

MAUDU LOMPOA CULTURE IN SHAPING THE CHARACTER OF LOVING THE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Environmental damage is a recurring issue in South Sulawesi. The community remains insufficiently aware of the importance of environmental conservation. One of the contributing factors is the lack of a character that values and loves

the environment within the community. It is necessary to integrate local culture into environmental issues. Society should recognize that integrating knowledge and personal norms inherited from their ancestors can shape an environmentally friendly character. This research examines how Maudu Lompoa culture shapes an environmentally aware character among the followers. The research findings reveal that the formation of an environmentally aware character in Maudu Lompoa is rooted in the love and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a holy figure. Maudu Lompoa is conducted with great reverence at each stage, emphasizing cleanliness and the sanctity of the celebration process. The formation of an environmentally aware character stems from behavioral patterns and ancestral messages, which are embodied in preparing celebration materials, food, and event venues. This study could shape the community's understanding of environmental preservation and inspire a lifelong love of the environment ingrained in their values.

Kerusakan lingkungan di Sulawesi Selatan masih sering terjadi. Masyarakat masih kurang menyadari pentingnya menjaga lingkungan. Kurangnya karakter cinta lingkungan dalam diri masyarakat menjadi salah satu penyebabnya. Diperlukan integrasi budaya lokal dalam permasalahan lingkungan. Masyarakat harus menyadari bahwa integrasi pengetahuan dan norma-norma pribadi dari leluhur sangat penting untuk membentuk karakter cinta lingkungan. Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang budaya lokal Maudu Lompoa dengan fokus pada pelaksanaannya yang membentuk karakter cinta lingkungan para pengikutnya. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa pembentukan karakter cinta lingkungan pada pelaksanaan Maudu Lompoa dibentuk oleh landasan kecintaan kepada Nabi Muhammad SAW sebagai manusia suci. Pelaksanaan Maudu Lompoa dilaksanakan dengan penuh khidmat dari setiap tahapannya dengan memperhatikan kebersihan dan kesucian prosesi perayaan. Pembentukan karakter cinta lingkungan terbentuk dari bentuk perilaku dan pesan-pesan leluhur, yang tetuang dalam perilaku menyiapkan bahan perayaan, makanan, dan tempat pelaksanaan. Penelitian ini dapat memberikan implikasi pada pengetahuan masyarakat dalam menjaga lingkungan sekitarnya, membentuk karakter cinta lingkungan yang akan bertahan lama karena berasal dari kepercayaan yang dianutnya

Keywords: character; environment; maudu lompoa culture

Introduction

Environmental degradation continues to be a prevalent issue in South Sulawesi. Several sectors and regions within the area have been identified to encounter environmental problems, such as river water pollution due to domestic waste (Amrul & Makkau, 2023), communicable diseases (Puspita, et al., 2023), and air pollution (Surya, et al., 2020). Additionally, natural balance supporters are also suffering from damage due to mining activities (Adidharma & Takarina, 2023), and mangrove forests, which serve as coastal ecosystem stabilizers, have also suffered damage (Hidayat & Dessy, 2021). Many people still neglect environmentally conscious behaviors (Holilah, 2016; Sukendar et al., 2019).

Conscious efforts should be made by fostering an environmentally friendly character within the community. Thus far, the formation of the character has been primarily exhibited in formal education at schools (Afandi, 2013; Kasi et al., 2018). Meanwhile, this character can also be cultivated through local knowledge and personal norms embedded in perception.

An environmentally friendly character is an integral part of living cleanly, from oneself, one's family, and the surrounding environment. Encouraging individuals to be environmentally conscious is not easy, especially if one is unable to practice it personally. Environmental awareness remains a complex issue, and unconscious behavior towards the environment leads to a decline in the quality of the living environment day by day, disrupting the sustainability and balance of ecosystems. One of the effective approaches today is the natural behavior practiced by community groups to maintain cleanliness and protect their environment. This behavior is deeply rooted in the cultural values of Indonesian society, often expressed through traditional celebrations or ceremonies that foster a sense of unity and shared goals (Harahap, 2015) and interconnectedness with a common purpose (Safei & Himayaturrohman, 2023; Won & Lee, 2020).

Local culture adds distinctiveness to the preservation of values in society. Community groups naturally develop their own culture, generating expected norms for practice (Persada, et al., 2010; Yusuf et al., 2023). In addition to customary practices, cultural ceremonies also instill values that become integral to community life. Therefore, local wisdom values are

robust because they are based on communal bonds and manifested in local communities (Nurdin, 2016; Rocmadi, 2012).

Research on the integration of local culture and the environment has been conducted. Local cultures that value the preservation of water sources (Sumarmi, 2015), conservation of forests (Sufia et al., 2016; Syarif et al., 2016; Yusuf, et.al 2019), and protection of coastal ecosystems (Marlina, et.al 2022) have been explored. However, research on local cultures with a focus on building an environmentally friendly character through the practice of cultural values has not been conducted. The local wisdom of Maudu Lompoa among the Cikoang community as a local culture in South Sulawesi is unique in the life of the local community, and it continues to persist (Teddy. et al., 2019).

Maudu Lompoa is a blend of celebration rituals and religious beliefs within the Cikoang community's faith. It has become a routine for the Cikoang community to express their love and exemplary values from Prophet Muhammad SAW (Sila, 2001). The implementation of Maudu Lompoa, as one of the local cultures of South Sulawesi, has spread to various regions and has become followers of the belief of Sayyid Jalaluddin (Hisyam, Muhammad, 2014). The first person to bring the teachings of love for Prophet Muhammad SAW through Maudu Lompoa celebrations in Cikoang held the highest position in his community (Saleh, 2013). The ceremony is rich in behaviors that promote cleanliness and environmental care during the Maudu Lompoa celebration, which shapes the environmentally friendly character. In essence, Islam, the religion believed by the Cikoang community, has taught them how to maintain cleanliness and care for the environment, maintaining a harmonious balance between humans and nature (Pinem, 2016). This research focuses on the implementation of the Maudu Lompoa cultural celebration that shapes an environmentally friendly character among its followers.

Method

This research was conducted in the village of Cikoang, Mangarabombang, Takalar Regency. This qualitative study aimed to explore the Maudu Lompoa celebration that contributes to the development of environmentally friendly character. It used ethnographic research approach

to uncover the meaning of local culture in the Maudu Lompoa celebration. Data for the research were collected through observation, documentation, and interviews. Data were collected through interview with the village chief, village officials, elders, and members of the community who participated in the celebration. The selection of research participants in qualitative studies involves careful considerations, as emphasized by Creswell (2019). Besides, observations were also carried out to directly witness the event. The key informants were Opu, who held a prominent position as a community leader in Cikoang, and other community leaders who led smaller groups within the Cikoang community. Residents who participated in the Maudu Lompoa celebration were also included. The collected data were then tabulated and analyzed using an interactive analysis model, which involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

The data were analyzed using qualitative analysis by Creswell (2019). First, all data were transcribed as part of data processing and preparation. Second, they were coded and tabulated. Third, they were reduced through selection, simplification, summary, abstraction, and transformation. Fourth, local wisdom data on Torosiaje ecotourism were examined in more detail by categorizing and classifying the data into relevant components related to environmental conservation in the Torosiaje ecotourism area. Fifth, an in-depth investigation was made into locally aligned wisdom with environmental conservation based on category codes at a deeper level. Sixth, distinctive and interesting aspects were studied, leading to conclusions.

Finding and Discussion

The foundation of *Maudu Lompoa*

Maudu Lompoa is a celebration of the birth of Muhammad, which falls on the 12th of Rabi' al-awwal every year (Kadir, 1983/1984). The implementation of Maudu Lompoa is based on love and sincerity. This celebration is carried out based on household heads, and the conditions and rules are applied individually. The Maudu Lompoa celebration follows the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, a sacred and holy day for the people of Cikoang that reminds them of the values embedded in the Maudu Lompoa celebration, namely, love for Muhammad and love for the universe.

The recommended duration of the Maudu celebration is 18 days in the month of Rabi' al-awwal, starting on the 12th of Rabi' al-awwal in the Islamic calendar and ending on the 30th of Rabi' al-awwal. The preparation and celebration period can extend to 40-50 days or more. The extended period highlights the genuine dedication and earnestness of the Cikoang community in appreciating the importance and principles linked with the Maudu Lompoa festival.

The rules of the Maudu Lompoa celebration involve maintaining personal hygiene, the use of materials, and the surrounding environment. The values embodied in the Maudu Lompoa celebration are expected to bring blessings to the lives of the people of Cikoang. Therefore, the celebration is conducted with great reverence, as it commemorates the birth of the holy and special human being, Muhammad SAW. The implementation of this celebration is managed with attention to cleanliness and purity in every aspect of the Maudu Lompoa procession. They believe that any action performed in accordance with the rules of the Cikoang community's beliefs regarding Maudu Lompoa will bring blessings. Conversely, not following the terms and conditions of the Maudu Lompoa celebration will result in the loss of blessings, and their efforts will be in vain.

The greater the sacrifice given, the greater the blessings received. Despite the high costs involved, they consider this celebration an obligation (Tenriwaru, & Yamin, N.S, 2016). Yamin et al. (2019) stated that the foundation of love for Prophet Muhammad leads to willingness and sincerity in giving offerings at great expense because what is prepared serves as provisions for the afterlife, as mentioned in the holy Quran: *"O you who believe, fear Allah and let every soul look to what he has put for tomorrow (hereafter); and fear Allah, surely Allah knows what you do. (Surah Al-Hashr: 18).*

The people of Cikoang carry out the Maudu Lompoa celebration with a high level of religious motivation (Hermin & Ahmadin, 2018). All absolute conditions must be met for the celebration to be accepted as a sign of their love for Prophet Muhammad SAW and as provisions for the Day of Judgment. The Maudu Lompoa celebration is very strict in enforcing its rules (Hendra, et al., 2019). The obligation of this celebration applies to every living soul. Participants in the celebration are counted per human soul, and every living soul is considered a part of the celebration. Therefore, the environmentally friendly character within the celebration is embedded from

birth, and the Maudu Lompoa celebration teaches that caring for the environment is the responsibility of every individual. Their souls are nurtured with love from the beginning of life and strengthened through the principles of sacrifice and sincerity. Love for the universe in their belief is a manifestation of their love for Muhammad SAW.

The behavior during the execution of *Maudu Lompoa*

The implementation process necessitates that individuals participating in the Maudu Lompoa celebration must undergo a purification bath known as "mandi safar" or cleansing bath. This purification bath, which is often taken in flowing river water, is intended to rid oneself of all pollutants, apparent or unseen. It is the first requirement to fulfil before preparing the necessary materials for the celebration. This purification process involves performing a ritual ablution by reciting prayers and pouring water over the entire body as a way of cleansing. Maintaining personal hygiene before commencing the Maudu Lompoa celebration is significant. Failure to purify oneself with the "mandi safar" renders one ineligible to participate in the Maudu Lompoa celebration.

Once the purification process is complete, preparations for the celebration begin. The initial step involves the preparation of chickens to be used as sacrificial offerings. These chickens are confined in cages for a period of 40 days. The Maudu Lompoa celebration places a strong emphasis on the cleanliness of all materials used. The confinement of chickens is intended to ensure their cleanliness and well-being. The cleanliness of the cages is regularly maintained to ensure that the chickens' food does not become contaminated. Consequently, the chickens confined for 40 days are believed to have consumed clean food and remained free from impurities. Even the water provided for their drinking is closely monitored for cleanliness. The use of chickens from outside sources, which are not subjected to confinement beforehand, is discouraged. Using chickens from external sources without proper care can lead to environmental issues and disease transmission.

Subsequent preparations for the Maudu Lompoa celebration involve the creation of baskets made from dried lontar leaves, which serve as containers for the food offerings. These baskets are woven from lontar leaves,

which are thoroughly dried beforehand. The materials used must be pristine, and they are sourced directly from the palm tree. They are then sun-dried and carefully inspected for any signs of impurity. Lontar leaf baskets are chosen for their white and clean appearance, making any stains easily discernible. The preparation process is conducted with great care and strict attention to maintaining the cleanliness of the materials to be used. The use of plastic basins for storing offerings is not permitted, as their origin cannot be definitively established, rendering them unhygienic for use in the Maudu Lompoo celebration. Inadequate plastic containers can potentially lead to various diseases.

As the month of Rabiul Awal comes, the community becomes busy preparing all the necessities for the celebration. An essential step is the crafting of "tusuk telur" (egg skewers), measuring approximately 60 cm in length and one cm in diameter, which are used for piercing eggs. The "salussung" (banana or coconut leaf) used as a covering for the "kanre maudu" is also prepared by sun-drying. The creation of decorative flowers and adornments begins as well. All materials must meet specific cleanliness criteria, and materials previously used for celebrations are not allowed. These materials are sourced directly from the local environment and nature. The execution of the celebration's requirements must adhere to applicable regulations, prioritizing cleanliness and ensuring that those in the vicinity are also clean, especially keeping them away from menstruating women, who are considered impure.



Figure 1. Rice pounding process

The pounding of rice takes place seven days before the celebration. It involves separating the rice grains from the husk by collectively pounding them. The rice is preferably harvested and managed personally to ensure the origins of the materials and their cleanliness, avoiding any contamination or impurities. The harvested rice is stored in a special location at the community's raised houses. Before use, the rice is sun-dried to ensure it is clean. All areas used for drying are enclosed with high fences, and the spaces between the posts are too narrow for animals to enter and defile the rice. Pounding the rice is executed with great care to prevent any grains from falling to the ground. Therefore, all surfaces used for rice processing are covered with mats made from lontar leaves, and they are enclosed with bamboo fences or even tents. The process of rice processing generates husks, which are disposed of through a dedicated opening, serving as an environmentally friendly way to create compost. This approach offers several benefits, such as reducing waste and preventing environmental contamination, including rivers that flow through Cikoang village. The maintenance of cleanliness is a tangible effort to prevent diseases.

Making coconut oil (*Aktanak oilyak*) and making traditional cake, such as *renggina*, *dodol*, *wajik* and the like are done four days prior the celebration day. The making of oil from coconut is done in a sterile and clean place. In addition, one of the rules used in this process is to not use a machine. Thus, the coconut is shredded by using hand shredder. It should be done in a special place, which is fenced and possibly with a tent. The behavior of keeping the environment clean is crucial because it determines whether the celebration of *Maudu Lompoa* is accepted. This activity is carried out by males and females, working together peeling coconuts from their belts with machetes (done by males) and grating the peeled coconuts (done by women). The shredded coconut is then squeezed and the milk produced is taken and cooked until it becomes oil. Figure 2 shows the yard during the process of making oil from coconut.



Figure 2. The making of coconut oil

The next is the procession of slaughtering the chicken (*Angnyamballe jangang*) for the celebration. Before being cut, the chicken feet, mouth, and feathers are cleaned with clean water. Before slaughtering the chicken, the slaughterers need to pray. They even must perform ablution first to clean themselves in the same way before Muslims perform prayers. They must dress modestly and respectfully, and their clothes must be clean. The chicken to be slaughtered is cleaned by rubbing water on its head, down to its body, and its legs. Then, the ties on its legs are released. Before the *angnyamballe*, a hole must be made for the blood. After that, the chicken blood was then buried. The behavior of maintaining cleanliness is very strong in this procession. A drain hole is made for the garbage from the procession. Both water and waste materials in the process are placed in one disposal area and are made sure not to flow anywhere. It is not even justified to throw the used water into the ditch.

The chickens that have been cut are then collected and cleaned together. The rest of the chicken cleaning is collected in a hole that has been provided. The waste from this slaughtering is properly maintained before it is piled up after the activity had been completed. The cleanliness is maintained, chicken that has been cut into pieces are fried with coconut oil that has been made beforehand. All these activities are carried out in one place. The implementation is carried out three days before the day of the celebration.

The *angnyongkolo kanre* procession or cooking rice is carried out the day before the celebration day. Before the procession, the rice is cleaned first

until it is completely clean. The water used is not to flow out of the ditch but is thrown into the prepared hole and then heaped up when all the activity processes has been completed, similarly managed with the other materials used for the celebration. After cleaning, the *angnyongkolo kanre* activity is immediately carried out by using a *pangnyongkolang* (clay pot) tool, the cleaned rice is cooked only until it is *ammatarata* (half cooked) because of fear of getting it spoiled quickly. In this process, eggs are also boiled.

The celebration stage is carried out by following the rules and regulations of the community belief, Cikoang. The first stage of the celebration is filling baskets (*ammone kanre*). The *baku ammone* procession is carried out on the day of the celebration. This procession is carried out by *anrong guru* who has the ability in the celebration of *Maudu Lompoa* (Hisyam, Muhammad, 2014). The baskets are filled with rice and chicken. All food ingredients that have been prepared for the *Maudu* celebration are to remain untouched and should not be tasted. The standard *ammone* process is carried out with wisdom and holiness. The behavior of maintaining cleanliness in this procession included the person who filled the basket must wear a sarong, songkok, and modest clothes as well as have hands and other body parts cleaned by taking ablution water. After filling this basket with food ingredients which are the main requirements in the celebration, the food ingredients are brought to the place of celebration with other people. Figure 3 shows the atmosphere of *Maudu Lompoa* celebration.



Figure 3. The celebration of *Maudu Lompoa*

The cultural values of Maudu Lompoa in shaping environmentally friendly character

The values embodied in the Maudu Lompoa celebration serve as the foundation for the livelihood of the Cikoang community. These values, handed down from their ancestors, remain preserved to date. The Maudu Lompoa celebration upholds values related to cleanliness and the surrounding environment. The primary focus during the Maudu Lompoa festivities is as follows:

Fostering a clean way of life; people are always encouraged to maintain personal hygiene, including handwashing and ensuring cleanliness before touching food. Unclean food can lead to contagious diseases, emphasizing the connection between environmental cleanliness and human health (Sumarni & Susanna, 2014). This clean way of life is also reflected in the community practice of ablutions before engaging in the preparation of Maudu Lompoa materials. The procedure involves cleansing the hands, mouth, nose, face, arms up to the elbows, the crown of the head, ears, and finally, washing the feet thoroughly before donning clean attire. This practice is deeply ingrained in the community's beliefs and is integral to their way of life.

Ensuring the cleanliness of food: All materials used in the celebration are under constant supervision, and the origins of the basic ingredients are meticulously checked. Moreover, these materials must be sourced directly from nature without any added substances whose origins are unknown. Self-management of these materials is crucial to guarantee their cleanliness. Several tools and materials used during the celebration, such as egg skewers and baskets, are intended for one-time use only. Reusing materials is discouraged. All materials used are organic in nature and originate directly from the environment. This stringent adherence to clean sourcing ensures that materials are not reused and that they are environmentally friendly (Setyawati et al., 2020).

Cultivating a clean environment: They consistently clean the yards and spaces used for the preparation of Maudu Lompoa materials. Each yard used by the community is sealed off and enclosed securely to prevent the entry of dirt or animals in the area. This practice reflects the community's moral values in maintaining the cleanliness of their surroundings, refraining from littering, and preserving the cleanliness of nearby waterways. The yard's

environment is designed to be as pleasant as possible and exhibits excellent health indicators (Leng et al., 2020). The main celebration venue is typically a large river in Cikoang Village. The nearby ditches are also well-maintained because adhering to the Maudu Lompoa values means that produced materials are not disposed of recklessly. Managing waste in accordance with Maudu Lompoa customs can reduce waste accumulation, and organic waste can be transformed into compost (Windraswara & Prihastuti, 2017). Balancing human needs with nature is crucial to maintain harmony in existence (Mansoben, 2003; Kartika & Sitepu, 2018; Kian et al., 2019; Sufia et al., 2016; Wiradimadja, 2019).

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the local Maudu Lompoa culture's role in shaping an environmentally friendly character. However, it is important to note that the environmentally friendly character instilled by the Maudu Lompoa tradition remains periodic, limited to the time of the celebration. Further research is required to explore the influence of the environmentally friendly character manifested through the Maudu Lompoa celebration in the daily lives of the Cikoang community. There is no absolute guarantee that the environmentally friendly character formed within the Maudu Lompoa culture can be applied at all times and in all circumstances.

The Maudu Lompoa culture, in shaping an environmentally friendly character, can maintain an environmental balance due to its long-standing and deeply rooted beliefs. Additionally, the belief in the Maudu Lompoa celebration continues to evolve with ongoing regeneration. Therefore, the Maudu Lompoa culture could serve as an alternative solution for integrating an environmentally friendly character into the predominantly Maudu Lompoa-following communities in South Sulawesi.

Conclusion

The Maudu Lompoa culture of the Cikoang community has molded an environmentally friendly character within them. The formation of this character originates from each stage of the Maudu Lompoa implementation. The first, based on the foundation of Maudu Lompoa execution, it is acquired from the principles of the Maudu Lompoa celebration for their love with Prophet Muhammad SAW, motivated by the religious values they adhere to. Maudu Lompoa is considered mandatory, and as such, the Maudu

Lompoo culture has instilled an environmentally friendly character within them from the beginning to the end of their lives. The second, based on the behavior during the Maudu Lompoo celebration, each stage of the celebration reflects the environmentally friendly character, on the inside as well as the outside because the celebration is practiced with deep reverence. The environmentally friendly character manifests in the purity of those who participate, the location of the celebration, and the materials used. The third, the values of Maudu Lompoo within the celebration consist of messages, behaviors, and interpretations of meaning in every object, symbol, action, and words in each activity. These values have shaped the environmentally friendly character.

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