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The *Gula Satuangan* Tradition Among Muslims on the North Coast of Central Java: A Contemporary *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* Analysis

Abstract: This research examines the *Gula Satuangan* tradition practiced by Muslim communities in the northern coastal region of Central Java as a socio-religious phenomenon through the lens of contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, with particular emphasis on the principle of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah*. This qualitative field study was conducted in Tegal-Brebes using a phenomenological approach. Research data were obtained through participant observation, in-depth interviews with traditional practitioners, cultural experts, local academics, and documentary analysis. Analysis was conducted using phenomenological steps: interpretation, exploration, meaning-making, and thematic grouping. The research showed that the Gula Satuangan tradition functions in three domains, namely (1) the sincerity of giving, which was synonymous with *birr al-wālidayn* and *ihsān*; (2) the strengthening of family relationships through social gatherings and intergenerational advice; and (3) the circulation of the local economy through the purchase of sugar-and-tea packages ahead of the event. These findings demonstrated that local traditions could be interpreted as living law that aligns with contemporary *maqāṣid*, particularly the aspect of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah*. This study extends the theoretical framework of contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, particularly the notion of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah*, by demonstrating how normative and empirical *maṣlaḥah* are integrated through the functional relationship between normative fiqh and local social practices.

Keywords: *Gula Satuangan; Maslahah al-Ummah; Maqasid al-Sharia;* living law.

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INTRODUCTION

Muslim communities in the northern coastal region of Central Java, particularly in Tegal and Brebes, maintain numerous living traditions in daily life and are passed down across generations. One of the most prominent is the *Gula Satuangan* tradition.[1] This practice of gift-giving (*hibah*) during Eid al-Fitr visits is understood by the local community as a part of social obligations and etiquette, as well as a sign of respect for older family members.[2] *Gula Satuangan* serves as an expression of local religious practice, demonstrating how the community negotiates the teachings of Islamic jurisprudence with local customs. The Muslim community in Tegal and its surrounding areas, although ethnically Javanese, has creatively developed—within a cultural context—a cultural mosaic and traditions resulting from the convergence of Javanese and Sundanese cultures, and has preserved them from generation to generation over a long period of time.[3] This cultural mosaic is apparent in the sociocultural, socioeconomic, and socio-religious spheres. Tegal's location at the crossroads of Javanese and Sundanese cultures has given rise to a cultural mosaic rich in meaning and value.[4]

Gula Satuangan is a time-honored tradition that continues to this day and remains an integral part of the culture of the communities in the northern coastal region of Central Java, particularly in Brebes and Tegal. This tradition is deeply ingrained in the hearts of the people, especially during the annual Eid al-Fitr gatherings. "No *Gula Satuangan*, no gathering"—such is the adage deeply rooted in the communities of Tegal and Brebes. The two are like inseparable twins, united in real life.

"*Gula Satuangan*" is a tradition in which younger relatives present older relatives with a single serving of sugar and tea as a mandatory "gift" during social gatherings, particularly on Eid al-Fitr. From a theoretical and normative perspective, the *Gula*

[1] Dewi Kusuma Putri, "Mengenal Tradisi Gula Satuangan, Sebuah Tradisi Lebaran Di Tegal," Disway Pekalongan, 2024, https://diswaypekalongan.id/2024/09/29/mengenal-tradisi-gula-satuangan-sebuah-tradisi-lebaran-di-tegal/.

[2] Irham Yuwanamu, "Bentuk Islam Faktual: Karakter Dan Tipologi Islam Indonesia," *El-Harakah* 18, no. 2 (2016).

[3] Vani Indra Pramudianto, "Identitas Wong Tegal: Kajian Budaya Dan Estetika Resepsi Bahan Ajar Sastra Berbasis Kearifan Lokal," *Tabasa: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia, Dan Pengajarannya* 5, no. 1 (2024): 52–66, https://doi.org/10.22515/tabasa.v5i01.10022.

[4] Moh. Aji Pamungkas and Zahrotul Umami, "Komunikasi Ritual Larung Sesaji Tradisi Sedekah Laut Di Kota Tegal," *JCOMMSCI - Journal of Media and Communication Science* 6, no. 3 (2023).

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Satuangan tradition is not found in religious texts. Nevertheless, this tradition serves as a primary driving force behind religious, social, cultural, and even economic structures.

In reality, *Gula Satuangan* transcends the rhetoric of tradition to become a "living law" that has evolved within society, thereby becoming an obligation to be fulfilled. It serves as a cultural instrument that bridges differences, unites family members, and fosters social cohesion. Indeed, it is an expression of the sincerity of brotherhood that transcends the boundaries of space and time. Taken together, the findings indicate that the *Gula Satuangan* tradition aligns closely with the contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* paradigm, particularly its emphasis on *ḥifẓ al-ummah* (preserving the unity of the *ummah*). The theory *of ḥifẓ al-ummah* is a contemporary concept formulated by scholars, asserting that the objectives of Islamic law are not limited to just five aspects: religion, life, intellect, wealth, and lineage. Rather, religion was revealed to safeguard the community and the environment.[5] Thus, *Gula Satuangan* essentially represents the convergence of normative (fiqh) *maslahah* with empirical (social) *maslahah*.

Gula Satuangan embodies values that align with contemporary *maqāṣid* theory. First, this tradition carries a binding nature known as obligation or mandatory law, deeply rooted in the fiqh discourse on worship. Consequently, people feel guilty (sinful) if they abandon this tradition. Second, this tradition incorporates aspects of family fiqh (*ahwal al-syakhsiyyah*) as the doctrine of respect for parents, older siblings, and ancestors. Third, this tradition is also rich in aspects of *mu'amalah* fiqh, specifically in the implementation of reciprocal social contracts through the gifting of *Gula Satuangan* packages. Furthermore, the tradition contributes substantially to the local economy by promoting the circulation and sale of *Gula Satuangan* packages. And lastly, this tradition contains teachings of state and political jurisprudence (*fiqh daulah* and *siyasah*). This is evident in the doctrines of unity and equality within society, as well as the principles of dialogue and communication found in this tradition.

The term "*Gula Satuangan*" derives from the words "*gula*" (sugar, a sweetener made from sugarcane) and "*satuangan*" (a single pour or drink), which serve as expressions of

[5] Tarmizi Tahir, Syeikh Hasan, and Abdel Hamid, "Maqasid Al-Syari'ah Transformation Implementation for Humanity," *Ihya Ulum Al-Din* 26, no. 1 (2024): 119–131.

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politeness and humility. In the Tegal dialect, "*Gula Satuangan*" refers to a modest gift package containing a simple sugar-and-tea set, presented to an elder relative. This tradition is rooted in the "*moci*" (drinking from a Javanese clay teapot) culture; the practice of drinking tea while chatting among people in Tegal and its surrounding areas.[6] This tradition serves as a symbol of social norms and a unifying force for the community. As a result, social conflicts are extremely rare in this region.[7] All the elements found in the *Gula Satuangan* tradition ultimately give rise to a new thesis regarding the dialectic between fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and *'urf* (local wisdom).

Studies on local Islam in Indonesia have indeed addressed syncretic, acculturative, and collaborative forms of Islam. However, many previous studies have tended to be descriptive and have not critically highlighted the limitations of each typology when confronted with specific field data. Therefore, this study not only positions *Gula Satuangan* as a new subject of inquiry but also examines whether this tradition can broaden our understanding of the relationship between fiqh, *'urf*, and the social practices of coastal communities.

Relevant previous research is generally divided into two clusters. First, studies on culture and religion in Indonesia; and second, studies on Islamic law and local wisdom with a focus on the Indonesian archipelago. The first cluster falls under the theme of syncretic Islam, as explored by Geertz[8], Beatty, Hefner, and Mulder regarding concepts of syncretic Islam. This syncretic theory was later challenged by research conducted by Woodward, Mulkhan, Erni B., and Muhaimin AG, who proposed the concept of acculturative Islam. Similarly, Nur Syam's ideas regarding Islam in the northern coastal region of East Java—specifically the Tuban area—are referred to as "collaborative Islam."[9]

Meanwhile, numerous research clusters are focusing on the dialectic between Islamic law and tradition. Through approaches such as compromise, dialectic,

[6] Dini Nisa Usufiyah, "Living Qur'an Di Kota Tegal (Dalam Tradisi Grebegan Masyarakat Kota Tegal)" 1, no. 2 (2025): 97–102.

[7] Syamsul Bakhri and Braindilog Sosiologi Indonesia, *Resiprositas Dalam Sunat Poci Dan Mantu Poci Masyarakat Tegal*, vol. VII, 2018.

[8] Sulistiyono Susilo, "Common Identity Framework of Cultural Knowledge and Practices Of" 6, no. 2 (2016): 161–184, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v6i2.161-184.

[9] Khoirul Anwar, "Makna Kultural Dan Sosial-Ekonomi Tradisi Syawalan," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 21, no. 2 (2013): 437–468, https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.21.2.253.

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accommodation, harmonization, and the encounter between the two entities, it is obvious that fiqh is significantly influenced by time and place. Fiqh, which was initially sacred when embedded within a community, becomes secular and flexible. It is visible that Javanese Islam, Acehnese Islam, Sasak Islam, Sundanese Islam, Batak-Angkola Islam, and so on have emerged. However, among the many studies conducted, none of them has yet explored North Java Coastal Islam, particularly the *Gula Satuangan* tradition.

Although various studies have examined the integration of Islamic law with local traditions, there remains room for research into the mechanisms by which normative religious values are interpreted into empirically observable benefits in community life. Therefore, this study seeks to explore how the process of religious teachings generates tangible advantages within the community through the *Gula Satuangan* tradition. This study focuses on observable facts, such as mutual giving practices, social bonding, and respect for elders. From these practices, tangible benefits can be seen in social life, family relationships, and the local community's economic activities.

Accordingly, this study advances a contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* perspective for examining Islamic law (fiqh) and '*urf*, highlighting the areas where the two intersect within the *Gula Satuangan* tradition. In light of this, the study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How is "living law" expressed in the *Gula Satuangan* tradition? (2) How are normative *maṣlaḥah* and empirical *maṣlaḥah* integrated within this tradition? (3) What is the typology of Islamic law among coastal communities in North Central Java?

METHOD

The present study utilizes a qualitative methodology grounded in a phenomenological approach and informed by the contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* framework.[10] Both approaches were selected to enable this study to bridge the values of maṣlaḥah grounded in normative sources (religious texts) with those grounded in empirical, socio-cultural contexts. This study was conducted across three years (2022–2024) in the western part of the North Coast region of Central Java—specifically, Tegal and Brebes regencies—where the *gula satuangan* tradition is practiced in both areas. Data collection was

[10] Abdul Nasir et al., "Pendekatan Fenomenologi Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif," *INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research* 3 (2023): 4445–4451.

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carried out through fieldwork employing direct observation, in-depth interviews, and the analysis of documentary sources. Observational data were obtained through participant observation, enabling direct engagement with the practice of the *gula satuangan* tradition. The aim was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how this tradition is carried out.[11]

Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted with informants selected based on specific needs (purposive sampling). The informants consisted of 35 practitioners of the tradition representing both regions, as the representatives from 35 subdistricts across Tegal and Brebes. The interviews were designed to gather data related to emic studies—specifically, to identify underlying motives and construct the values inherent in the tradition. The values obtained were then analyzed using the contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* theory, specifically the aspect of *maṣlahah al-ummah*: the values of fiqh of worship, fiqh of family, fiqh of *mu'amalah*, and *waḥdah al-ummah* (social cohesion). In addition to practitioners of the tradition, the interviews also involved cultural figures, academics, and community leaders. This was done to understand the history, philosophy, and cultural-economic values embedded within the tradition. Meanwhile, the documentation method serves to trace the history of traditions through manuscripts, articles, local documents, and other relevant sources. Thus, the researcher employed the triangulation method by comparing different sources and methods to ensure that the findings did not rely on a single data.

All data obtained were processed and analyzed using phenomenological steps: interpretation, exploration, and meaning.[12] Interpretation was conducted in accordance with guidelines regarding the *gula satuangan* tradition, seeking the tradition's background and context with the hope of uncovering the underlying concepts and moral ideas behind this tradition as they truly are. Meanwhile, exploration focused more on the researcher's ability to grasp the underlying dynamics within the subject known as tradition. Finally, "meaning" involved deriving a deeper significance from the interpretation of the *Gula Satuangan* tradition. From this meaning, markers and indicators emerged and were integrated with contemporary conceptions of *maqāṣid*. Through the "meaning" step, the

[11] A Romdona, S., Junista,S. S., & Gunawan, "Teknik Pengumpulan Data : Observasi," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Ekonomi Dan Politik* 3, no. 1 (2025): 39–47.

[12] Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi, "Journal of Education and Educational Developement Discussion Phenomenology: A Philosophy and Method of Inquiry" 5, no. 1 (2018): 215–222.

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researcher could reach both ethical and transcendental entities, ultimately leading to the discovery of a new paradigm.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contemporary *Maqāṣid* based on *Maṣlaḥah al-Ummah*

Conceptually, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* essentially aims to realize public interest and prevent harm. In contemporary developments, its scope extends beyond the protection of individuals to encompass the family, society, the environment, and the collective order.[13] The objectives (*maqāṣid*) of Islam and Islamic law are to bring about the common good of humanity. Therefore, *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* can serve as a guiding principle in steering society toward achieving goodness and peace for humanity and the environment as a manifestation of mercy for the universe.[14] The theory *of maṣlaḥah al-ummah* is worthy of being adopted as a method and technique for building a tolerant and moderate community (Quran 2:143) that is capable of fulfilling the duty of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. These objectives must be guided by Allah SWT (Quran 3:103) and imbued with the spirit of *wasaṭiyyah*. This moderate and tolerant attitude underpins interactions among different ethnic groups, cultures, races, and nations (Quran 19:13). In the effort to build a moderate Muslim society,[15] ijtihad is necessary, which is practically realized through the study of comparative madhhabs to foster tolerance among madhhabs and cultures within society.[16]

In practice, the discourse on *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* is evident in the normative foundations of fiqh of worship, which is oriented toward developing pious individuals as the foundation of the *ummah*.[17] This foundation is reinforced by the teachings of family fiqh (*al-aḥwāl al-syakhṣiyyah*), which emphasizes a *sakīnah-raḥmah* family building.

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[13] *Primasatria Edastama, "The Importance of Maslahah Orientation in Sharia Institutions,"* Aptisi Transactions on Management (ATM) *5, no. 2 (2021): 180–190, https://doi.org/10.33050/atm.v5i2.1595.*

[14] Danang Firdaus and Nasihun Amin, "Reactivation of the Role of Pesantren for the Maslahah of the Ummah : A Study of KH Sahal Mahfudh ' s Social Fiqh Thought," *FiTUA : JURNAL STUDI ISLAM* 6, no. December (2025): 200–217, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47625/fitua.v6i2.1074.

[15] Fitri Damayanti, Dewi Kurniawati, and Fatma Merve Prayogo, 'From Tradition to Modernity: The Contemporary Relevance of Islamic Law in Art and Culture', *Nusantara: Journal of Law Studies* 3, no. 1 (July 2024): 14–26, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17372790.

[16] Deri Wanto and Rahmad Hidayat, "Al-Istinbath," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 6, no. 2 (2021): 427–454.

[17] Imam Syafi'i et al., 'Harmonization of Islamic Law and Local Wisdom: A Methodological Reconstruction of Ijtihad in Family Law Based on Yusuf al-Qaradawi's Istinbāṭ Approach', *Nusantara: Journal of Law Studies* 5, no. 1 (January 2026): 25–43, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18359276; Syafi'i et al.

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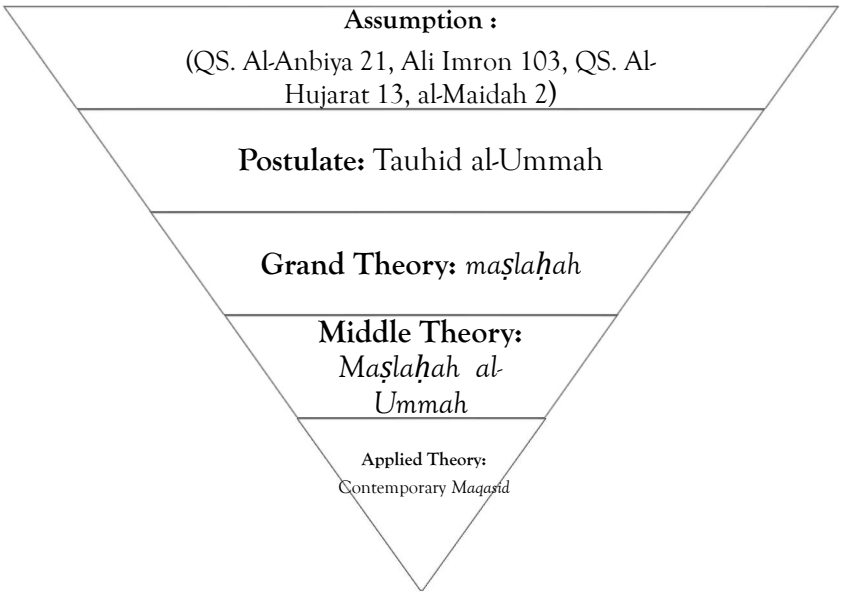
Ultimately, these two foundations are complemented by fiqh *of mu'amalah*, which is rich in practices of piety within harmonious social interactions. It is this systematic framework that is taught within the concept of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah.*[18] The discourse *on maṣlaḥah al-ummah* is the best alternative for developing methods of ijtihad and legal creativity. This is based on the need to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah through an ijtihad approach that emphasizes the dimension of *maṣlaḥah* in responding to the dynamics of the *ummah*. Thus, *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* becomes a vehicle for legal change.

Table 1: Taxonomy of the *Maṣlaḥah al-Ummah* Paradigm



The Urgency of *Gula Satuangan* Tradition

"*Gula Satuangan*" refers to sugar poured in a single serving, a practice that has evolved in social customs into a traditional gift exchanged during Eid al-Fitr visits. This tradition serves not only as a symbol of courtesy but also as a social mechanism that governs how younger generations show respect to their elders within the extended family.[19] *Gula Satuangan* is a "small gift" or "token of appreciation" given during social visits, consisting of sugar and tea. For the people of Tegal, sugar and tea are deeply intertwined, as evidenced by the tradition *of ngeteh* (*moci*) or drinking tea from a Javanese clay teapot, particularly

[18] Hannani Hannani, "Analysis of Najmuddin Al Thufi's Concept of the Supremacy of Maslahah Against the Postulates of Islamic Law," *DIKTUM: Jurnal Syariah Dan Hukum* 19, no. 1 (2021): 75–86.

[19] Mursyidah Dwi Hartati and Tity Kusrina, "Social Construction of Local Wisdom in the Era of Science and Technology Development (A Phenomenological Study in Tegal City)," *Journal of Education, "Cakrawala"* 13, no. 2 (2019): 2–40.

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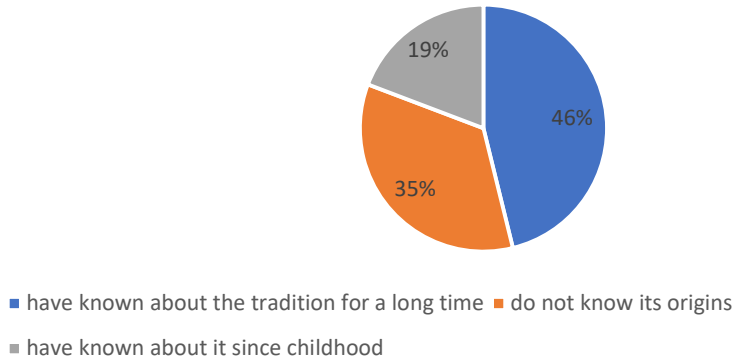
among the younger generation.[20] Therefore, it is considered impolite to visit parents or relatives without bringing *gula satuangan*. The people of Tegal and the surrounding areas have practiced this tradition for generations, although most do not know exactly when it first began.[21] Interview results show that 48% of informants know this tradition has existed since the spread of Islam in Tegal, while 36% do not know its origins, and 20% have known about it since childhood.

Chart 1: Percentage of the Public Aware of the Origins of the *Gula Satuangan* Tradition



Those who practice this tradition do not view this gift as a transaction that must be reciprocated with something of equal value. What stands out more are a sense of appropriateness, respect, and sincerity. In this regard, *gula satuangan* functions as a "living law"—that is, a norm that is observed because it is embedded in the community's social consciousness, not merely because it is codified in formal rules.

Observational findings indicate that this practice is more commonly carried out by siblings who are already married, while unmarried family members simply attend the gathering without the obligation to bring Gula Satuangan. This fact indicates that the tradition does not stand as a formal obligation under religious law, but rather as a strong and vibrant social norm within the community. The *gula satuangan* tradition is understood by the community as part of the etiquette of social gatherings during Eid al-Fitr. It takes the form of giving sugar, tea, and sometimes snacks to older relatives or respected figures. In

[20] Fadel Ikrar Jamika et al., "Wisdom Local Tegal City Communities in the Modernization Era and Strategies to Maintain It," *AMPLITUDO: Journal of Science and Technology Innovation* 2, no. 1 (2023): 29–33, https://doi.org/10.56566/amplitudo.v2i1.17.

[21] Ibnu Gusdanni Muflih, Agustina Kusuma Dewi, and Asep Ramdhan, "Perancangan Buku Ilustrasi 'Tradisi Moci Tegal'" Untuk Remaja Usia 13-15 Tahun," *Prosiding Fakultas Arsitektur Dan Desain*, 2024, 1–20.

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several interviews, informants described these gifts as expressions of respect, gratitude, and sincere benevolence, rather than quantifiable reciprocal transactions.

As a form of local wisdom, *gula satuangan* embodies the essence of life that defines the cultural identity of Muslims along the northern coast of Central Java. This tradition reflects the values of equality, brotherhood, sincerity, mutual aid, and a collective awareness of the unity of the community (descendants). This tradition remains relevant amid the penetration of foreign cultures that threaten local wisdom. Its values shape the very fabric of community life—ideologically, culturally, socially, and economically.

First, this tradition supports the implementation of religious doctrine. Although there are no explicit texts regarding this, the tradition is steeped in major religious doctrines—namely, the dogma of honoring one's parents (*birr al-walidain) and* the doctrine of doing good (*iḥsān*) through the act of giving (*ṣadaqah*) a single-serving packet of sugar. The interview excerpt shows:

> *"Badanan kuwe wajib nggawa gula-teh kanggo wong tua lan sedulur. Nilaine dadi ngibadah ya. Wong paling setahun pisan tur kudu dianakena. Senajan laka dalile quran-hadise, kiye dadi tradisi wong tegal, dadi wes dipersiapna adoh-adoh dina" (saat silaturahim lebaran wajib memberikan hadiah gula-teh buat kedua orang tua dan saudara tua. Ia bernilai ibadah. Cuman setahun sekali, masak tidak disempatkan. Ini tradisi wajib masyakarakat Tegal yang jauh-jauh hari sudah dipersiapkan)."*[22]
> "It's mandatory to bring sugar and tea for the elders and relatives. It's considered an act of worship. It happens only once a year, and you really should make time for it. Even though there's no specific basis in the Quran or Hadith, this has become a tradition among the people of Tegal, so preparations are made well in advance" (During Eid visits, it is mandatory to give sugar and tea as gifts to both parents and older siblings. It is considered an act of worship. It only happens once a year—surely you can make time for it. This is a mandatory tradition of the Tegal community that is prepared well in advance.)"

The quote above shows that the "sugar offering" has become part of religious doctrine and a form of worship for its practitioners. There is a dialectic between religion and local wisdom within this tradition. As a form of local wisdom, this tradition demonstrates that coastal communities have developed a religiosity that is integrated into their daily lives. Family relationships, respect, and social bonds are integral to how they

[22] Author's Interview, "Interview with Mr. AP (Traditional Practitioner)" (Tegal, 2023).

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maintain social balance, making this tradition worthy of interpretation as a cultural practice that supports community cohesion.

Second, the social aspect. The *gula satuangan* tradition emphasizes the sincerity of brotherhood. This tradition serves as a symbol of recognition of kinship—whether by blood or not—and acts as a buffer against conflict and hostility between families. It is able to break down communication barriers within the community. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a community leader:

> *"Ketika ada komunikasi yang buntu antar warga bahkan konflik antar warga, maka gula satuangan menjadi media untuk meleburkan konflik yang ada, tentunya dengan mediasi tokoh masyarakat. Pihak yang merasa bersalah akan membawa gula the sebagai simbol permohonan maaf. Dan yang diberi gula teh akan menerima dan perdamaian dapat terwujud. Bahkan gula teh menjadi alat komunikasi dalam semua kehidupan di sini termasuk pra-nikah (tunangan)."*[23]
> "When communication breaks down among residents—or even when conflicts arise—*gula satuangan* serves as a means to resolve these conflicts, of course with the mediation of community leaders. The party at fault will bring *gula satuangan* as a symbol of apology. The recipient will accept it, and peace is restored. In fact, gula satuangan serves as a tool for communication in all aspects of life here, including pre-marital relationships (engagement)."

The interview excerpt above manifests that the *gula satuangan* tradition plays a vital role in supporting social life and serves as a tool to break down communication barriers, dissolve hostilities, and mitigate conflicts. "Conflict mitigation" here is understood to mean that when family relationships are harmonious and conflict-free, this contributes to the harmony of the wider community as well.[24]

From the perspective of Tegal community leaders, the "sugar-sharing" tradition plays a significant role in easing tensions caused by family discord. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a Tegal community leader:

> *"Tradisi ini tujuan utamanya untuk menunjukkan pengakuan persaudaraan baik individual maupun keluarga. Ada rasa penghormatan dibalik symbol gula satuangan. Utamanya pihak yang memberi menjadi symbol pengakuan kesalahan dan ketulusan persaudaraan terhadap yang menerima gula satuangan"*[25]

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[23] Author's Interview, "Interview with Tan Atmo Siddiq (Head of the Tegal Cultural Association)" (Tegal, 2023).

[24] Muhamad Zaenal Muttaqin et al., "Family Harmony in Contemporary Islamic Law: Ibn 'Āshūr's Maqāṣid Perspective on Marital Rights and Duties," *MILRev : Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 61–79, https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v5i1.10480.

[25] Author's Interview, "Interview with KH. AS in Slawi" (Tegal, 2023).

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> "The primary purpose of this tradition is to demonstrate a sense of brotherhood, both on an individual and family level. There is a sense of respect behind the symbol of the 'sugar-sharing' ritual. Most importantly, the giver symbolizes an acknowledgment of wrongdoing and a sincere expression of brotherhood toward the recipient of the sugar."

This finding shows that the tradition could become an instrument to alleviate social conflicts derived from the *moci* tradition (drinking *poci* or tea from a clay teapot) in the Tegal and Brebes areas. In the *moci* tradition, people converse relaxedly to erase barriers of differences. This finding is confirmed by Dwi Rahmawati, a cultural researcher in Tegal, stating that:

> *"Gula satuangan tidak dapat terpisahkan dari tradisi moci di tegal. Terdapat rasa gotong royong dan saling menghargai serta menghormati. Hubungan yang erat antar masyarakat juga diciptakan melalui kegiatan moci. Tradisi moci yang sangat melekat pada masyarakat Tegal, menjadi simbol kesetaraan nyong, koen, ente dengan hangatnya tuangan teh yang berkali-kali menambah keakraban."*[26]
> "The single-serving sugar is an integral part of the moci tradition in Tegal. It embodies a spirit of cooperation, mutual appreciation, and respect. Close bonds among community members are also fostered through moci activities. Deeply rooted in Tegal society, the moci tradition symbolizes the equality of "*nyong*," "*koen*," and "*ente*" (informal words for "you"), while the warmth of the tea, poured time and again, further deepens the sense of camaraderie."

Other researchers have also acknowledged that the tradition of "sugar sharing" and the moci culture form a single, integrated whole. Both serve to mitigate family conflicts. It is not surprising, then, that social conflicts are rarely found in Tegal and the surrounding areas. On this point, Tegal cultural experts accentuate that "*the sense of equality fostered by the traditions of "gula satuangan" and "moci" helps to break down communication barriers and the divisions caused by differences—both of which often trigger social conflict. Thus, this tradition has a strong influence in mitigating the early signs of social conflict in the Tegal region and its surroundings. This is reinforced by a statement from a Tegal cultural expert who said that gula satuangan can quell resentment and hatred among residents.*"[27]

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[26] Dwi Rahmawati, "Nilai-Nilai Sosial Dan Budaya Dalam Tradisi Mantu Poci Di Kota Tegal Jawa Tengah (Kajian Antropologi Sastra)," *Tabasa: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia, Dan Pengajarannya* 2, no. 2 (2021): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.22515/tabasa.v2i2.3852.

[27] Syamsul Bakhri, "Resiprositas Dalam Sunat Poci Dan Mantu Poci Masyarakat Tegal," *Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi* 7, no. 1 (2018): 94–109.

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Third, this tradition has also become a cultural identity. The obvious evidence is the *Poci Grabah* symbol in the center of Slawi's town square. It illustrates just how deeply ingrained the culture of drinking Poci tea is among the local community. The proliferation of tea factories in this region, as well as the large sugar factory in Pangkah subdistrict, has led people to an automatic association between tea sugar packets and the Tegal-Brebes culture. This culture is not found in any region other than Tegal-Brebes.

Fourth, it becomes a driver of the people's economy through the purchase of single-serving sugar packets. Interview data showing a range of purchase package amounts—from Rp75,000 to Rp150,000 depending on one's means, with an average purchase of 4–5 packages per person—reinforces the impression that this tradition has an economic dimension; however, this dimension must still be understood as a local and seasonal social impact, not as a definitive measure of the region's economic strength.[28] This is implied from an interview with the Head of the Tegal Regency Trade Office, who stated:

> *"Menjelang lebaran, yakni 10 hari terakhir bulan puasa, omset penjualan gula teh meningkat drastis. Ini tidak lepas dari budaya kirim-kiriman gula-teh pada saat lebaran. Bahkan bisa naik 6-10 kali lipat dari konsumsi bulan lainnya. Rerata keluarga membeli 3 hingga 10 paket gula the. Inilah yang membuat perputaran ekonomi kerakyatan meningkat tajam. Di tambah pulangnya para perantau dari berbagai daerah"*[29]
> "As Eid approaches—specifically during the last 10 days of Ramadan—sales of tea sugar surge dramatically. This is closely tied to the tradition of exchanging tea-sugar gifts during Eid. Sales can even increase 6 to 10 times compared to consumption in other months. On average, families purchase 3 to 10 packages of tea-sugar. This is what causes the economic activity of the grassroots economy to rise sharply. This is compounded by the return of migrants from various regions."

The excerpt above confirms that this tradition supports the grassroots economy. The most essential items to bring when visiting relatives are sugar and tea. According to a Tegal cultural observer, Sumarno, the Eid tradition in the Tegal region dictates that when visiting relatives, one must bring sugar and tea. The tradition of "sugar sharing" has been passed down from generation to generation and is still practiced today. In fact, as Eid

[28] Setyo Puspita Andarini and Agus Karya, "Rebranding Pencitraan Sarana Perangkat Minum Teh Poci Tegal Sebagai Bentuk Pengembangan Budaya Minum Teh Tradisional Khas Tegal," *Jurnal Tingkat Sarjana Senirupa Dan Desain*, no. 1 (n.d.): 5–10.

[29] Author's Interview, "Interview with Mr. Tasyrifin (Head of the Tegal City Trade Office)" (Tegal, 2023).

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approaches, market demand for sugar and tea increases dramatically. Typically, people in Tegal bring an average of 500 to 1,000 grams of sugar as a gift.[30]

Based on observations and interviews with informants, the benefits of *gula satuangan* encompass religious, social, cultural, and economic dimensions, as summarized in the table below:

Table 2: The Significance of the *Gula Satuangan* Tradition

Aspect	Contribution of the Tradition	Description
Religion	Reinforcing devotion and sincerity toward parents	Selfless giving to older siblings and parents
Social	Strengthening social cohesion through kinship	Sincere intergenerational bonds
Culture	Preserving the unique, religion-based culture of the northern coast of Central Java	Symbols of the cultural identity of the communities along the northern coast of Central Java
Economy	Promoting the local economy through tradition	Supply and Demand Increase for Single-Serving Sugar Packages

Source: interviews and observations

Contemporary *Maqāṣid* Values in the *Gula Satuangan* Tradition

Based on observational data and direct interviews, the *gula satuangan* tradition embodies the spirit of the concept of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah*. The researcher integrated these two elements by identifying indicators based on interpretation and reflection, which were then compared, interpreted, and synthesized to uncover their relevant values. The first dimension is revealed in the ethics of giving, which emphasizes sincerity, selflessness, and respect for elders. In this practice, participants described that giving is done as a form of devotion and gratitude for the contributions of older family members.

The second dimension emerges in the family sphere, namely when this tradition fosters intergenerational communication and strengthens a sense of belonging among

[30] Putri, "Mengenal Tradisi Gula Satuangan, Sebuah Tradisi Lebaran Di Tegal."

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siblings. This tradition does not automatically resolve all family issues, but it provides a social space to nurture closeness and prevent emotional distance.

The third dimension relates to *mu'āmalah*, as the offering of sugar and tea encourages the circulation of goods and local spending. Here, *maṣlaḥah* in terms of wealth does not manifest as the accumulation of profit, but rather as a small economic cycle that sustains local markets and shops. The fourth dimension is the role of tradition in building social knowledge. Advice, teachings, and conversations between generations provide a space for the transfer of values, so that these traditions also serve as a medium for fostering sound judgment and a well-ordered approach to life. One informant explained:

> *"Tradisi ini turun-temurun dan sudah ada sejak kami lahir di sini. Motifnya ya memang penghormatan dan keikhlasan. Seserahan ini bentuk kebhaktian kepada yang tua atas jasa-jasa mereka dalam membesarkan kami. Udah niatnya karena memberi saja dan tanpa pamrih apa pun." Kutipan ini menegaskan bahwa praktik tersebut lebih dekat dengan etika bakti daripada transaksi ekonomi."*[31]
> "This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation and has existed since we were born here. The underlying motives are indeed respect and sincerity. This gift is an expression of devotion to our elders for their efforts in raising us. The intention is simply to give, without expecting anything in return. This quote underscores that the practice is more closely aligned with the ethics of devotion than with an economic transaction."

The quote above shows that the primary motivation behind the tradition lies in respect and sincerity. Therefore, an interpretation through the lens of ***hifẓ*** *al-dīn* is most relevant when focused on preserving moral values, rather than on the claim that this tradition is a standalone form of religious ritual. In the family context, several field observations indicate that *gula satuangan* serves as a marker of social maturity, particularly for married siblings. This tradition underscores that family relationships extend beyond blood ties and are further strengthened through an ethic of mutual respect within the broader kinship networks.

The results of the observation indicate that unmarried individuals are generally not regarded as the primary practitioners of the tradition. This finding suggests that *gula satuangan* is a multi-layered social norm, as its social obligations vary depending on a person's position within the family structure. Thus, this tradition chronicles the history of

[31] Author's Interview, "Interview with DJ, Community Leader in Brebes and Practitioner of the Gula Satuangan Tradition," 2024.

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care, education, and respect within the family. It is not merely a physical gift, but also a token of recognition for the contributions of parents and older siblings in shaping the lives of younger family members. This concept is further elaborated upon in the teachings of family fiqh (*al-aḥwāl al-syakhṣiyyah*), which focus on fostering a peaceful and harmonious family.

In the realm *of mu'āmalah*, giving *gula satuangan* shows generosity and does not demand immediate reciprocity. Reciprocity here is moral in nature, not contractual. This is why this tradition is best understood as a social gift that broadens the meaning of the common good. Another informant stated: *"The package we offer consists of sugar and tea, along with the parents' favorite snacks. We do not expect anything in return for our gifts. This is a form of gift-giving, even though it cannot compare to their services."* This statement reinforces that *gula satuangan* exchanges are guided by the principle of sincerity.

At this point, reciprocity cannot be equated with a binding, reciprocal transaction. *gula satuangan*, in fact, exemplifies a form of moral economy that strengthens social bonds while simultaneously helping to drive local spending. On the social level, this tradition brings together scattered family members and provides a forum for exchanging news, advice, and care. It is this function that most closely aligns with the concepts of social cohesion and community governance, as the community maintains the order of its relationships without the necessity to rely on formal mechanisms.

Table 3: The Relevance of *Maṣlaḥah al-Ummah* to *Gula Satuangan*

Dimension	***Gula Satuangan***	**Shared Values**
Fiqh of Worship	Sincerity, Selflessness, and Compassion Among Family Members	Shaping Pious and Strong Individuals
Family Jurisprudence	Mutual advice regarding marital harmony, strengthening family and kinship bonds, and intergenerational communication.	Building a family based on *sakīnah*, *mawaddah*, and *raḥmah*

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Fiqh of Transactions	Unconditional giving, the exchange of property based on sincerity	Building a people-centered economic ecosystem based on charity and grants
Social Cohesion	Bond enforcement between families and across generations, as well as across ethnic groups and regions, based on local wisdom and religion.	Building an inclusive, mutually respectful, and harmonious community

Summarized from interview data and observations

The table above shows that the taxonomy under the *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* paradigm aligns with the philosophical values enshrined in tradition. The two complement and perfect each other, reinforcing the validity of religion—which is grounded in theoretical maslahah—with *maslahah* grounded in empirical evidence.

Analysis of Contemporary *Maqāṣid al-Shari'ah* Based on *Maṣlaḥah al-Ummah*

The *gula satuangan* tradition is in harmony with the values and spirit *of maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, namely the theory asserting that Islamic law was revealed to achieve and preserve human *maṣlaḥah*. According to al-Syatibi, primary maslahah encompasses five aspects: the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), with the preservation of the *ummah* (*maṣlaḥah al-ummah*) being incorporated into contemporary interpretations.[32]

First, regarding *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, this tradition is discovered in the ethics *of birr al-wālidayn*, sincerity, and respect for elders. The religious values that emerge here are ethical and relational in nature, rather than formal rituals. Therefore, *gula satuangan* is best understood as a means of internalizing religion and moral values. These values stem from religious teachings, and as noted by Atmo Tan Sidik, a cultural figure from Tegal and leader of

[32] Muhammad Harfin Zuhdi and Mohamad Abdun Nasir, "Al-Mashlahah and Reinterpretation of Islamic Law in Contemporary Context," *Samarah* 8, no. 3 (2024): 1818–1839, https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v8i3.24918.

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Lesbumi (the Indonesian Muslim Artists and Cultural Figures Association), *gula satuangan* embodies beauty, generosity, and family honor.[33]

Second, in terms of *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, this tradition helps foster a safe, peaceful, and supportive social environment. Field findings indicate the existence of practices of mutual respect minimizing the potential for friction between families, thereby serving as one of the factors in preventing social conflicts within the community. Third, behind the tradition of "sugar sharing" lies the aspect of preserving reason (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*). Specifically, when visiting older relatives, knowledge and skills are shared across families. Family members exchange expertise in fields such as business (*warteg*/ Javanese food courts), engineering, construction methods, and so on.[34] This fosters intellectual development within the group. This aspect is significant for practitioners of the tradition, as it enhances their capacity to innovate and adapt to new challenges. This practice is consistent with the Islamic principle of safeguarding intellectual capacity and individual skills.

Fourth, the practice of "sugar-sharing" also aligns with the preservation of lineage (*ḥifẓ an-nasl*) by strengthening family and community bonds. This is evident in the practice of *silaturahim*, which supports marital and family bonds. Parents introduce their children to their lineage. It also fosters unity and continuity within both immediate and extended families. This tradition serves as an important milestone in the lives of participants and their families, providing collective support. In short, this tradition supports social stability and family structure, which are essential for maintaining moral values and social cohesion.

Fifth, regarding *ḥifẓ al-māl*, this tradition stimulates the local economy by the purchase of sugar-and-tea packages. Data showing the variety of purchase amounts supports the circulation of money at the household level and in small markets. At the macro level, the *gula satuangan* tradition contributes to the strengthening of the people's economy. Grocery stores, as well as retail and small-scale vendors in Tegal, experience increased sales leading up to Eid al-Fitr because migrants and younger relatives set aside their annual savings to purchase *gula satuangan* packages. The price of a single *gula satuangan* package varies, depending on the buyer's financial means. One package typically contains ½–1 kg

[33] Author's Interview, "Summarized from an Interview with Tan Atmo" (Tegal, 2024).

[34] Vani Indra Pramudianto et al., "Identitas Wong Tegal: Kajian Budaya Dan Estetika Resepsi Bahan Ajar Sastra Berbasis Kearifan Lokal," *Tabasa: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia, Dan Pengajarannya* 5, no. 01 (2024): 52–66, https://doi.org/10.22515/tabasa.v5i01.10022.

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of sugar, 1–2 packets of tea, and one packet of snacks, with a value of approximately Rp75,000.00–Rp100,000.00 when converted to monetary value.

Interview data show that 63% of respondents chose to give gift packages worth Rp50,000.00–Rp60,000.00, 28% gave packages ranging from Rp70,000.00–Rp80,000.00, and 9% gave packages worth more than Rp100,000.00. These data confirm that the *gula satuangan* tradition not only strengthens social bonds but also stimulates the local economy in the lead-up to the holiday. In practice, the youngest married sibling is generally the one most obligated to bring *gula satuangan* to older siblings, parents, and older relatives. This pattern reflects a clear ethical structure, in which responsibility flows from the young to the old as an expression of respect and gratitude. An illustration of this practice can be described as follows:

There are four siblings:
The fourth child → The third child, second child, and first child
The third child → The second child and the first child
The second child → The first child
Note: → means to give (as a gift)

This illustration shows that this social obligation requires the family's economic readiness but is still carried out within the limits of each family's ability. Therefore, the resulting economic impact should be understood as a cycle of spending influenced by tradition, not as a uniform burden on all households.

Sixth, regarding *ḥifẓ al-ummah*, this tradition demonstrates that the common good arises from the accumulation of pious personal attitudes, harmonious families, and a community that looks out for one another, thereby fostering social harmony.[35] Thus, the fiqh *gula satuangan* tradition ultimately serves the same purpose: to preserve family unity based on kinship ties. This tradition encompasses family routines—both on a small and large scale—through gatherings, communication, mutual support, and mutual forgiveness. These practices are believed to break down barriers between siblings and the community, allowing everyone to come together in love and family unity. The following are excerpts from interviews with experts and scholars regarding this tradition:

[35] M. Umar Ahfadz, Masykuri Hasan, and Rakhmawan Habibi, "Hifdh Al-Ummah Salah Satu Maqasid Al-Syari'ah," *TIJAROTANA : Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Syariah* 03, no. 01 (2022): 1–11.

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> *"Gula satuangan menjadi tradisi melekat masyarakat Muslim Tegal dan sekitarnya. Ia merefleksikan kerendahan hati dan bentuk penghormatan kepada yang tua. Menjadi identitas dan budaya khas masyarakat ini. Ini terbukti untuk penguatan sosial. Jarang sekali ditemukan konflik sosial horizontal di daerah ini. Semua ada kaitan erat dengan tradisi ini"*[36]
>
> "*Gula satuangan* is a deeply ingrained tradition among the Muslim community in Tegal and the surrounding areas. It reflects humility and a form of respect for elders. It has become a distinctive identity and cultural trait of this community. This has proven to strengthen social cohesion. Horizontal social conflicts are rarely found in this region. All of this is closely linked to this tradition."

This quote emphasizes that *gula satuangan* is an expression of humility and respect serving as the foundation for tightening family bonds. Through this tradition, a collective awareness of the unity of the community grows, making it a relevant effort to preserve the lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), one of the fundamental principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* theory. Lineage and family recognition function as a social safety net, curbing various social ills. When family bonds are well maintained, the potential for poverty and other social problems can be minimized, and the gaps can even be closed.

Thus, *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* in this study is understood as the common good that originates in the family, is fortified by the community, and is sustained through tradition. *Gula satuangan* helps reflect that normative Islamic principles can align with local practices without losing their ethical force. he data as a whole indicate that the relationship between religion and culture in coastal communities is not always one of conflict. In this case, the two actually reinforce one another through customs that are simple yet meaningful for everyday social life.

To make it easier to read, here is a table comparing traditional concepts with contemporary *maqāṣid* theory:

Table 4: Comparison of Values

Practices of *Gula Satuangan*	*Maqāṣid* Values	Description
Sincerity, Selflessness, and Fostering Relationships	Preserving the Religion (*ḥifẓ al-din*)	Instilling and maintaining noble character in the form of *birr al-walidain* and *iḥsān*.

[36] Author's Interview, "Interview with an American Academic Serving as Rector at PTS Slawi and a Member of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board of Tegal Regency," 2024.

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Social Cohesion, Individual and Collective Protection	Preserving the Soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*)	Strengthening a sense of mutual care that helps prevent social friction.
Reciprocal Practices, the Pecingan Tradition, and Economic Information	Preserving Wealth (*ḥifẓ al-mal*)	Strengthening a people-centered economy based on mutual support and sincerity
Practices of sharing positive information and parental advice (*pitutur*)	Preserving the Mind (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*)	Generational internalization and enlightenment regarding life principles and virtue.
The practice of recognizing lineage, marriage, and kinship	Preserving the Lineage (*ḥifẓ* al-nasl)	Maintaining family unity based on kinship and good communication.
Practices for building a strong nation from the smallest to the largest scale	Caring for the Welfare of the Community (*ḥifẓ al-Ummah*)	Pious individuals strengthen families, families strengthen communities, and communities sustain communal life.

Source: Author's Interpretation

The table illustrates the relevance and urgency of this tradition, while also demonstrating that tradition and religion can coexist and complement one another. Although their origins differ, both converge in the realm of values—namely, strengthening individual bonds and uniting human diversity that stems from the same womb. Ultimately, the practice of "sugar-sharing" has become a defining feature of the northern coastal communities of Central Java. This tradition transcends the rhetoric of *maslahah* as the basis of Islamic law and serves as a meeting point between theoretical and empirical *maslahah*. It has shaped models of Islam across the Indonesian archipelago, such as Javanese Islam,

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Lombok Islam,[37] Padang Islam,[38] Madurese Islam,[39] Bugis Islam,[40] and so on.[41] *Gula satuangan* serves as evidence from Indonesia that Islam and culture can complement one another, enriching the dialectical typology of Nusantara Islam, which is integrated with local wisdom. Integral Islam is understood as the unification of sources of knowledge that complement and reinforce one another, as seen in the alignment of the Islamic concept of *ma'ruf* with the local wisdom rooted in the public good known as *gula satuangan*.

CONCLUSION

In this study, *gula satuangan* can be understood as a "living law" within the coastal communities of northern Central Java, primarily because it is practiced as a social norm — that governs the ethics of social interaction, respect for elders, and recognition of family ties. The research findings also indicate an integration between normative *maṣlaḥah* and empirical *maṣlaḥah*. This integration is uncovered in three main aspects: the ethics of giving reinforcing moral character, the strengthening of family relationships through social interaction, and the circulation of the local economy through the purchase of *gula satuangan* packages. Through this perspective, the *gula satuangan* tradition may be interpreted as a cultural practice that contributes to the attainment of the common good. This study advances the theoretical discourse of contemporary *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* by expanding the understanding of *maṣlaḥah al-ummah* as a collective benefit generated through lived social practices. Through this framework, the theory *of maṣlaḥah al-ummah* is clearly illustrated, namely the emergence of an integration between normative *maṣlaḥah*—derived from a collaborative approach to religious texts—and empirical *maṣlaḥah*—derived from human culture and civilization.

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[37] Mutawali, "Moderate Islam in Lombok the Dialectic between Islam and Local Culture," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 2 (2016): 309–334, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2016.10.2.309-334.

[38] Sumper Mulia Harahap, "Akomodasi Hukum Islam Terhadap Kebudayaan Lokal (Studi Terhadap Masyarakat Muslim Padangsidimpuan)," *Istinbáth* 15, no. 2 (2016): 320–334.

[39] Suhaim, Agustri Purwandi, and Akhmad Farid Mawardi Sufyan, "Binsabin Dan Tongngebban as Madurese Local Wisdom: An Anthropology of Islamic Law Analyses," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 1 (2021): 161–179, https://doi.org/10.19105/AL-LHKAM.V16I1.3861.

[40] Rahmawati et al., "Harmonizing Islamic Law and Local Culture: A Study of The Mampatangpulo Tradition in Duri, Enrekang Regency," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ah* 22, no. 1 (2024): 67–78, https://doi.org/10.30984/jis.v22i1.2678.

[41] M.A Suleman, Z.Z, Tungkagi, D.Q, Suleman, Z, Kau, S.A,& Salleh, "Jurnal Ilmiah Al- Syir ' Ah Negotiating Islamic Moderation : The Interplay of Sharia" 23, no. 1 (2025): 50–69.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Junaidi Abdillah contributed to the conceptualization, research design, methodology, data analysis, and overall supervision of the study. Nur Amelia Ridha contributed to the literature review, data collection, data curation, and initial drafting of the manuscript. Amir Tajrid contributed to the research methodology, data analysis, interpretation of the findings, and critical revision of the manuscript. Moch. Mifathul Arief contributed to data collection, literature analysis, manuscript drafting, and visualization. M. Tholchah contributed to data validation, interpretation of the findings, critical review, and final revision of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the development and completion of the study, reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article. All authors have contributed independently and objectively, without any financial, institutional, or personal interests that could influence the integrity and outcomes of the study.

AI USAGE STATEMENT

This article utilized artificial intelligence (AI) tools solely for language refinement, grammar improvement, and formatting assistance. All conceptual development, data interpretation, analytical arguments, and conclusions were generated entirely by the authors. The authors reviewed and verified all AI-assisted outputs to ensure accuracy, originality, and alignment with academic integrity standards. No AI tools were used to generate research ideas, conduct analyses, or draw conclusions.

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