, recidivists, etc; and (3) and the other related to race, nation, ethnicity, and religion. In this study, the stigma attached to the Pegayaman Muslim community is classified as one associated with certain ethnic and religious groups.

Stereotypes, which refer to the evaluation of a person's or group's traits based on condensed categories, are also connected to stigma. According to (Dyer, 1993), stereotypes are perceptions and beliefs that a person or group is perceived as having undesirable features or behaviors based on past societal evaluations. Meanwhile, simplification implies that the same assessment will be given only by looking at very

minimal attributes, for example, a recidivist is immediately considered a criminal. This belief and judgment place them in one category and narrow the space to obtain a more varied assessment. Therefore, operationally, the concept of stigma in this study is more focused on the following aspects: (1) categorizing the distinctive attributes of a group, (2) assessment of the group, (3) the formation of a negative image from the group according to certain signs, (4) the formation of attitudes and behavior in interactions with stigmatized groups that are perpetuated through discourse and social practices, and (5) the simplification of categories for all group members. This concept was imposed in social relations between the dominant group (Hindu-Balinese) and religious minority groups, such as the Pegayaman Muslim community in Buleleng Regency.

Additionally, Goffman (1963) stated that people who are stigmatized do not necessarily exhibit bad characters or behaviors, but are considered bad because of the stigma attached to them. Stigmatized individuals and/or groups, therefore, try to fight back in various ways. The resistance strategies adopted by these stigmatized groups and/or subgroups have attracted the interest of many, who are now examining it in detail, as exemplified by several study results published in the last five years. Ariantini et al., (2018), examined the stigma against Balinese women with tattoos in Denpasar City and their resistance strategies. Kartaningdryani (2019) analyzed heteronormativity in the discourse and struggles of Waria and LGBT groups. Following this, Ahmad, et al., (2020) revealed a strategy against social stigma carried out by Gang Tato youth in Kemantren Village, Malang, while Basri (2021) analyzed how women who wear the veil in Indonesia fight against radical stigma through Instagram. Aminuddin (2022) further examined the communicative performance of takmir against negative stigma and the spread of terrorism in mosques. Some of the results of these studies basically showed that stigmatized groups or sub-groups will usually fight back in their ways and strategies.

Resistance to stigma is closely related to interactions and relations between groups that are unequal and dominating. Stigmatized (dominated) groups are sets of people who receive unfair treatment in sociocultural life and as a result of these unfair treatments, the stigmatized group(s) will fight or resist. Resistance, according to Scott (2004), is an action carried out by subordinate groups or communities (powerless) against their superiors. Resistance is also interpreted as an act of questioning or rejecting something addressed by a dominant group to a subordinate one. Furthermore, Scott (2004) developed this concept of resistance in understanding patron-client relations and found two types of resistance that are commonly practiced by the client (subordinate) groups namely public resistance (public resistance) and covert resistance. Public resistance is usually organized by the stigmatized group and it is carried out openly and directly. Meanwhile covert resistance is a form of resistance that tends to prioritize the social roles of each individual. It is carried out covertly, surreptitiously, indirectly, and not by an organization. This study focuses on indirect or covert resistance, which is carried out by the Pegayaman Muslim community as a stigmatized group.

### **3. Method**

This study was designed within a qualitative methodological framework with a critical social theory approach as applicable in the cultural studies tradition. This approach

assumed that social phenomena appearing on the surface contain various ideologies operating in social practices (Lubis, 2006). This ideology must be revealed by researchers in the field in order to directly experience the social practices carried out by the Pegayaman Muslim community, hence, the ethnographic work method developed by Spraedly (1997) was also applied in this study. Based on this understanding, the data collection techniques used include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies with the following steps.

Observations were carried out by directly participating in data collection by observing various social practices of the Pegayaman Muslim community. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were used to gather information from the community, traditional, and religious leaders, as well as a number of residents of the Pegayaman Village. In order to focus the interviews and avoid biased, supporting instruments were used in the form of interview guides, recording devices, and data documentation. The documentation study was carried out by reading and reviewing a number of documents, such as books, scientific articles, village monographs, government documents, and the results of previous socio-religious activities documentation carried out by the Pegayaman Muslim community. Furthermore, data analysis was carried out using a three-phase descriptive-qualitative analysis approach, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing temporary conclusions or verification (Miles and Huberman, 1992). The steps for interpreting the data were in accordance with the Geertz model (1973), which involves thinking and reasoning, and reflecting on thoughts that originate from previous readings (thinking of thought). All the stages were carried out continuously by extending the number of researchers in the field, hence, reliability, objectivity, and validity can be accounted for.

#### **4. Result and discussion**

##### **- General Description of the Study Object**

Pegayaman Village is located in Sukasada District, Buleleng Regency, Bali Province, and is the largest village in the sub-district area. This village tends to be inland, but road access to the area is quite adequate. The easiest route to reach the location is Jalan Denpasar-Singaraja through Bedugul. At a point, the road conditions would have steep descents and inclines, hence, caution is required when driving, both with a two-wheeled or four-wheeled vehicle. This road is the main access for residents to travel outside and into the village. The distance from the village to the district capital, regency capital, and the provincial capital is about 7, 9, and 75 kilometers respectively. Furthermore, the boundaries of the Pegayaman Village area consist of (1) Pegadungan Village to the north, (2) to the west by Gitgit Village and Wanagiri Village, (3) to the south by Pancasari Village, and (4) to the east by Silangjana Village and Lemukih Village which are included in the administrative area of Sawan District.

The Pegayaman Muslim community occupies five hamlet areas (Banjar) with the population distribution according to religion, as follows: (1) West Hamlet Street, where the population was approximately 1,269 people (100% Muslim), (2) East Hamlet Street, which comprises of about 1,514 people (100% Muslim), (3) Kubu Hamlet, with a population of 2,121 people (95% Muslim, 5% Hindu); (4) Kubu Lebah Hamlet, with 999

people (100% Muslim); and (5) Amertasari Hamlet, which has a population of approximately 1,116 people (94% Muslim, 6% Hindu). This data showed that only in Kubu Hamlet and Amertasari Hamlet there was an assimilation between adherents of Islam and Hinduism. This population condition indicates that the domination of Islam is quite strong in the socio-religious life in Pegayaman Village and this makes it one of the well-known 'Muslim Villages' in Bali. However, the community continues to adopt various Balinese cultural attributes, such as the use of the Balinese language as a means of daily communication. The pattern for naming children in Pegayaman is also very similar to the Hindu-Balinese culture according to birth order, namely Wayan or Gede (first child), Made or Nengah (second child), Nyoman or Komang (third child), and Ketut (fourth child). Furthermore, Islamic identity is presented in the last name, for example, Wayan Hasyim, Nengah Abdullah, Nyoman Siti, Ketut Imamulhayi, etc (Budarsa, 2020).

The adaptation and acculturation of Balinese culture in the Pegayaman Muslim community cannot be separated from the historical process of their existence in the village. This village is classified as one of the oldest villages in Bali which has been in existence since the time of the Buleleng Kingdom during the reign of Ki Barak Panji Sakti. It is stated that Ki Barak Panji Sakti undertook an expedition to Java to attack the Blambangan Kingdom with his troops known as "Taruna Goak" in the 16th century. At the same time, the Islamic Mataram Kingdom led by Tumenggung Danusaha also wanted to carry out an attack on Blambangan. However, internal political upheaval in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom prevented them from attacking Blambangan with full force. Knowing these conditions, Ki Barak Panji Sakti also wanted to cooperate with the Islamic Mataram forces to attack the Blambangan Kingdom and an agreement was reached between the two. This collaboration between the Buleleng and Mataram Islamic troops finally succeeded in defeating the troops of Blambangan Kingdom. Furthermore, as a form of recompense, Tumenggung Danusaha rewarded Ki Barak Panji Sakti with a herd of elephants and 100 soldiers to accompany his journey to Bali. The one hundred Muslim soldiers became the forerunner to the formation of the Islamic community in Buleleng (Sastrodiwiryo, 2011; Pageh, 2013). Meanwhile, Barth (1993) had a different view that the accompaniments of Ki Barak Panji Sakti who were gifted by Tumenggung Danusaha came from Bugis. They were soldiers who are also skilled at caring for elephants and then Ki Barak Panji Sakti awarded the Pegatepan forest to be cleared and used as a settlement. He stated "The villagers' pedigrees recognize an additional strand of origin in Bugis (Sulawesian) settlers who have subsequently joined the elephant-keepers descendant in Pegatepan...".

Although there are different opinions regarding the ancestry of the residents of Pegayaman Village, the two studies above agreed that the Muslim community was founded by the companions of Ki Barak Panji Sakti after returning from an expedition to Blambangan Kingdom. Upon arrival in Bali, the escorts were ordered by the king to clear the 'Pegatepan' forest in the southern region of Buleleng Kingdom which is known to be haunted. The king also offered the forest area to be cleared as widely as possible as a place for their settlement. This offer was greeted with joy, and they succeeded in clearing the Pegatepan forest to open up land for settlements and agriculture. After

settling in the area, they still carried out the king's mandate to take care of the horses and elephants, as well as being the shield of Buleleng Kingdom to anticipate the emergence of attacks from the south (Mengwi Kingdom) and east (Gianyar Kingdom). In addition, the soldiers must also be prepared to be called upon as reserve troops when Buleleng Kingdom wants to expand other royal territories at any time, both in and out of Bali. In addition to the people who already live in the Pegatepan forest area, Barth (2003) and Pageh (2013) also indicated that some of the ancestors of the Pegayaman Muslim community were Bugis troops from Makassar Kingdom who were stranded at Buleleng Harbor when they were about to sail to Java and Madura in order to ask for protection due to the internal conflicts in Makassar Kingdom. In accordance with royal regulations regarding the 'Right of Tawan Karang', the entire contents and crew of the ship became the property of Buleleng Kingdom. The crew of the ship conveyed their conditions to the King and he eventually accepted and gave them two choices, namely to occupy the coastal area of Buleleng or to join forces with the Muslims who first lived in the Pegatepan forest or Pegayaman Village. They also accepted the offer and some selected to settle down on the coast of Buleleng which is now known as 'Kampung Bugis', while others selected to join the Islamic community in Pegayaman. Therefore, it is accurate to state that the ancestors of the Pegayaman Muslim community currently can be identified as a combination of people from Java and Bugis-Makassar.

- **Community Stigmatization of the Pegayaman Muslim Community**

This historical fact is at the same time the forerunner to the establishment of a patron-client relationship between the Pegayaman Muslim community and the Buleleng Kingdom. Following this, the patron-client relationship is built on an ethic of subsistence (Kartini, 2011), namely the dominant ideology that positions the royal party as a 'patron' because they have the ability to provide socio-religious protection to the Pegayaman Muslim community as clients. The change in the political system from a kingdom to a republic has revoked all of the patronage's legitimacy, except for symbolic values (Kumbara and Dewi, 2022). The implication is that the Pegayaman Muslim community no longer becomes subsistence protection from patrons, both from a political, economic, and religious perspective. Admittedly, the weakening of the patron-client system has an impact on the economy of the Pegayaman community and the looser control of patrons (read: heirs to the Buleleng Kingdom) over their political activities.

The weakening of economic resources has pushed some Pegayaman residents to commit criminal acts, such as stealing, becoming bouncers, and even contract killers. The accumulation of criminal incidents which continuously involved perpetrators from the Pegayaman Village area, in turn, gave rise to the stigmatization of 'the area as a criminal village' (Andrini, 2006; Kumbara and Dewi, 2022). This stigma was exacerbated when the bloody G-30-S/PKI incident, which occurred in 1965, allegedly involved the youth of Pegayaman Village. This tragedy built the collective memory of some of the Hindu-Balinese community around it that some Pegayaman youths had joined the Multipurpose Ansor Front (BANSER) and had been involved in the killing of residents who were considered sympathizers of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Subsequently, ethnic and religious sentiments have begun to develop in relations

between Hindus and Muslims around Pegayaman Village. This further strengthened the preconceived criminal stigmatization (Andrini, 2006; Kumbara and Dewi, 2022).

The stigmatization involving issues of ethnicity and religion grew after the Bali Bombings I and II which occurred in the year 2002 and 2005, respectively. Considering the fact that the actors in these two tragedies brought religious issues into their actions, the phenomena has proven to have complicated the harmonious relationship between the Balinese (Hindu) and Islamic people, which have been maintained for centuries (Burhanuddin, 2008). The strengthening of ethnic and religious sentiments after the Bali Bombings was marked by the emergence of a response from the Balinese people through the Ajeg Bali discourse (Atmadja, 2010; Kumbara, 2010). The Pegayaman Muslim community, which had previously been stigmatized as 'criminal', also eventually received a new stigma as 'terrorists' because of their religious affiliation. Meanwhile, in the religious context, the Muslim community also usually receives stigmatization from mainstream Islamic groups who consider the community not to be true Muslims because theyof the continuous adoption of Balinese culture in the group's religious practices. This means that the community experienced complex stigmatization in the context of religious ideology because apart from the stigma constructed by other religious groups, they also experience stigmatization from fellow religious members.

Some of the stigmatization experienced by the Pegayaman Muslim community is based on natural realities, for example, several criminal incidents were proven to have been committed by Pegayaman residents. This reality is viewed by society as a moral objection to be examined later in connection to values and standards, leading to the perception that it is an aberrant behavior that calls for stigmatization. The repetition of behavior carried out by members of a group or community will usually promote the attachment of stigma to the group concerned as a whole, as experienced by the Pegayaman Muslim community. This already attached stigma is also used by other parties by constructing a similar reality to obtain a 'reasonable status'. For example, several cases were found when a criminal was caught claiming to be from Pegayaman, even though he was not. Therefore, the stigmatization of the Pegayaman Muslim community is continuously reproduced through discourses and disciplinary actions (Foucault, 1980a/1980b). This process gave birth to a stronger bond of stigma, and this made it increasingly difficult for the community to get out of it.

Furthermore, there is always a dialectical relationship between stigma as a condition and stigma as something that is constantly upheld in social discourse and practice. This is related to the concept of identity maturity which requires every individual and/or cultural group to reflect on themselves in a plural society. Identity maturity, however, often creates a crisis in self-narration. This crisis is demonstrated by narratives of selfhood which are almost always constructed in a 'versus' scheme such as by negative vs positive, isolation vs integration, bound vs autonomous, suspicion vs trust, and so on (Goffman, 1963). The failure to fully reflect the value of 'identity' with the dominant culture makes the Pegayaman Muslim community still be regarded as a 'newcomer' community that is distinguished from the natives (Bali wed) 'Hindu-Balinese originals as the dominant group'. Following this, the dichotomy is emphasized by the structural performance that does not accommodate the Pegayaman customary system as part of



the Balinese customary system. This positioning encourages the construction of 'original vs newcomer' in various cultural discourses, where natives tend to maintain their self-narration as the legitimate owners of the Balinese culture. On the contrary, the negative image of being a 'newcomer' tends to be capitalized for self-positioning, and this makes stigmatization a part of the way of affirming 'we' and 'them' identities (Kumbara and Dewi, 2022).

The stigmatization that was perpetuated through various narratives and social practices eventually developed into labeling, stereotypes, segregation, and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001). Labeling is carried out in accordance with certain signs of a different type of stigma in society. The labeling mechanism is dependent on the process of detection, definition, and community responses to deviant behavior, for example, criminality (Becker, 1963). Stereotypes, however, are simplistic thinking frameworks or cognitive aspects consisting of knowledge and beliefs about social groups and certain traits that are over-simplistic. The stereotype mechanism functions through the belief that the personal characteristics or attributes possessed by people in certain groups or social categories are a picture of the group itself. As a result, whether these traits are identified, specified, appraised or not, when the stigmata observe general patterns in those who are labeled, the label will be applied to all individuals or groups that possess them. Separation involves the division between the "us" and "them" stigma. Stereotyped relationships with negative attributes only become a reality when a stigma continues to maintain its prejudices. Conversely, stigmatized groups feel that the stereotypes attached to them are true, at least to a certain extent (Dyer, 1999). The highest level of stigma is discrimination, which involves the intentional differential treatment of the stigmatized. In terms of discrimination, the stigmatized group is treated differently from other groups, either in the form of opposing positions or unfair and unequal treatment (Fulthoni, et al., 2009).

Usually, these four forms of stigma simultaneously experienced by the Pegayaman Muslim community include the 'criminal' label resulting from the accumulated behavior of some members who are seen as deviant. This label builds a stereotype of the 'crime village', hence, all members of the community are seen as criminals and this directly or indirectly indicate the occurrence of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991; 2010). This stereotype ultimately widens the social distance between the Muslim and the Hindu-Balinese communities, for example, a reluctance to associate intimately for fear of receiving the same stigma. In the wider social arena, discriminatory treatment of the Pegayaman Muslim community is unavoidable, e.g, many Balinese business actors do not accept workers from Pegayaman. Wider discrimination is felt within the bureaucracy, specifically the lack of funding for village development compared to other villages in Buleleng Regency (Kumbara and Dewi, 2022).



Figure 1. Inscription on the Pegayaman Village boundary monument (Kumbara and Dewi, 2021).

The word 'mekarye' means work, while 'wicare' has two meanings, namely 'speech' and 'problem'. In the Balinese customary system, wicare (speech) refers to all actions that cause problems in society, including all forms of violations of customary rules (Windia, 2021). Therefore, this statement does not only motivate the residents of the Pegayaman Village to 'work more and talk less', but can also be interpreted as a form of resistance against the stigma attached to the community as trouble makers. The importance of hard work as a strategy against stigma is the result of reflexivity that criminal incidents involving the residents of Pegayaman Village have been based on economic powerlessness. Increasing the economic status of the residents is expected to be able to target the root causes of the stigmatization they face. With better economic conditions, the residents will avoid criminal acts and slowly change the stigma of society.

Furthermore, the Pegayaman Muslim Community promotes improving the quality of education of its citizens from an early age because education is seen as the only way to change their standard of living, while at the same time minimizing social stigma. All Pegayaman citizens are intended to be indoctrinated with an understanding of education from an early age, both by traditional leaders (PENGHULU), village government, religious leaders, and community leaders. In this situation, the Pegayaman Muslim community also makes use of early childhood education institutions and schools located in the village area. According to Inawati, in an interview carried out on 21 August 2021, the awareness of the Pegayaman community about the importance of education so far has been relatively low. In addition to economic factors, there are also not many highly educated villagers, hence, they lack motivators and role models who can raise awareness of community education. As a result, the traditional, religious, and community leaders of the community continue to promote this awareness to be nurtured through education from an early age.

Education comprises efforts to internalize, accommodate, and equilibrate knowledge on the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions to the extent that it is relevant to the development of a person's character (Maliki, 2008). Stigma stems from deviant behavior (devasi) which of course has direct contact with character, moral knowledge (moral knowing), feelings, and behavior (Lickona, 1986). Basically, education that strives to develop moral character in a person will work effectively against stigma, whether directly or indirectly. Good character will not affirm any form of deviant behavior that is contrary to social values and norms. Therefore, increasing the educational awareness

of the Pegayaman Muslim community is an effective way of resisting stigma through the formation of character and self-image.

The instillation of Islamic values also promotes the development of character and personality to prevent deviant behavior. It is evident that most residents of Pegayaman Village select to send their children to religious-based schools (Madrasah) or Islamic boarding schools, both in Java and Lombok. The religious educational system is seen as an ideal form of education for Pegayaman Muslim children. This was emphasized by Ketut Rohmiati in an interview conducted on 21 August 2021, where it was stated that "Islam prohibits its followers from doing bad things. Therefore, any Pegayaman residents still practicing bad behaviors are considered as those having weak religious values. By sending children to Islamic boarding schools, it is anticipated that children will be devout in worship and have good behavior in accordance with Islamic teachings."

According to Nottingham (2002) and Scharf (2004), religion provides a set of values that can motivate individuals to behave in accordance with the norms and rules in society, including obedience to the law. Referring to this opinion, strengthening Islamic values through religious education carried out by the Pegayaman Muslim community can be seen as an effort to avoid the emergence of deviant behaviors as well as the social function of religion itself.

In the sociocultural and religious context, the Pegayaman Muslim community is also actively building its self-image as an inclusive and tolerant religious group. Socially, the community actively build interaction and cooperation with the surrounding Hindu community, specifically in ups and downs, for example in marriage ceremonies and death (grief). They also carry out cultural adaptation strategies by using Balinese as a medium of daily communication. Furthermore, the Pegayaman Muslims follow the usual Balinese naming pattern, such as "Wayan", "Putu", or "Gede" to name the first child; "Made" or "Nengah" for the second child; "Nyoman" or "Komang" for the third child; and "Ketut" for the fourth or last child. An Islamic name is then attached to the Balinese name, which made it possible to find names such as "I Wayan Abdullah", "I Gede Yusuf Bachtiar", "Ni Wayan Fatimah", etc. This naming pattern is maintained because they see this as a characteristic and legacy of their predecessors that should be preserved. This naming pattern with a Balinese style has even become a marker of the identity of the Pegayaman Muslim community and the inhabitants feel proud to bear these names (Fatimah, interview, 21 August 2021).

Furthermore, the formation of cultural identity through the adoption and acculturation of Balinese culture by the Pegayaman Muslim community can be seen as a sociocultural strategy in a plural society. Through organizing these cultural attributes, they intend to show themselves as a Muslim community that is inclusive and tolerant of local people. These Muslims not only respect and appreciate the Balinese culture but also follow it. In this way, they hope to be integrated into the broader structure of society without any distinction between 'us' (the Pegayaman Muslim community) and 'them' (the Hindu-Balinese community). Lastly, the community's success in adapting the Balinese culture and practicing it in their daily sociocultural activities has proven to be able to build a

positive self-image, thereby opening up space for cohesive communication and interaction with the surrounding community.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study showed that the Pegayaman Muslim community develops a covert resistance strategy by building a positive self-image to fight against the stigma, which they have been labeled with beforehand. This self-image is being built through economic empowerment, by increasing educational awareness, strengthening Islamic values, building cohesive communication and interaction with the Hindu-Balinese community, and using the media to mediate their image to the public. This approach is seen to be effective because, as their self-image improves, the stigma associated with their past labels disappears. Furthermore, acculturation and assimilation of Islamic-Balinese culture have even become the distinctive identity of the Pegayaman Muslim community which shows its success in adapting to a multicultural society.

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