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Preserving and Adapting the Mappadendang Ritual by the Bugis Ethnicity in the Kaili Indigenous People's Area

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to understand the role of the Mappadendang ritual as part of the Bugis ethnicity's identity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people and the benefits of the Mappadendang ritual for social life in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This research uses an ethnographic analysis. Ethnographic analysis is an approach that begins with field facts, analyzes them based on cultural theories and relevant arguments to explore the cultural situation of the community, and ultimately yields a conclusion. The results show that the Mappadendang ritual is an essential means for the Bugis ethnicity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people to maintain and express their cultural identity. Through elements such as traditional cake, traditional cuisine, and bodo attire, the Bugis ethnicity demonstrates solidarity and pride in their cultural heritage. Moreover, this tradition provides broad social benefits, including strengthening interethnic fellowship, enhancing social relationships, fostering social care, reinforcing cultural identity, and boosting the spirit of rice farming. Therefore, it is recommended that the Department of Education and Culture of Parigi Moutong Regency support the preservation and adaptation of the Mappadendang ritual by providing facilities and platforms for the Bugis ethnicity and other ethnicities to showcase and share their cultural values. The government should also ensure the availability and affordability of fertilizers and streamline the irrigation process for rice farming, which is a crucial element of the Mappadendang ritual. To the traditional leaders of the Bugis ethnicity, Kaili indigenous people, and other ethnic groups, it is recommended that they continue collaborating in organizing the Mappadendang ritual as a platform for interethnic fellowship and to strengthen cultural identity. The community in Kasimbar Palapi Village is encouraged to continue participating in and supporting this activity. With good cooperation among all parties, the Mappadendang ritual can continue to be preserved as a valuable cultural heritage, enriching diversity and strengthening cultural identity in a region rich with multiple identities.

Keywords: Ethnicity; Indigenous People; Mappadendang; Preservation and Adaptation.

INTRODUCTION

In social and cultural life, traditions play a crucial role as identity markers and vehicles for transmitting values from one generation to the next (Sasmita et al., 2022). The concept of tradition refers to a series of repeated actions, forming an integral part of every individual and community (Rickard, 2022). These traditions are not merely routines but also encompass values deemed beneficial by their practitioners, which are thus preserved (Akhurun & Septiady, 2022). Broadly, the diversity of traditions in Indonesia reflects the cultural richness of the nation, which is composed of various ethnic groups, languages, and religions (Lintang & Najicha, 2022).

Indonesia's ethnic and cultural diversity provides unique insights into how specific traditions play roles in building and maintaining groups' cultural identities (Agus et al., 2021). Studies on traditions and cultural identity in Indonesia have generated a diverse body of literature, reflecting the nation's cultural richness. These studies often highlight how traditions can influence and strengthen the identities of groups or communities within a multicultural context (Reddy & Dam, 2020; Fielding, 2021; Rahmadani et al., 2024).

A notable example is the *Mappadendang* ritual practiced by the Bugis ethnicity, especially by those who migrate to areas inhabited by the Kaili indigenous people

in Central Sulawesi. The Mappadendang ritual, a tradition of celebrating the rice harvest, is an act of giving thanks for the harvest and a crucial means of forming and expressing Bugis' ethnic identity. The importance of the Mappadendang ritual in the cultural and social context of the Bugis ethnicity is inseparable from its historical and symbolic background. As part of a cultural heritage passed down through generations, the Mappadendang ritual is one way for the Bugis ethnicity to maintain their ethnic and cultural identity in a new environment. This activity is a celebration and a social communication medium that strengthens community bonds and communicates the values and history of the Bugis ethnicity to the next generation and their social environment (Agus, 2022).

Nevertheless, the relationship between the Mappadendang ritual and the Bugis ethnic identity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people remains underexplored. Some studies have not thoroughly explored how this tradition is adapted and revived within a new social and cultural context and the implications of this process for forming cultural identity. The Mappadendang ritual serves as a concrete example of how a tradition acts not only as a customary ceremony but also as a crucial pillar in constructing a group's cultural and social identity.

Based on the description above, this research aims to understand the role of the Mappadendang ritual as part of the Bugis ethnicity's identity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people and the benefits of the Mappadendang ritual for social life in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This research aims to reveal how the Mappadendang ritual serves as a means of celebration and gratitude for the harvest and is essential in maintaining and asserting cultural identity amid social diversity. Moreover, by focusing on the practice of the Mappadendang ritual in the context of the community's social life, this research aims to explore how this tradition affects social dynamics, community integration, and solidarity among community members, offering benefits that extend beyond cultural aspects to broader social dimensions.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand groups of people, objects, situations, conditions, ongoing events, and even thought systems (Whitney, 1960). This research was conducted in Kasimbar Palapi Village, Parigi Moutong Regency. This research utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Data was collected through interviews with key informants, field observations, literature study techniques, and document analysis concerning the adaptation, preservation, and benefits of cultural traditions for social life. The acquired data was then analyzed using ethnographic analysis. Ethnographic analysis is an approach that begins with field facts, analyzes them based on cultural theories and relevant arguments to explore the cultural situation of the community, and ultimately yields a conclusion (Hicks et al., 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Mappadendang Ritual as an Identity Marker of the Bugis Ethnicity in the Kaili Indigenous People's Area

The Bugis ethnicity in Kasimbar Palapi Village has demonstrated remarkable cultural resilience through their efforts to preserve the Mappadendang ritual. As migrants, they not only adapt to a new environment but also actively maintain and practice traditions that shape their identity. The Mappadendang ritual, brought from South Sulawesi, serves not only as a reminder of their origins but also as a unique marker of the Bugis' presence amidst the cultural diversity of the Kaili indigenous people area.

The Mappadendang ritual plays a crucial role in strengthening the social identity of the Bugis ethnicity in Kasimbar Palapi Village, which is particularly evident during its celebration. This celebration is more than just a gathering; it manifests camaraderie, joy, and pride in cultural heritage (Fitri et al., 2020). Unlike other traditions like mappalette bola or mappalili, the Mappadendang ritual provides a unique moment where all members of the Bugis ethnicity unite, affirming their cohesion and solidarity. Through this tradition, the Bugis ethnicity successfully maintains their cultural identity, which is far from their ancestral lands.

The preservation of the Mappadendang ritual by the Bugis ethnicity in Kasimbar Palapi Village illustrates their appreciation and guardianship of ancestral heritage. This tradition is not merely an event but also a learning tool for the younger generation about their ethnicity's values, customs, and history. The choice of traditional food and attire during the Mappadendang ritual highlights cultural uniqueness and communicates messages about identity, origins, and pride as the Bugis ethnicity.

In the Mappadendang ritual, *beppa ade'* (traditional cake) or *beppa pitunrupa* (seven varieties of traditional cakes) are served at every customary celebration. The seven varieties of traditional cakes, including *santan loka*, *sanggara loka*, *beppa oto'*, *onde-onde*, *baje'*, *jompo-jompo*, and *suwella*, reflect the diversity and cultural richness of the Bugis ethnicity. The presence of traditional cake is not just a complement to the celebration but also a means to communicate cultural values, traditions, and camaraderie. Each type of cake in the seven varieties has its own story and philosophy rooted in the Bugis ethnicity's social, economic, and spiritual values.

At the same time, traditional cuisine like *nasu konro* and *coto* strengthens social bonds among community members. The communal practice of pooling resources to purchase a cow, slaughtered and prepared as part of this dish, demonstrates the values of mutual aid and solidarity (Littman et al., 2022). *Nasu*

konro, made from beef or buffalo ribs, and *coto*, made from meat and offal, illustrate Bugis traditional cuisine's skill and adaptation to local resources. Variants of *konro* soup and grilled *konro* offer insights into the creative and flexible adaptations of Bugis traditional cuisine, while preserving the distinctive features of their culinary culture.

Moreover, the use of *bodo* attire (traditional attire) by women pounding rice in the Mappadendang ritual signifies deep respect for the cultural heritage of the Bugis ethnicity. This attire, also known as *waju tokko*, functions not only as ceremonial attire but also as a profound symbol of identity for Bugis women. Known since the mid-9th century, *bodo* attire is one of the oldest traditional attires in the world, emphasizing the richness and historical depth of Bugis cultural history (Adela et al., 2023). The association of traditional attire with significant events, such as weddings and dance festivals, underscores its role in maintaining and communicating traditions and social values (Warni & Afria, 2023).

The adaptation and integration of the Mappadendang ritual in Kasimbar Palapi Village with other rituals add layers of meaning to the celebration. The presence of a *tojang* or giant swing reaching 15 meters highlights a unique aspect of the Mappadendang ritual in Kasimbar Palapi Village compared to practices elsewhere. The *Mattojang* ritual or swinging is not just part of the entertainment but also rich in spiritual symbolism. The practice of holding a rice deity while swinging depicts a sacred relationship between humans and nature, signifying reverence and hopes for fertility and prosperity.

Thus, through the presentation of traditional cake and cuisine like *nasu konro* and *coto* in the Mappadendang ritual, the Bugis ethnicity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people not only maintains their traditional cuisine traditions but also asserts their cultural identity. These culinary practices are not just about food consumption but rather a broader expression of identity, togetherness, and cultural continuity (Syahril & Anjarsari, 2023). Meanwhile, the integration of cultural elements like *bodo* attire and the *Mattojang* ritual into the Mappadendang ritual underscores the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Bugis ethnic identity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people. The existence and execution of these traditions are not only efforts to preserve culture but also demonstrate harmonious adaptation and interaction between the Bugis ethnicity and their surrounding environment and community. Through the Mappadendang ritual, the Bugis ethnicity solidifies their cultural identity while enriching the cultural mosaic of the Kaili indigenous people area.

B. The Benefits of the Mappadendang Ritual for Social Life in Kasimbar Palapi Village

The presence and preservation of traditions within a society indicate the inherent values and benefits, manifesting across various aspects of social life.

The Mappadendang ritual, which has persisted for 45 years in the region of the Kaili indigenous people, exemplifies the dynamic interaction between tradition and community. This activity is not merely a routine celebration but has become deeply rooted and an integral part of the social life in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This tradition reflects not only cultural identity but also strengthens the bonds of kinship and solidarity among community members.

In the context of social life, the Mappadendang ritual plays a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing social relations among the residents of Kasimbar Palapi Village. The collective activities of this tradition provide opportunities for individuals and groups to gather, interact, and collaborate. From preparation to execution, the Mappadendang ritual effectively strengthens kinship and friendship ties, instils the value of mutual assistance, and reinforces the sense of community and unity among the villagers.

Furthermore, the Mappadendang ritual also contributes to the preservation of culture and the transmission of cultural values to the younger generation. In every celebration, the knowledge and values embedded in this tradition are taught to children and teenagers, ensuring the continuity of Bugis ethnicity culture in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This underscores the role of tradition as a venue for learning and instilling cultural identity, which is crucial for the sustainability and richness of the community's culture (Rusman et al., 2023). The benefits of the Mappadendang ritual for social life in Kasimbar Palapi Village will be discussed in the following section.

1. Strengthening Interethnic Fellowship

The Mappadendang ritual celebrated by the Bugis ethnicity offers fascinating insights into the social dynamics among ethnic groups within a multi-ethnic community. The social structure of Kasimbar Palapi Village, divided by ethnic groups in each hamlet, implicitly limits daily inter-ethnic interactions. However, the Mappadendang ritual acts as a bridge connecting various ethnic groups, creating space for broader social interactions and enriching the fabric of community relations.

The contact hypothesis theory, which emphasizes that interactions between groups can reduce prejudices (Olonisakin, 2022) and enhance understanding and tolerance (Turner et al., 2020) among members of different groups, provided the contact occurs under supportive conditions, applies here. In the context of Kasimbar Palapi Village, the Mappadendang ritual serves as a practical example of this theory. This tradition provides ideal conditions for interethnic contact, where all individuals gather in a positive atmosphere and engage collectively in activities with shared meaning and purpose.

Thus, the Mappadendang ritual is essential not only for the Bugis ethnicity but also for the entire community in Kasimbar Palapi Village. In an atmosphere filled with joy and togetherness, the Kaili indigenous people, Balinese, Javanese, and other ethnicities can participate, contribute, and interact. This joint activity strengthens social solidarity, breaks ethnic barriers, and builds a more inclusive and harmonious social network. Moreover, this tradition also reinforces the community identity of Kasimbar Palapi Village as a whole, demonstrating that cultural diversity can be a unifying force, not a divisive one.

Therefore, the benefits of the Mappadendang ritual for social life extend beyond the preservation of Bugis ethnicity culture; it also fosters fellowship and promotes values of tolerance and respect among ethnic groups (Mamat et al., 2022). This activity allows all ethnicities to get to know and appreciate each other's cultural richness, creating awareness and respect for differences.

2. Enhancing Social Relationships

The Mappadendang ritual has proven effective as a tool for strengthening social relationships among various ethnicities and social groups. This traditional celebration's openness and inclusivity allow all community members, regardless of religious background, ethnicity, or social status, to participate and contribute. The fact that the Mappadendang ritual reaches a broader audience than other celebrations like weddings or religious rituals demonstrates its potential to enhance social cohesion and promote inclusion.

Social interaction theory states that interactions and communication among individuals form the foundation of society (Dewiyanti et al., 2023). In the context of the Mappadendang ritual, this traditional celebration creates a space for individuals to interact, exchange ideas, and understand each other, strengthening social networks and deepening the sense of community. The communal activities in the Mappadendang ritual, from preparation to execution, serve as a means for community members to engage and collaborate, solidifying the social foundation of Kasimbar Palapi Village.

The freedom to choose attire for attending the Mappadendang ritual also reflects the principles of inclusivity and openness (Dewilde et al., 2021). This freedom not only reduces participation barriers due to economic or social differences but also emphasizes that the primary value of the tradition lies in participation, not external formalities. Thus, the Mappadendang ritual not only serves as a venue to celebrate the harvest but also as a moment to celebrate diversity and unity within the community of Kasimbar Palapi Village.

Through the Mappadendang ritual, the community of Kasimbar Palapi Village has demonstrated how a tradition can be a powerful tool for

strengthening social bonds and building a more harmonious and inclusive society. The success of this tradition in enhancing social relations reaffirms the importance of preserving and celebrating cultural heritage as a means to enrich social interactions within a diverse community.

3. Fostering Social Care

The Mappadendang ritual demonstrates how tradition can be a powerful medium for fostering a sense of care and social solidarity in a multi-ethnic community. Initially, when the Bugis ethnicity needed a place to celebrate the Mappadendang ritual, the Kaili indigenous people provided a location and participated in the preparation and celebration. This act is a tangible manifestation of social care that transcends ethnic boundaries, showing that cultural activities can serve as a bridge connecting various groups within a society (Eden et al., 2024),

Social capital theory explains how social networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit can be strengthened through communal activities (Muis, 2022). The Mappadendang ritual, by involving various ethnicities in its celebration, indirectly strengthens the social capital of Kasimbar Palapi Village. The participation of the Kaili indigenous people, both materially and directly, creates a sense of shared ownership of the tradition, encouraging coordination and cooperation among different community members.

The sense of togetherness created through the Mappadendang ritual is not limited to the Bugis ethnicity but also involves the entire community of Kasimbar Palapi Village. The gathering of villagers to celebrate the harvest shows how social events can strengthen interpersonal relationships and build broader social networks. Activities like the *Mattojang* ritual and communal dancing provide entertainment and opportunities for interaction, sharing joy, and celebrating success together, which in turn enhances the spirit of care and mutual assistance among them.

Thus, the Mappadendang ritual is more than just a harvest thanksgiving celebration; it also builds and strengthens social relationships and promotes concern among communities in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This activity encourages everyone, regardless of ethnic origin, to unite, share resources, and celebrate success as one community. It reaffirms the importance of tradition in strengthening social bonds and supporting harmonious coexistence among various groups within a society (Maisondra, 2023).

4. Reinforcing Cultural Identity

The Mappadendang ritual plays a crucial role in enhancing the cultural identity of the Bugis ethnicity. This activity is a form of giving thanks for the

harvest and a medium to express and celebrate various aspects of Bugis ethnic identity. By incorporating distinctive elements such as *bodo* attire, traditional cake, *nasu konro*, and *coto*, and the symbolism of odd numbers in various aspects of the tradition, the Mappadendang ritual becomes a vital means to preserve and maintain cultural heritage.

Social identity theory provides a theoretical framework for understanding how celebrations like the Mappadendang ritual can influence a sense of cultural identity. According to this theory, individuals define themselves in the context of social groups, with certain aspects of the group's culture serving as sources of pride and differentiation from other groups (Syafrini et al., 2020). The Mappadendang ritual offers the Bugis ethnicity an opportunity to strengthen internal bonds and solidify group identity through rich and diverse cultural expressions.

Furthermore, the Mappadendang ritual facilitates cultural transmission from generation to generation. Children and young people of the Bugis ethnicity who participate in or witness this tradition gain a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage, including the values, norms, and symbolism associated with their ethnic identity. This not only helps maintain cultural continuity but also builds a sense of ownership and pride in their ethnic identity (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Thus, the Mappadendang ritual significantly contributes to forming and maintaining the Bugis ethnic identity in Kasimbar Palapi Village. Through this celebration, the Bugis not only celebrate the harvest but also reaffirm the values and traditions that form the foundation of their identity. It demonstrates that tradition and culture are core, inseparable aspects of a community's social life and ethnic identity (Rezah & Muzakkir, 2021).

5. Boosting the Spirit for Rice Farming

For the Bugis ethnicity, the Mappadendang ritual functions not only as a celebration but also as a profound source of motivation for rice farming activities. The motivation to farm does not stem solely from physical or economic needs but also from the cultural and historical values associated with this activity (Irmayani et al., 2023). By understanding the importance of rice in the history and mythology of the Bugis ethnicity, as recorded in the epic *La Galigo*, the community gains greater respect and enthusiasm for rice cultivation (Akhmar et al., 2022).

Intrinsic motivation theory suggests that activities imbued with personal significance and aligned with cultural values tend to increase an individual's motivation to engage in those activities (Maiyo et al., 2023). In the context of the Mappadendang ritual, this celebration strengthens the emotional

connection between Bugis farmers and their rice crops, making farming not just an economic activity but also an expression of respect for heritage and tradition. This reinforces that everyday work such as farming can be a source of pride and identity, not just a routine task.

Furthermore, rituals within the Mappadandang that involve the rice deity, as a symbol of respect for the rice, add a spiritual dimension to farming activities. The presence of the rice deity in the celebration not only reminds participants of the origins of rice according to their beliefs but also encourages the understanding that the harvest is a blessing that should be respected and appreciated. This understanding fosters a respectful attitude towards each farming process and outcome, strengthening the spirit to continue rice farming more vigorously.

Thus, the Mappadandang ritual plays a crucial role in nurturing and enhancing the spirit of rice farming among the Bugis ethnicity in Kasimbar Palapi Village. This tradition links farming activities to cultural, historical, and spiritual values, making rice farming not just an economic activity but an integral part of the social life and identity of the Bugis ethnicity (Mansyur et al., 2022). This illustrates how tradition and everyday activities can reinforce each other, lending broader significance to work that might otherwise seem simple or routine.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the Mappadandang ritual is an essential means for the Bugis ethnicity in the area of the Kaili indigenous people to maintain and express their cultural identity. Through elements such as traditional cake, traditional cuisine, and *bodo* attire, the Bugis ethnicity demonstrates solidarity and pride in their cultural heritage while contributing to the cultural diversity of the Kaili indigenous area. Moreover, this tradition provides broad social benefits, including strengthening interethnic fellowship, enhancing social relationships, fostering social care, reinforcing cultural identity, and boosting the spirit of rice farming. Thus, the Mappadandang ritual functions as cultural preservation and a tool for social adaptation and integration for the Bugis ethnicity, showing how tradition can bridge the past and current social needs and dynamics.

Based on the above conclusions, it is recommended that the Department of Education and Culture of Parigi Moutong Regency support the preservation and adaptation of the Mappadandang ritual by providing facilities and platforms for the Bugis ethnicity and other ethnicities to showcase and share their cultural values. The government should also ensure the availability and affordability of fertilizers and streamline the irrigation process for rice farming, a crucial element of the Mappadandang ritual. To the traditional leaders of the Bugis ethnicity, Kaili indigenous

people, and other ethnic groups, it is recommended that they continue collaborating in organizing the Mappadendang ritual as a platform for interethnic fellowship and to strengthen cultural identity. The community in Kasimbar Palapi Village is encouraged to continue participating in and supporting this activity, considering its significant benefits for social harmony and cultural preservation. With good cooperation among all parties, the Mappadendang ritual can continue to be preserved as a valuable cultural heritage, enriching diversity and strengthening cultural identity in a region rich with multiple identities.

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