The dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institute

Mettadewi Wong
Universitas Hindu Indonesia, Denpasar, Indonesia
Email: mettadewiwong@gmail.com

Euis Dewi Yuliana
Universitas Hindu Indonesia, Denpasar, Indonesia
Email: dewi.yuliana1966@yahoo.co.id

I Wayan Budi Utama
Universitas Hindu Indonesia, Denpasar, Indonesia
Email: budiutama904@gmail.com

Abstract---MAGABUDHI plays an important role in the moral and spiritual development of Buddhists, helps maintain harmony and tolerance among religious communities in Indonesia. In the age of almost half a century, MAGABUDHI still has many obstacles, such as when asked to lead the avamangala ceremony which falls on a weekday, because MAGABUDHI members are part-time Dhamma servants. There are at least three problems, namely the causes of the dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institute, the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, and the implications of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta on the social, economic, cultural, and religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta. Based on this phenomenon, researchers are interested in conducting research in the form of a dissertation with the title "The Dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institute." This research is an interpretive qualitative research type, because this research is presented descriptively with interpretive analysis using phenomenological theory, structuration theory, and reception theory. The research approach is religion and culture, with data collection techniques including participant observation, interviews, and document studies, while data analysis is carried out using qualitative descriptive techniques. The research location is in DKI Jakarta. The results of this study are 1. The causes of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institutions include: a) internal factors consisting of the desire to organize themselves, provide more professional religious services, and competition to be the best among Buddhist Religious Institutions and...
b) external factors that consists of the Government’s acknowledgment of the Confucian religion and modernization which is viewed from an ideological and technological point of view. 2. The dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institute include: a) membership b) recruitment c) coaching, d) activities of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta. 3. Implications of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta on the lives of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta in the fields of: a) social, b) economy, c) culture, d) religion. With the existence of MAGABUDHI, spiritual services for Buddhists can be carried out, such as the avamangala/grief ceremony services and marriage ceremonies that cannot be performed by bhikkhus.

Keywords---Dynamics, MAGABUDHI, Tilakkhana.

Introduction

MAGABUDHI (Indonesian Theravada Buddhist Council) is one of the Buddhist religious institutions that was formed to strengthen the existence of Theravada Buddhism in Indonesia. MAGABUDHI (formerly MAPANBUDHI) was founded by two Maha Pandita who were actively preaching the Buddha Dhamma to various corners of the world at that time, namely Rama Maha Pandita Khemanyana Karbono and Rama Maha Pandita Sumedha Widyadharma, BBA., and five other pioneer figures, namely Rama Drs. Teja S.M. Rashid, Rama Drs. Med Hudoyo Hupudio, Rama Drs. Djamal Bakir (now Bhikkhu Khantidharo Mahathera), Rama Herman S. Endro, S.H. (now Bhikkhu Jayamedho Thera), and Rama dr. R. Surya Widya on October 3, 1976 in Bandung. At that time, Rama K. Soeratin from Semarang, Ms. Khemavati from Surabaya, and Rama Soeparto Hs. from Jakarta also supported the establishment of MAPANBUDHI.

MAGABUDHI was originally named MAPANBUDHI (Indonesian Buddha Dhamma Pandita Council) which consisted of only Pandita. MAPANBUDHI later changed its name to MAGABUDHI at the fifth national meeting in 1995. MAGABUDHI consists of Panditas and Upacarikas (Pandita candidate) who have expressed their determination to actively participate in all activities related to the spread of Theravāda Buddhism, which is based on the Pali Tipitaka scriptures (the oldest Gotama Buddha teaching). MAGABUDHI is engaged in the non-profit socio-religious field and has the motto "Sincerely serving endlessly".

In its nearly half-century age, MAGABUDHI is still experiencing many obstacles that bind it, such as the existence of Buddhists who do not understand the existence of MAGABUDHI, the absence of adequate facilities and infrastructure, the inability of members to prepare digital lecture materials (with power points) due to lack of IT mastery, an unfavorable climate (such as internal conflicts), level promotions that are considered unclear refer to the Articles of Association (AD) and Bylaws (ART) MAGABUDHI, so that there was disappointment in some of its members who felt that they deserved to be promoted, but it turned out that the promotion was postponed. Another problem is the inability and ignorance of the MAGABUDHI management in understanding its functions and duties, so they cannot fully contribute to MAGABUDHI, there are still MAGABUDHI members
who violate Pandita Ethics, such as wearing MAGABUDHI uniforms or clothes that are not in accordance with the provisions, the limited number of active MAGABUDHI members because they are busy making a living for the family. MAGABUDHI members are generally part-time Dhamma devotees who do not receive a monthly salary/honorarium. They only get transportation or modest service fees when providing services to their people. So sometimes there are problems when MAGABUDHI members are asked to lead avamangala ceremonies or mourning ceremonies and others that fall on weekdays, because they often do not get permission from their workplace.

This research is an interpretive qualitative research type, because this research is presented descriptively with interpretive analysis using phenomenological theory, structuration theory, and reception theory. This interpretive qualitative research was conducted in a religious and cultural approach. The research location is DKI Jakarta. The data collection techniques used were participant observation, in-depth interview techniques with relevant sources, and document studies. Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative descriptive technique. The analysis process is carried out in line with the data obtained in the field.

As a preparation material, observations were made on the dynamics of the DKI Jakarta MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute. For past conditions, document research and reconstruction were carried out through analytical interviews in the field. To determine the informants used the concepts of Spradley (1997) and Benard (1994) which in principle requires that an informant must understand what is being studied. Determination of informants using a purposive technique based on Bungin (2010) opinion on several criteria that can be used as informants, so that the informant in this study was PMy. Dhammapalo Eddy Tjan as chairman of PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, activist figure MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta. Data analysis in this study used the Spradley Cyclical model and research process. According to Moleong (2016) in this model, the steps of data collection are not distinguished from the data analysis process, but are integrated.

**Discussion**

**The cause of the dynamics of the DKI Jakarta MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute**

There are 2 factors that cause the dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institution to occur, namely internal factors and external factors. For internal factors, there are three reasons, namely the desire to organize themselves, the desire to provide more professional religious services, and competition to be the best among Buddhist Religious Institutions. This dynamic occurs according to the teachings of the Buddha which is called anicca or impermanence. Anicca is one of the features in Tilakkhana theory.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI arise because of the desire to organize themselves, namely by improving their shortcomings, willing to accept input or suggestions regarding what is expected, holding regular and continuous meetings or work meetings, open management, routinely socializing the existence of MAGABUDHI
to the community, Government, and Interfaith, so that many Buddhists and other believers understand the existence of MAGABUDHI.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI also arise because of the desire to provide more professional religious services by preparing well-trained HR (Human Resources), according to the talents or abilities of each member. This more professional service is as far as possible towards the needs of the people in general, such as avamangala or mourning ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, house or office or shop blessing ceremonies, legal aid consulting, taxation, business ventures or employment, Theravada-based education/schools, in addition to building-based spiritual development or cetiya/vihara renovation assistance. MAGABUDHI must provide continuous service according to the conditions of the times by continuously learning, adapting by applying the patterns of progress of the times. MAGABUDHI must make improvements to change for the better so that its existence still exists.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI arise because there is a competition to be the best among Buddhist Religious Institutions. MAGABUDHI experienced dynamics by leaving WALUBI in 2000 because they did not want to be in the same room with a Buddhist Religious Institute whose teachings were not in accordance with the Tripitaka scriptures. MAGABUDHI develops itself, so that it can become a pioneer and be taken into account by other Buddhist religious institutions. MAGABUDHI bases all of his teaching of Buddhism on the Pali Tipitaka (the oldest Gotama Buddha teaching).

Meanwhile, external factors consist of the Government’s recognition of Confucianism and modernization in terms of ideology and technology. The acknowledgment of Confucianism by the Government is certainly a challenge for Buddhists, which means it also has a big impact on MAGABUDHI. All members and administrators of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta must continue to improve themselves to catch up with more enthusiasm in their dedication to spreading the truth for the happiness of the people.

Modernization has had a major impact on MAGABUDHI due to a shift in the attitude and mentality of humans / society to be able to live in accordance with the demands of the present. Therefore, character education is needed. So, if viewed from an ideological point of view, the leadership of MAGABUDHI must emphasize character education in providing guidance to its members and followers by providing meaningful learning that can increase the correct understanding of the ideology of Pancasila, the teachings of Buddhism, and religious moderation. By understanding religious moderation, MAGABUDHI members will think more rationally, tend towards the "Middle Way", not extreme, not forcing desires by means of violence, but rather acknowledging the existence of other people, respecting followers of other religions, tolerance in religion, avoiding friction between religious communities, trying to have a sense of justice and balance in society.

From a technological point of view, advances in science and technology have had a major impact on MAGABUDHI. For this reason, all MAGABUDHI members must be IT literate, understand the use of technology, so that they can facilitate
coaching, facilitate communication through online media, make presentations with interesting materials using power point, increase insight and knowledge of Dhamma. With advances in technology, people find it easy to learn Buddhist teachings because of the distribution of Dhamma content through online media, the use of technology for Dhamma education, as well as for communication between Buddhists in organizations or monasteries. However, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that the existence of technology makes it easy for people, especially young people, to get content that is not in accordance with religious values.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta

MAGABUDHI experiences dynamics in terms of the number of PCs and their members, recruitment, training, and activities. The existence or position of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta is very important, because it becomes a barometer for the growth and development of the MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute in Indonesia.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta in terms of PCs (Branch Managers) which originally consisted of 2 (two) PCs, namely West Jakarta and North Jakarta, then increased with Central Jakarta PCs and East Jakarta PCs. So, for the DKI Jakarta province which is divided into 5 (five) municipal areas, MAGABUDHI already has branches in 4 municipalities, namely PC MAGABUDHI West Jakarta, PC MAGABUDHI North Jakarta, PC MAGABUDHI Central Jakarta, and PC MAGABUDHI East Jakarta. So far, the South Jakarta MAGABUDHI PC has not yet been formed, because the number of members domiciled in South Jakarta is not sufficient to meet the requirements to form a PC (Branch Manager). In the development of MAGABUDHI, the number of members increases with recruitment through Dhammaduta courses organized by the Regional Management (PD) MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta every two years. Based on data from PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, the number of members of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta in 2021 amounted to 232 people, consisting of 166 upacarikas and 66 panditas. Of the 66 Pandita, there are 47 Young Pandita (PMd.), 11 Madya Pandita (PMy.), 7 Pandita (Pdt.), and 1 MP (Maha Pandita).

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta regarding recruitment aims to increase the quantity of its members. Membership of MAGABUDHI begins with becoming an Upacarika (Pandita candidate) after attending a Dhammaduta course organized by the PD (Regional Management), so that his knowledge increases and his ability to lecture develops. Before becoming a MAGABUDHI Upacarika, he must first become an Upasaka/Upasika by following a Visudhi Upasaka/Upasika after graduating from attending the KDAB (Basic Course of Buddhism) organized by the local MAGABUDHI PC. After 2 (two) years of being an active member, an upacarika can be proposed to become a Young Pandita (the initial level of Pandita in MAGABUDHI) after attending the Pandita course organized by PP (central management) and passing the exam. After 5 (five) years of continuous service as a Young Pandita, he can be proposed to become an Madya Pandita (second level of Pandita in MAGABUDHI) after taking the Pandita upgrading course and passing the exam. After 5 (five) years of continuous service as an Madya Pandita, he can be proposed to become a Full Pandita after showing
proud achievements and works such as writing a book. After relentless dedication for more than 20 (twenty) years as Pandita, he can be proposed to be the Maha Pandita in the national meeting which is held every 5 (five) years.

The dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta is also related to its development which demands to be improved regularly and continuously. MAGABUDHI leaders must always remind their members to behave well by adhering to the Pandita Ethics, so that they should be role models for other Buddhists. So, every Pandita MAGABUDHI, including upacarika, must obey the Prasetya Pandita Theravada which he has said sincerely at the time of his inauguration and also the Pandita Ethics which consists of 17 pledges or promises as a guide in behaving as a member of MAGABUDHI. Each member of MAGABUDHI must also carry out the Dasa Raja Dhamma which are the ten virtues possessed by a king or leader, so that they can set a good example to the community because their attitudes and behavior are in accordance with the characteristics of a leader in Buddhism.

Each member of MAGABUDHI must continue to learn throughout his life, including understanding the material on Religious Moderation and being committed to making it happen in the midst of a multicultural Indonesian society, namely having a moderate, not extreme perspective in religion, so that it can contribute to creating a harmonious, tolerant, and peaceful life. Buddhists practice Religious Moderation means carrying out the teachings of the Ariyan Atthangika Magga or the Noble Eightfold Path, which briefly consists of sila (rules / discipline / moral conduct), samadhi (meditation / concentration of mind / mental development), and panna (wisdom).

Each member of MAGABUDHI must carry out general activities that include various spiritual services, such as leading worship services at the monastery, giving Dhammadesana or Dhamma sermons, leading wedding ceremonies, leading funeral ceremonies called avamangala, providing public speaking training, training on making digital lecture materials with power points, providing counseling for people with problems, and others.

MAGABUDHI participates in developing and preserving Buddhist teachings in Indonesia, especially moral and spiritual development. MAGABUDHI collaborates with fellow Theravāda Buddhist organizations that are members of the KBTI (Indonesian Theravada Buddhist Family), namely Sangha Theravada Indonesia (STI), WANDANI, PATRIA, and ASINDA. From the Sangha Theravāda Indonesia (STI) and ASINDA, it is always hoped that Dhamma guidance and harmonious cooperation, so that all the duties and obligations of MAGABUDHI can be carried out properly. With PATRIA and WANDANI, MAGABUDHI always cooperates in various Buddhist religious activities, both at local and national levels.

**The implications of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta on the social, economic, cultural, and religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta**

The implications of the dynamics of the PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institute are very large for the social, economic, cultural and religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta. The existence of MAGABUDHI provides great benefits for Buddhists, namely that Buddhist spiritual services can be carried
out, both in giving Dhammadesana or Dhamma sermons, accompanying Bhikkhus, which numbers are limited, in the service of the people, providing counseling, leading various religious ceremonies such as marriage ceremonies that cannot be performed by Bhikkhus, Avamangala / mourning ceremonies, oath-taking ceremonies, and others.

The implication of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta on economic life is that it can improve welfare with the awareness to live a lifestyle that is in accordance with the Dhamma, namely samajivita, which means living within the limits of ability. Buddhists, including MAGABUDHI members, who generally still have responsibilities towards their respective families, are expected to be able to manage finances well, live within the limits of their ability, prioritize fulfilling their primary needs, buying only what is needed, not what is wanted. Another way to improve the welfare of MAGABUDHI members is to become Pandita Asuh or Pandita Vihara who are ready to serve the people at all times. For this reason, MAGABUDHI must approach and cooperate with the Foundation's management, the Theravada temple administrator, and donors, so that the welfare of the pandita gets attention. At least there is a monastery that is able to provide adequate "honor" that can help the life of the pandita. With the guarantee of sufficient welfare, the pandita can devote all his time to the monastery (like a Christian Priest).

The implication of the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta for the cultural life of Buddhists is that they can increase their role by leading religious ceremonies that are in accordance with Indonesian culture, such as the doctor's oath taking ceremony, house blessing ceremony, marriage ceremony, death ceremony called avamangala, and others. So, MAGABUDHI can always adapt to local cultures in terms of religious ceremonies. However, MAGABUDHI still maintains certain cultures such as wedding ceremonies, avamangala / mourning ceremonies, expounding the Dhamma, which always begins and ends with prayers in Pali, according to what Buddha Gotama said in his time or era.

The implications for the religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta are positive because Buddhists' belief in Buddha is getting stronger by frequently receiving spiritual showers from MAGABUDHI members during services. Thus, it is hoped that the practice of Buddha's teachings in daily life will also improve. With the guidance, training, and Dhammaduta courses from PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, it is hoped that DKI Jakarta Buddhists will become religious people, who not only know the theory of Dhamma, but can also practice the Dhamma in daily life.

**Theoretical Findings**

1. From the analysis of the problems that occur within MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, it is found that in order to reduce the turmoil that occurs, MAGABUDHI upacarikas and panditas must be able to overcome their personal problems, so that they can apply the teachings of Ariya Atthangika Magga well.
2. The acceptance of Confucianism by several community groups (mainly Chinese) is a challenge for Buddhists. This is in accordance with
Appadurai’s view in Landscape’s theory of ideoscape, namely that the spread of a new ideology will bring its own challenges.

3. To improve the welfare of MAGABUDHI members, priests can become monastic priests, can become karakasabha (vihara administrators / cetiya), become lecturers, lead marriage blessing ceremonies that cannot be carried out by bhikkhus, make visits to the Correctional Institution to preach the Dhamma, visit people's homes to visit, be active in the avamangala chanting at the Funeral Home or chanting at the hospital, and so on. So, the economic conditions that demand the fulfillment of the welfare of the upacarikas and panditas demand the attention of the MAGABUDHI administrators. This research strengthens the landscape theory of Appadurai, namely that the transfer of ideology, the movement of people through tourism, the transfer of capital, the transfer of technology, and the development of media have brought great dynamics to the MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute of DKI Jakarta.

4. PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta experienced dynamics from time to time in several ways while maintaining the existing work system, such as carrying out various religious social activities, wedding ceremonies, avamangala / mourning ceremonies, preaching Dhamma, and recruiting members through KDD (Dhammaduta Course). So here it appears that the administrators of MAGABUDHI still maintain their traditions even though they live in DKI Jakarta which is already in the modern category. This is in accordance with the view of Anthony Giddens in Structural theory that in a post-traditional society, tradition which is the collective wealth of society is difficult to change.

5. MAGABUDHI received attention from the Government, especially in this case the Indonesian Ministry of Religion through the Director General of Buddhist Guidance in fostering harmony and the development of Buddha Dhamma, because MAGABUDHI plays a role in moral and spiritual development in Buddhism. MAGABUDHI received religious moral guidance, namely Dhamma guidance and harmonious cooperation from Sangha Theravāda Indonesia (STI). Here the role of the Director General of Buddhist Guidance and Bhikkhu Sangha Theravada Indonesia is very large for the progress of MAGABUDHI. This is in accordance with the Structural theory of the role of agents and structures.

6. The implications of the dynamics of PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta on the social, economic, cultural, and religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta are very positive based on the response of the majority of the Buddhist community in DKI Jakarta to the activities carried out by MAGABUDHI. This research strengthens the Reception theory operationally.

Factual Findings

1. Within PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, there are still members who violate the Pandita Ethics, both in clothing and behavior. On the other hand, there are also members who feel they have been treated unfairly because their promotions are always delayed even though they have served for a long time at MAGABUDHI. Therefore, MAGABUDHI must make improvements to change for the better so that its existence still exists.
2. The efforts made by PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta at this time have not shown the role of strengthening the behavior of social life in society, because there are still current Buddhists who seek learning resources by themselves through developing social media channels. Likewise, the PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta program on the need for the role of economic empowerment of Buddhists and those related to cultural development is still lagging behind other Buddhist religious institutions.

3. In this multi-cultural Indonesian society, inter-religious harmony can be created even though there are still frictions and conflicts between religious communities due to the extreme understanding of their religion. This harmony is fostered by the correct understanding of religious moderation which was proclaimed by the Government in 2016, Buddha’s teachings on Ariya Atthangika Magga (The Noble Eightfold Path), and religious tolerance from King Asoka.

4. The welfare of MAGABUDHI members of DKI Jakarta can be guaranteed by proposing a member of MAGABUDHI whose economy is weak to become Pandita asuh or Pandita Vihara or Buddhist instructor, but of course he must have good knowledge of Buddhism and be ready to serve the people at any time.

Conclusion

The DKI Jakarta MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute always experiences dynamics and follows technological advances and the demands of the times. There are two factors that cause the dynamics of the MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta Buddhist Religious Institution, namely internal factors and external factors. There are three reasons for the internal factors that cause the dynamics of MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta, namely the desire to organize themselves to improve their shortcomings, the desire to provide more professional religious services, and competition from other Buddhist religious institutions. While the external factors are the Government’s recognition of Confucianism and modernization in terms of ideology and technology.

MAGABUDHI as a Buddhist Religious Institution experiences dynamics or changes from time to time. The dynamics of PD MAGABUDHI DKI Jakarta involve recruitment to increase the number of members and the increasing number of PCs (Branch Managers), their work programs, activities, religious services provided, and their coaching which demands to be improved regularly and continuously.

The implications of the dynamics of the Jakarta MAGABUDHI Buddhist Religious Institute for the social, economic, cultural, and religious life of Buddhists in DKI Jakarta are very positive. The existence of MAGABUDHI provides great benefits for Buddhists, namely that Buddhist spiritual services can be carried out, both in leading ceremonies, giving Dhammadesana or Dhamma sermons, provide counseling accompanying the limited number of bikkhus in the service of the people, especially presiding over marriage ceremonies that cannot be carried out by monks.
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