

An Analysis of the Sandobatu Tradition in Compong Village, Sidenreng Rappang Regency: A Case Study of Masara Culture

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the Sandobatu tradition in Compong Village, Sidenreng Rappang Regency, with a specific focus on its significance in preserving Masara culture. Utilizing a qualitative research approach, the study examines the role of traditional leaders in maintaining this cultural heritage and fostering a sense of identity among the community. The findings reveal that while traditional leaders actively promote and uphold the Masara traditions, the younger generation faces challenges in preserving them due to the growing influence of globalization and modern technology. This shift has led to a decline in cultural understanding and engagement among younger members of the community. In response, efforts have been made to educate the youth on the importance of these traditions through cultural discussions and interactive learning activities. Additionally, the study underscores the necessity of documenting and digitizing Masara rituals to ensure their longevity and accessibility for future generations. Preserving these traditions is crucial for maintaining the cultural integrity of the community and strengthening intergenerational connections.

Keywords: Sandobatu Tradition; Masara Culture; Cultural Preservation

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation known for its cultural richness, with diverse ethnic groups spread across the archipelago, each possessing distinct traditions, languages, and customs. The country's vast geographical landscape and complex cultural heritage have fostered the development of a wide array of indigenous cultures, deeply rooted in the history and values of local communities. However, as Indonesia continues to modernize and become more interconnected with the global community, its indigenous cultures are facing challenges posed by globalization, technology, and the erosion of traditional values. In particular, traditional ceremonies and customs

are at risk of being lost or diluted as younger generations increasingly embrace modernity and foreign influences. Compong Village, located in the Sidenreng Rappang Regency of South Sulawesi, is home to a community that holds the Sandobatu tradition in high regard. This tradition is closely tied to the Masara culture, a significant part of the local identity. The Masara ritual, which includes various sacred practices and ceremonies, has long been a vital expression of the community's connection to its heritage and spiritual beliefs. The culture is not only a symbol of the community's uniqueness but also a means of maintaining social cohesion and transmitting values across generations.

The Sandobatu tradition plays a pivotal role in the lives of Compong's inhabitants, as it governs important cultural activities, agricultural practices, and spiritual ceremonies. Masara culture, in particular, reflects the community's deep respect for nature, family, and their ancestors. However, as globalization continues to influence the younger generation, many of the youth in Compong Village find themselves increasingly detached from their cultural roots. With the pervasive influence of technology and foreign cultures, there is a growing gap between the older and younger generations when it comes to understanding and participating in these traditional practices. The importance of preserving the Sandobatu tradition and the Masara culture cannot be overstated. It represents more than just a set of rituals; it is a way of life that has sustained the community for centuries. Preserving these traditions is crucial not only for maintaining cultural identity but also for ensuring that future generations can continue to experience and learn from the values embedded in these practices. Traditional leaders in Compong Village have expressed a strong commitment to preserving the Masara culture, recognizing its role in defining the community's identity and providing a sense of belonging.

This research aims to explore the role of the Sandobatu tradition in shaping the cultural identity of the Compong Village community and the factors that influence its survival in the modern era. By understanding the challenges faced by the community in maintaining these traditions, the study will provide insight into how these cultural practices can be revitalized and preserved for future generations. The research will also examine the efforts made by traditional leaders and the community in promoting cultural awareness, education, and participation in the Masara rituals. Through qualitative research methods, including interviews, observations, and documentation, this study will analyze the perspectives of key informants such as traditional leaders, community members, and cultural experts. These insights will help to understand the role of the Masara culture in the daily lives of the people of Compong and the broader implications of its preservation. The research will also explore how the community adapts to modern challenges while trying to maintain their traditional practices and values.

In examining the Sandobatu tradition and Masara culture, the study will address the broader issue of cultural preservation in the face of globalization. It will provide a case study for other indigenous communities that face similar challenges in maintaining their cultural heritage. The findings from this research are expected to

contribute to the discourse on the importance of safeguarding indigenous traditions and offer practical suggestions for preserving these cultural practices in an increasingly globalized world. The study's outcomes will not only highlight the value of the Sandobatu tradition in preserving the cultural identity of Compong Village but also serve as a reminder of the importance of cultural continuity in the face of change. As globalization continues to shape the world, it is essential to strike a balance between embracing modernity and safeguarding the cultural practices that define and unite communities. The research aims to ensure that the Masara culture remains an enduring symbol of the community's identity and resilience in a rapidly changing world. The research will shed light on the critical role of traditional leaders and the broader community in preserving the Sandobatu tradition and Masara culture. By exploring the challenges and efforts involved in cultural preservation, the study will offer valuable insights into how indigenous traditions can thrive amidst modernity. It will serve as an important resource for future generations, ensuring that the Masara culture remains a living, evolving heritage for years to come.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The preservation of cultural traditions amid globalization has become a focal point in studies of cultural anthropology, sociology, and heritage management. Globalization, while fostering greater connectivity, has also led to the erosion of local cultures in many parts of the world. Local traditions, such as those practiced by the Sandobatu community in Compong Village, South Sulawesi, are particularly vulnerable to these forces. These cultural practices, including the Masara ritual, serve as the foundation of the community's identity, and the challenges of maintaining them in a rapidly changing world are increasingly evident. Cultural identity, as defined by various scholars, plays a crucial role in sustaining traditional practices. Tylor (1871) described culture as encompassing knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, and customs, elements which are often passed down through generations. In indigenous communities, culture and identity are closely intertwined, with customs such as rituals, ceremonies, and traditional knowledge forming the core of what it means to belong to a community. The Sandobatu tradition, through its Masara culture, provides the community with a distinct cultural identity that links them to their ancestors and to the land they inhabit.

Traditional ceremonies, like the Masara ritual, are crucial to the continuity of cultural identity. These rituals are not only expressions of spiritual beliefs but also serve to reaffirm social bonds within the community. As Geertz (1973) noted, rituals help to articulate the values and ideologies of a community, providing a framework through which individuals relate to each other and their environment. The Masara ritual, which includes various stages of communal activities, plays an important role in fostering social cohesion, reinforcing shared values, and ensuring that cultural knowledge is passed down from one generation to the next. However, the impact of globalization presents significant challenges to the preservation of such traditions. Hall (1997) argued that globalization can lead to the homogenization of cultures,

where local practices are overshadowed by dominant global trends, particularly from Western societies. The younger generations in Compong Village, like those in many other parts of Indonesia, are increasingly influenced by modern technologies, foreign media, and global cultural practices, which may result in a loss of connection to their cultural heritage. As a result, the Masara culture, like many indigenous traditions, faces the risk of fading away unless deliberate efforts are made to preserve it.

Cultural preservation strategies have been widely discussed in the literature, with documentation and education being key components of successful initiatives. Documentation, including the recording of rituals and ceremonies through digital media, provides a valuable tool for safeguarding cultural heritage. According to Kurniawati (2014), digital platforms can play a vital role in making cultural practices accessible to a wider audience, both locally and globally. In the context of the Masara ritual, documenting the various stages of the ceremony can help preserve its meaning and significance for future generations, while also raising awareness among outsiders about the importance of the tradition. Furthermore, intergenerational knowledge transfer is a crucial aspect of cultural preservation. Ardiyanti (2015) emphasized the importance of educating younger generations about their cultural heritage as a way of ensuring that traditional practices are actively maintained. In Compong Village, traditional leaders and elders play a central role in this process, passing on their knowledge and experiences through direct involvement in the rituals and through storytelling. By involving the younger generation in the Masara ritual, the community ensures that cultural values and practices are not only remembered but are also lived experiences.

Cultural sustainability has emerged as a concept aimed at addressing the challenges of preserving traditions in the face of modernization. Serageldin (2000) defined cultural sustainability as the ability to safeguard the integrity of cultural practices while allowing them to evolve in response to contemporary needs. For the Sandobatu community, this means finding ways to adapt the Masara ritual to the modern world while retaining its core cultural values. Initiatives such as involving the younger generation in the rituals and using digital tools to document and share the ceremonies are examples of how cultural sustainability can be achieved. Finally, previous studies on the Sandobatu tradition and the Masara culture have provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for preserving this cultural heritage. Research by Malik (2019) focused on the role of traditional dances like Pajaga Sando Batu in the Masara ritual, showing how these performances help maintain cultural identity. Other studies have explored the role of documentation and digital media in preserving indigenous cultures (Wibowo, 2017), highlighting the importance of integrating modern technology into cultural preservation efforts. Despite these efforts, the continued challenge remains to ensure that the younger generation stays connected to their cultural roots while navigating the pressures of globalization.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the role of the Sandobatu tradition in preserving the Masara culture in Compong Village, Sidenreng Rappang Regency. A case study approach is used to examine the Sandobatu tradition within its specific cultural context, allowing for an in-depth exploration of how it is maintained and adapted in the modern era. Participants are selected through purposive sampling to ensure that individuals with direct knowledge and involvement in the tradition contribute to the study. The primary participants include traditional leaders, such as A'das Sando, A'das Sara, and other community elders, who lead the Masara rituals and play a crucial role in cultural preservation. Additionally, community members who actively participate in the continuation of the tradition are included to provide insights into local efforts to sustain the practice. Furthermore, representatives from the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago (AMAN) are involved to offer a broader perspective on indigenous cultural preservation and the challenges faced in maintaining such traditions in a rapidly changing society.

Instrument and Procedures

Data is collected through three primary methods. First, observation is conducted by attending Masara rituals and related cultural activities to document the ritual processes, community participation, and intergenerational interactions. This method provides a firsthand understanding of how traditions are practiced and maintained within the community. Second, semi-structured interviews are carried out with traditional leaders, community members, and cultural experts to explore the significance of the Masara culture, the challenges faced in preserving it, and the efforts made to ensure its relevance among younger generations. These interviews allow for in-depth discussions, giving participants the opportunity to share their perspectives and experiences. Lastly, documentation involves the collection of written records, photographs, and video recordings of the Sandobatu tradition and Masara rituals. This includes historical texts and any existing digital materials that provide context on the evolution of these cultural practices over time.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is employed to identify and interpret key patterns in the data. The process begins with data familiarization, where the researcher thoroughly reviews interview transcripts, field notes, and collected documents. Next, coding is conducted to categorize segments of text based on recurring themes such as cultural identity, globalization, education, and community involvement in preservation efforts. These coded data are then grouped into broader themes in the theme development stage, aligning with the study's research questions. Finally, in the interpretation phase, the researcher analyzes the identified themes in relation to the

study's objectives, drawing conclusions about the role of the Sandobatu tradition in cultural preservation and its interaction with modern societal influences.

Ethical considerations are carefully prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the research purpose and their right to confidentiality. Additionally, cultural norms and practices are respected, and participants are given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. While the findings provide valuable insights into cultural preservation in Compong Village, the study has certain limitations. The focus on a single village means the results may not be fully generalizable to other indigenous communities. Additionally, the reliance on qualitative methods introduces the possibility of researcher bias in data interpretation. However, despite these limitations, the study's depth and richness offer significant contributions to understanding the complexities of maintaining indigenous traditions in the face of globalization.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study's findings reveal several key insights into the role of the Sandobatu tradition and Masara culture in Compong Village, as well as the challenges and efforts made to preserve these traditions. One of the central themes identified in the study is the critical role played by traditional leaders in maintaining the Masara culture. Traditional leaders such as A'das Sando, A'das Sara, and other community elders have been instrumental in ensuring that the rituals are upheld. These leaders view the Masara rituals as an integral part of the community's identity and work diligently to transmit these traditions to younger generations. Through active participation in the rituals and by educating the youth, they aim to ensure the continuity of the Masara culture. Despite the strong support from traditional leaders, the study found significant challenges in preserving the Masara culture. The influence of globalization and the rise of modern technology are the primary factors contributing to a shift in the values of the younger generation. Many young people in Compong Village are increasingly drawn to modern lifestyles and external cultural influences, leading to a diminishing interest in traditional practices. This generational gap has resulted in many younger individuals being unaware of the importance of the Masara rituals, which has raised concerns about the potential erosion of their cultural identity.

The research also highlighted the community's efforts to address these challenges. One of the most prominent strategies employed by traditional leaders is education. Traditional leaders are actively involved in teaching younger generations about the significance of the Masara culture. By involving the youth directly in the rituals, they aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage. Interviews with traditional leaders and community members revealed that this hands-on approach is crucial in encouraging active participation and instilling a sense of pride in their cultural identity. In addition to education, the study found that documentation and digitalization of the Masara rituals have become key efforts in preserving the tradition. Community members and traditional leaders have

recognized the importance of recording the rituals to ensure that they are accessible to future generations. Digital documentation, including video recordings and photographs, serves as a valuable tool for safeguarding the rituals, especially for younger generations who may not always be able to participate directly. The use of digital platforms to share these recordings has also enabled the Masara culture to reach a broader audience, including those who may not be directly involved in the community.

The integration of modern technology, particularly social media, has played an important role in the preservation of the Masara culture. Community members have started using platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to share their traditions with the world. These digital spaces have provided an opportunity to engage younger generations who may be more inclined to interact with cultural practices through modern mediums. This approach has not only helped in revitalizing interest among the youth but has also raised awareness about the Masara culture among a global audience, contributing to its broader recognition and preservation. However, the study also found that the younger generation's increasing exposure to global media and technological advancements has led to a sense of detachment from their cultural roots. Many young people are more focused on modern educational goals and career aspirations, often viewing traditional rituals as outdated or irrelevant. This has resulted in a decrease in the participation of youth in the Masara rituals. As noted by several participants, there is a growing gap between the older and younger generations in terms of cultural engagement, with many younger individuals not fully understanding the significance of the Masara traditions.

Despite these challenges, the research also found that there are promising signs of revitalization within the younger generation. Some young people have expressed a renewed interest in learning about the Masara culture, with a few taking on active roles in leading rituals or assisting with the documentation process. These young individuals serve as role models for their peers, demonstrating that it is possible to balance modernity with cultural preservation. The efforts of these youth, coupled with the support of traditional leaders, provide hope that the Masara culture will continue to thrive and evolve in the face of modern challenges. While the preservation of the Sandobatu tradition and Masara culture in Compong Village faces significant challenges, there are considerable efforts being made by traditional leaders and community members to ensure its continuity. Through education, digital documentation, and the engagement of younger generations, the community is working to preserve their cultural heritage. The study contributes to the broader conversation on cultural preservation, highlighting the importance of balancing traditional practices with the demands of a rapidly changing world. The continued involvement of the younger generation and the use of modern tools for cultural documentation will be key to ensuring that the Masara culture remains an integral part of the community's identity for future generations.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the preservation of the Sandobatu tradition, with a focus on the Masara culture, in Compong Village, Sidenreng Rappang Regency. The findings underscore the significance of the Masara ritual in maintaining the cultural identity of the community and the crucial role of traditional leaders in ensuring the continuity of this heritage. Despite their efforts, the research identified several challenges, particularly the influence of globalization, modern technology, and the declining participation of the younger generation in cultural practices. These factors have contributed to a generational gap in cultural engagement, threatening the long-term survival of the Masara culture. However, the study also highlights the proactive steps taken by the community to address these challenges. Traditional leaders have prioritized educating the youth about the importance of the Masara rituals and have integrated them into the rituals themselves to foster deeper understanding and participation. Furthermore, the documentation and digitalization of the Masara rituals have proven to be valuable tools in preserving the culture for future generations. By utilizing modern technologies and social media platforms, the community has expanded the reach of their cultural practices, engaging both local youth and a global audience in the preservation efforts. While the Masara culture faces significant pressures from modernization, the efforts of the traditional leaders and the community demonstrate a strong commitment to cultural preservation. Through education, digital documentation, and active youth engagement, the community is creating pathways for the continuity of the Sandobatu tradition. This research contributes to the broader discourse on cultural sustainability, offering insights into how indigenous communities can navigate the challenges posed by globalization while safeguarding their cultural heritage. The ongoing involvement of the younger generation and the integration of modern technologies will be key to ensuring that the Masara culture remains a vital part of the community's identity for years to come.

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