

The Role of *Balombot* in Strengthening Social Solidarity and Cultural Awareness in the Fishing Community in Adean Village, Indonesia

Moh. Hasbullah Talaba¹, Yahya¹, Gayus Darius², Jayana Suryana Kembara¹

¹Departement of Antropology, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Hasanuddin University, Perintis Kemerdekaan Street Km 10, Makassar 90245, Indonesia

²Manado State Christian Institute (IAKN), Bougenville Street, Tateli Satu, Pineleng, North Sulawesi

*Corresponding Author: mohhasbullaht@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This research is related to the role of *Balombot* in strengthening social and cultural solidarity in Adean Village. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach, involving 10 informants consisting of the community, community leaders and village governments. The research was conducted on July 5-20, 2024, in Adean Village, Central Banggai District, Banggai Laut Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD). The study results showed that *Balombot*, a tradition of mutual cooperation, adheres to the principle of reciprocity or reciprocal assistance. It is still carried out today, both at major celebrations and family celebrations such as weddings, burials of the dead, and various other activities. The existence of the *Balombot* institution has strengthened the social and cultural solidarity of the people of Adean Village. This institution will survive if there is family, community, and local government support. The support of universities or other educational institutions and the media is also expected to help maintain this tradition.

INTRODUCTION

Banggai's cultural heritage, which includes its values, norms, and social functions, needs to be preserved so that it does not become extinct. Preserving this culture keeps these values alive and relevant now and in the future. Cultural values are a concept the community holds about things; they are considered important and valuable in life as a guideline that provides direction and orientation for people's lives (Soekanto, 1986; Koentjaraningrat, 1994).

One of the cultural heritages in the Banggai community is an institution called *Balombot*, which means 'gotong royong', 'mutual help' or 'please help'. The *Balombot* institution has become an inseparable part and the most important social activity of the fishing community's life in Adean Village, Central Banggai District, Banggai Laut Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Not only in Adean Village but this *Balombot*

tradition is also carried out in a number of other surrounding villages, such as Badumpayan, Gonggong, and Mominit Villages.

The implementation of the *Balombot* institution can be found in many social or community activities, such as wedding parties, deaths, or other celebrations, where people who live in the village, both family, relatives, and non-relatives, come to help the party who is carrying out the celebration, starting from the process of planning and implementation and continuing until the completion of the activity.

Based on preliminary literature studies, researchers did not find studies on *Balombot* widely published; even in media reports, it is rarely in the spotlight. However, similar institutions are found in many other cultures in Indonesia. In the Toraja community (Toraja and North Toraja Regencies), South Sulawesi is known for the tradition of mutual cooperation called *kasiturusan* (Tahir *et al.*, 2020; Tarrapa & Junaedi, 2021; Paillin, 2022; Situru & Tulak, 2022; Welem, 2023). Like *Balombot*, *kasiturusan* is a tradition that has a meaning and purpose to strengthen social solidarity.

The tradition of reciprocity can also be found in the implementation of *kalomba* rituals in the Ammatoa Kajang indigenous community, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi (Megawaty & Andriani, 2017; Maruf, 2020; Nain, 2024a, b). In this *kaloma* ritual, guests, either from family, relatives, neighbors, or other villagers who come, will give goods or money called *passolo* (Nain, 2024a, b).

In South Central Timor Regency, East Nusa Tenggara is a system called *manonob*. The *manonob* institution has been applied in various aspects of people's lives, including religious moderation. In respect to religious moderation, the *manonob* institution is an institution that mobilizes community solidarity, creates harmonious relationships in society, and reduces polarization between religious communities. This concept encourages people to help and support each other and respect the differences that exist between them. Thus, ethnicity, religion, and race are not obstacles to instilling a *manonob* culture (mutual cooperation), such as building houses, cleaning gardens, harvesting garden products, and cemeteries (Natonis *et al.*, 2024).

In these traditions, the person who receives help will 'give back' this favor to those who offer this aid or would apply the principle of reciprocity. The assistance provided can be in the form of energy, money, and daily necessities, especially those that will be used in the event; this manouver can be interpreted into humans being social creatures cannot live alone and they are in need of others (Soekanto & Sulistyowati, 2017).

Balombot and similar institutions are implemented in many community activities, such as religious activities, grief, marriage, and other activities, to meet the basic needs of human life, such as health, education, and other economic needs. With this social or institutional capital, people will find it easier to do every activity related to their work and more voluntary; anyone can follow it (Zuhri, 2013).

This article explores the *Balombot* institution as a traditional practice of mutual cooperation that continues to thrive today. It examines its influence on social solidarity

and cultural awareness, as well as the factors contributing to its persistence within the Banggai community, particularly in Adean Village.

According to **Bourdieu (1986)**, social capital is a resource found in individuals or groups within a network, formed through institutional and non-institutional relationships that mutually benefit each other.

Social capital is a manifestation of an organized society, seen through networks, norms, and trust values, which play a role in cooperation and beneficial actions. Specifically, it is argued that the erosion of bonds within families and communities can significantly impact social life (**Putnam *et al.*, 1994**).

Fukuyama (2000) explains that social capital refers to the norms that create a framework for cooperation between two or more individuals. These norms can manifest in simple interactions, such as friendships, or in more complex forms, like shared beliefs within a community. They are grounded in commitment and mutual bonds and foster cooperation within social communities.

According to **Bourdieu (1986)**, the concept of social capital is based on understanding that capital is not limited to economic aspects and that social exchange does not only focus on self-interest but rather includes capital. Bourdieu's thinking is based on the social reproduction theory and symbolic power. Bourdieu's work highlights the structural constraints and unequal access to institutional resources influenced by class, gender, and race.

Social capital is seen as a network, norm, and trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation for the common good. The existence of this social capital allows community members to collaborate voluntarily, making it easier to complete tasks that require joint participation (**Putnam *et al.*, 1994**).

Different views are expressed by **Bourdieu (1986)**, who sees social capital as belonging to the individual, not the collective, mainly from one's social position and status. Social capital allows one to exercise power over groups or individuals who mobilize resources. For Bourdieu, social capital is not equally available to all members of a group or collective but only to those who seek to acquire it through attaining positions of power, status, and the development of good relations. Social capital is inseparable from class factors and other forms of stratification, which ultimately involve different types of profit or progress (**Bourdieu, 1986**). Bourdieu framed social capital as an actual or virtual resource that an individual or group obtains through the ownership of "relationships that are more or less institutionalized through mutual acquaintance and recognition" (**Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992**), so that social capital resides within the individual and is related to social connections that a person can use for progress.

Mutual cooperation is a form of social capital. It has long grown and developed in the social life of the Indonesian people, inherited from generation to generation. Gotong royong is a form of group cooperation in the community that aims to achieve a positive

result through deliberation/consensus. The implementation of mutual cooperation is based on the spirit of willingness, togetherness, tolerance, and trust (**Noer, 2013**).

Social solidarity is a state in which a relationship between individuals and or groups is based on the factors of moral feelings and beliefs that are embraced together and strengthened by shared emotional experiences. This social solidarity produces a spirit of togetherness that arises from the existence of relationships between individuals and with groups based on mutual trust and feelings; social solidarity is needed in helping solve problems faced by community members (**Desyana, 2013**).

Solidarity is a network of social relationships involving dependence, responsibility, and mutual rights within different groups or communities. It is the structure in which luck and misfortune are redivided. In premodern societies, these networks were embedded in extended families, religiously integrated communities, trade unions, and companies (**De Deken et al., 2006**).

According to **Johnson (1986)**, solidarity is a relationship between individuals and/or groups based on shared moral feelings and beliefs reinforced by shared emotional experiences.

The discourse of social solidarity is humanitarian and highly valued in a certain group. It concerns solidarity in achieving common goals and desires. The source of social solidarity is a well-preserved tradition from generation to generation, strictly guarded through social control (**Nurlela, 2023**).

The principle of reciprocity is an exchange activity that contains elements of reciprocity between actors, be it individuals or groups (**Noer, 2013; Nirzalin & Maliati, 2017; Maeja & Paska, 2023; Wardaya & Supr, 2023**). **Polanyi (1957)** defines reciprocity simply as a reciprocal exchange between individuals or groups. This mutual exchange can occur if individuals or groups have a symmetrical relationship (**Dalton, 1971; Bakhri 2018**).

Symmetrical relationships refer to relationships that are equal or parallel. Reciprocity will arise in a society with these equal relationships, hence the concept of symmetrical relations is the first prerequisite for reciprocity. The second concept that supports reciprocity is kinship relationships. This kinship relationship ensures mutual exchange, with the family bonds that are established as a supporting factor for the realization of reciprocity (**Bakhri, 2018**).

The third concept that supports reciprocity is that people will get prestige from reciprocity exchange. That prestige is "appreciation, glory, authority, popularity, flattery and blessings" (**Hudayana, 1991; Maeja & Paska, 2023**). In the process of reciprocity, one can gain prestige that will ultimately improve everyone's position. The fourth principle of reciprocity is that when a person receives help, he has the right to return the favor or at least not harming the party giving the help (**Setiawan, 2022**). What is received from others should be returned to him. Even if the giver does not ask for a reply, the

recipient still has an obligation, albeit indirectly, to reciprocate. This simple principle applies to many situations.

METHODS

This research is a type of descriptive qualitative research that describes the culture of helping or mutual cooperation among the people of Banggai, Banggai Laut Regency, in daily social activities. Qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what the research subject experiences, such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc., holistically, and by describing in the form of words and language, in a special context that is natural and by utilizing various natural methods (Creswell, 2012).

This research was conducted in Adean Village, Central Banggai District, Banggai Laut Regency, Indonesia, July 5-20, 2024. Methodologically, the reason for choosing the location of this research is because the people still hold fast to the noble values in the Banggai culture, including *Balombot*. The informants of this research are traditional leaders of the Banggai Kingdom, community leaders, youth leaders, village heads and parties directly related to *Balombot* activities totaling 10 people. The data sources used in this study include (1) Primary data, namely data obtained directly from the object to be researched; in this case the informant and the situation at the research site. These data include the results of in-depth interviews and on-site observations (2) Secondary data were obtained from certain institutions, such as government agencies, private sectors, and community organizations that are generally related to quantity data (usually in the form of numerical data), or documents from related agencies. These data include village profiles and publications in the media related to the *Balombot* tradition. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews and focus discussion groups (FGD). Data analysis involved collecting, organizing, coding, and identifying patterns or themes. The data were then interpreted in depth using an inductive, reflective, and triangulation approach to ensure the validity and accuracy of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Description of the research location

Adean Village is in Central Banggai District, Banggai Laut Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, and has an area of 17.53km². It is located between the expanse of the sea and the hills, bordering other villages rich in culture, 30km from the district capital. The topography of this village consists of coastal and highland areas, which affect the climate and daily life of the people. Various tribes inhabit Adean Village, but the Bugis tribe dominates, with a population of 1,742 people.

The demographics of Adean Village show a distinctive diversity, where the structure of large families and close kinship relationships make it an example of a harmonious social life. Every family member, from the young to the old, has an important role to play in maintaining social balance and harmony. The experience of living in this village underscores the importance of language and culture in shaping the identity of the community. The people of Adean Village live in the middle of beautiful nature and inherit diverse cultural wealth. They passionately preserve traditions to keep noble values alive and passed on to future generations.

2. The practice of *Balombot* in Adean Village

Balombot in Adean Village is a distinctive tradition that reflects the traditional and cultural values of the Banggai community. It involves social, cultural, and economic aspects. As a unique customary system, this institution emphasizes the principle of mutual cooperation, where the word *Balombot* means cooperation or collaboration. Its philosophy rests on togetherness and solidarity, and each community member is responsible for supporting the common welfare.

Research shows that the people of Adean Village absorb the value of this *Balombot*, by working together in a joyful atmosphere without complaints or personal motives. For them, mutual cooperation is not only to achieve common goals but also to strengthen interpersonal relationships and build mutual trust. Strong social ties have long been established, with togetherness and solidarity as the main foundation of social interaction and customary sustainability. As pointed out by **Ar Rasyid (2024)**, mutual cooperation not only functions to complete joint work but also strengthens social relationships and builds trust between citizens, reflecting the values of solidarity and togetherness that are still upheld.

In daily life, the spirit of togetherness can be seen when the residents of Adean Village collectively carry out various activities such as farming, fishing, and building houses. They work together, divide tasks according to their abilities, and ensure that all work is completed properly without leaving residents behind or burdened. SP (44 years old/male), one of the informants, said that:

Through the Balombot tradition, all work that requires much effort and money, such as cleaning the village environment, weddings, deaths, and other social activities, will feel light. It is very easy to gather people because they have a high awareness of whether there is something they want to do or if there is a community that needs help. (SP Interview, July 12, 2024)

According to SP, mutual cooperation activities, as the most striking practice in showing togetherness and solidarity, involve all villagers in various activities ranging from cleaning the environment and improving village infrastructure to helping neighbors who are experiencing difficulties. This activity is carried out voluntarily and selflessly for

the common good, so that through mutual cooperation, the community not only completes work more efficiently but also strengthens social relations between residents.

In general, the form of social solidarity that exists in a society can be seen from strong unity, a high sense of togetherness, and mutual cooperation or mutual assistance between each other, either in the form of objects or goods or in the form of work or energy. In Adean Village, the spirit of togetherness of the Banggai community is the main foundation that strengthens solidarity. Residents know the social bonds that need each other, hence maintaining a sense of togetherness is important to achieve mutual prosperity. The community is quick to provide support when there are residents who experience difficulties, such as illness, death of family members, or economic problems. This support, whether in the form of energy, material, or moral, forms a strong social network where everyone feels valued and supported (FGD discussion results, July 17, 2024).

One of the relevant studies is that conducted on the mutual cooperation in Naga Timbul Village. It was reported that cooperation in various community activities is able to strengthen social relations and increase residents' participation in village development (**Serungke *et al.*, 2023**). In addition, a study in Batu Ampar Hamlet highlights how mutual cooperation revitalization can increase togetherness and social concern between residents, which directly impacts the improvement of village infrastructure (**Ramadhan *et al.*, 2024**).

Furthermore, research on "Fakosi Balaza" in Nanowa Village illustrates how traditional cooperative practices in agriculture have become a social glue that strengthens the solidarity of the farming community (**Duha, 2023**). Likewise in Naga Village, where mutual cooperation is not only applied in daily life but also in traditional rituals and religious activities, which further strengthens the social relations of indigenous peoples (**Rolitia *et al.*, 2016**).

Togetherness and solidarity in Adean Village can be seen in various community efforts to improve mutual welfare. Residents often hold regular meetings to discuss problems and find solutions together, ensuring everyone has an opinion. The meetings, which traditional elders or community leaders facilitate, function not only as a place for discussion but also to strengthen social ties and trust between residents.

The people's solidarity of Adean Village looks strong, especially during crises, such as natural disasters. In situations such as floods or earthquakes, residents immediately work together to help victims, providing temporary shelter, food, and medical assistance. Community economic practices also strengthen togetherness in the village, for example, through village cooperatives that share profits fairly, increase welfare and a sense of solidarity. This economic model involves all members in production and distribution, with the perceived material benefits and quality of life. Education also plays an important role in instilling the values of solidarity and togetherness from an early age.

Schools in Adean Village integrate character education with the formal curriculum, teaching children the importance of helping each other, working together, and maintaining good relationships. Through extracurricular activities and social programs, children are invited to actively participate in community activities and develop a strong sense of empathy and social responsibility (MR interview, 37 years old/female).

In daily life, the practice of togetherness is also reflected in family and neighborly relationships. Families in Adean Village live in harmony, often interacting and sharing in various household activities. Children are raised in an environment where they see and experience firsthand the practice of togetherness, from sharing food to caring for sick family members. These interactions build a strong foundation for the values of solidarity that they will carry into adulthood.

Overall, togetherness and solidarity in the people of Adean Village are not just abstract values, but real practices that are manifested in various aspects of daily life. Through cooperation, mutual cooperation, social support, traditional celebrations, education, joint decision-making, natural resource management, and community economic initiatives, the Adean community shows that by uniting and supporting each other, they can face various challenges and build a harmonious, prosperous, and sustainable life. These values, which have been passed down from generation to generation, ensure that the people of Adean Village continue to thrive by maintaining tradition and adapting to changing times, creating a strong and resilient community in the face of the future.

In addition, with the increasing access to technology and information, the people of Adean Village have also begun to integrate technology in their daily lives without putting aside traditional values. The use of technology for agriculture, education, and communication purposes was introduced with an approach that pays attention to the balance between progress and cultural sustainability. Togetherness and solidarity ensure that all community members, including the older and less technologically educated, benefit and are not left behind. Togetherness is also seen in how society welcomes social and cultural changes from outside.

The results of the FGD show that the people of Adean Village have an open attitude towards new ideas that have the potential to improve their quality of life. Still, they are also very critical and selective in choosing innovations. Any changes are discussed in customary deliberations to ensure their conformity with the values and interests of the community so that modernization can occur in a balanced manner without disrupting the local social and cultural structure. Solidarity also strengthens the collective identity and sense of belonging in this community. Various joint activities, such as cultural festivals, traditional competitions, and holiday celebrations, become a place for the community to celebrate cultural heritage and ensure that these values are inherited. These activities are not just entertainment but also a means for the younger generation to understand the importance of preserving their traditions and identity (FGD, July 17, 2024).

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The role of women in maintaining togetherness and solidarity in Adean Village is very significant. They are often the driving force in mutual cooperation activities, traditional celebrations, and children's education, carrying out a dual role as a household manager and a community leader. Through this role, women ensure that the values of togetherness and solidarity continue to be instilled in daily life. Their dedication builds a solid foundation for the stability and well-being of the entire community.

The togetherness and solidarity of the people of Adean Village demonstrate a formidable collective strength, allowing them to face various challenges while maintaining their identity and core values. Through cooperation, social support, and cultural preservation, they build harmonious and prosperous communities and inspire other communities to adopt these values in their lives. The success of the people of Adean Village in maintaining togetherness and solidarity is a clear example of how traditional values can be a source of strength and resilience in a changing world.

Balombot in the wedding in Adean Village is a clear example of the togetherness and solidarity of the residents, where all the villagers, voluntarily and selflessly, work together to prepare and carry out the event. They work hand in hand to handle all aspects of the wedding event, such as setting up tents, arranging chairs, and serving dishes. Everyone contributes to their abilities and expertise, ensuring that the event runs smoothly and successfully. This moment presents a festive and joyful atmosphere, enjoyed by the bride and groom, their families, and the entire community who celebrate and strengthen social bonds. This practice of *Balombot* continues to affirm the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation, which are the foundation of the life of the people of Adean Village.

At the wedding in Adean Village, the spirit of mutual cooperation was evident in the division of duties between residents. The women generally prepare traditional dishes using ingredients from neighbors' contributions, while the men handle heavy logistics such as tents and stages. Village youth also participated, adding creativity to decoration and entertainment. Through this mutual cooperation, the bride's family received practical support, and the social ties between residents were getting closer, strengthening the sense of shared responsibility.

This mutual cooperation process reflects the community's appreciation for customs. Every event stage, from preparation to implementation, is full of attention to traditional values. The participation of traditional leaders, families, and various other parties creates a sacred and respectful atmosphere, providing satisfaction and pride for the community.

After the wedding, the residents of Adean Village held an evaluation to appreciate the contributions of all parties, strengthen togetherness, and provide valuable lessons for the younger generation about the meaning of cooperation. This procession strengthened the community's identity and showed warmth and solidarity in their social life. The wedding in this village is not just a private event but a community celebration that binds all residents.

In addition, after the wedding is over, residents work together to clean and repack the equipment, often ending with relaxing activities together. This experience creates collective memories that reinforce a sense of brotherhood. Through mutual cooperation, the residents of Adean Village affirm their commitment to cultural preservation, making every marriage a tangible proof of community cohesion. This practice shows that mutual cooperation is more than just cooperation; It reflects deep solidarity, ensuring every member feels valued. Each wedding is held as a celebration of love that spans the community, combining personal stories into one inspiring collective narrative.

3. The impact of the implementation of *Balombot* cultural practices

3.1. Strengthening social solidarity

Balombot as a traditional system that has been ingrained in the lives of the people of Adean Village, has a great influence on community social interaction so that it can strengthen social solidarity. *Balombot* is a foundation that guides people in living their daily lives. This system regulates how they work together, communicate, and maintain social harmony. This participation not only accelerates the completion of work but also strengthens the sense of community between them, as conveyed directly by IR (47 years old/female):

"We are the people here; when there is a wedding party, everyone helps each other. We don't look at the status of whether the family is close or not, even when there is not enough money for the party, we help each other to make the activity a success, the important thing is that this is a joint event. Everyone gathered; some prepared food and some looked for firewood. Everyone works together for the smooth running of the event." (IR interview, July 15, 2024).

The social solidarity formed through *Balombot* is very diverse in major events such as traditional ceremonies and village celebrations. Every ceremony, whether a wedding, circumcision, or death ceremony, is performed by the entire community. Everyone actively participates, providing help and support to the best of their ability. This participation makes the event run smoothly and strengthens the community members' relationships.

In the wedding tradition of the people of Adean Village, the *Balombot* system began to be applied from the proposal stage until it reached the peak of the wedding event. This tradition reflects the strong spirit of mutual cooperation among the residents, where they help each other to ensure the smooth running of the entire series of activities. From the beginning, relatives and neighbors were present to provide both physical and material support. Their presence is a symbol of unity and togetherness that has taken root in the life of the Adean people.

One of the tangible forms of this participation can be seen in the collection of foodstuffs. Residents collected various consumption needs that would be prepared during the events. They collectively forage for ingredients such as rice, vegetables, and meat, ensuring sufficient supplies to entertain guests. In this way, the community shows generosity and care, which is the main cornerstone of the *Balombot* tradition. *Balombot culture* also provides opportunities for the younger generation to learn and practice important social values. Children and adolescents are invited to be involved in various community activities to understand the importance of mutual cooperation and solidarity.

In addition to food, the community also provided firewood that will be used throughout the event. This activity is important because in the wedding tradition of the people of Adean Village, firewood is needed for cooking on a large scale. The availability of firewood also symbolizes the commitment of residents in supporting the smooth running of the wedding event. Every citizen, both men and women, takes an appropriate role in finding and preparing the needed firewood.

To manage this entire process, a wedding organizing committee was formed to coordinate each stage of the activity. This committee has structured tasks, from setting schedules to organizing foodstuffs to setting up event venues. With the committee, all activities can run well without disrupting residents' daily activities. The committee is tasked with ensuring that everyone involved understands their role in each event stage.

If all parts of the *Balombot* tradition go according to plan, then the host only needs to receive the results of the mutual cooperation. This tradition allows the bride's family to focus on the event itself without being overwhelmed by heavy preparations. Through the *Balombot tradition*, marriage becomes a moment that not only binds two individuals, but also strengthens social bonds between community members, showing the value of solidarity and togetherness that remains alive in the culture of Adean Village.

In this way, *Balombot* ensures that the social values that have been passed down from generation to generation remain alive and relevant in the future. *Balombot* also teaches the community about the importance of social responsibility. Everyone is taught to think not only of personal interests but also of the common good.

This social responsibility entrusts the occurrence of the same values or social integration in the community order of Adean Village, strengthening their bond and social solidarity.

3.2. Reinforcing cultural values

The *institution of Balombot* in the marriage of the Adean community plays an important role in strengthening local cultural values, especially togetherness, mutual cooperation, and social responsibility. Through *Balombot*, every community member feels directly involved in the marriage process, not only as a guest but also as part of the unity that supports the event's success. In this atmosphere, togetherness is the main foundation that allows everyone from various backgrounds and ages to actively

contribute so that everyone feels a role in the event's success. This was conveyed directly by NH (45 years old/male)):

"When we were going to be a Balombot, no one felt burdened, they were willing to help each other. All tasks have been divided equally and each has a responsibility. So we don't need to ask for help from others because all residents are ready to help; all of this has become our habit; if there is a celebration, we work together." (NH interview, July 10, 2024).

The value of mutual cooperation is evident in the division of tasks carried out during the wedding series. For example, starting from collecting food to providing firewood, each resident is involved according to his or her abilities and abilities. There is no distinction of social status in implementing *Balombot*; all citizens play a role according to their respective capacities, demonstrating the equality highly valued in Adean culture. Through this process, they help revive the meaning of mutual cooperation, which has become an important value in daily life.

Balombot also strengthens the social responsibility of every member of the community. With a committee formed specifically to manage the event, everyone has a clear and directed responsibility. The committee ensures that all wedding needs are well met, and every citizen involved realizes that their contribution is not only to the bride's family but also as a reflection of the dignity and togetherness of the Adean community. Thus, *Balombot* becomes a means for citizens to express social responsibility through concrete actions, not just abstract norms. Regarding this, MN (37 years old/female) said:

"When a big activity such as a wedding occurs, the committee organizes everything well. We feel responsible because this event is for married families and brings the village's good name. Everyone feels obliged to get involved" (MN Interview, July 17, 2024).

More than that, *Balombot* also plays a role as a mechanism for inheriting cultural values between generations. The young generation who participated in *Balombot* saw firsthand how the values of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and social responsibility are manifested in real life. They learned from parents and community leaders about the importance of participating and supporting each other in important events. By being actively involved, the younger generation understands that culture is preserved verbally and through everyday practices rooted in events such as marriage. This was also conveyed directly by RH (46 years old/male):

"Young people are usually invited to help so that they know the procedures in the Balombot event. By getting involved, they can learn how to behave and respect customs. This is important so that they know the value of togetherness and mutual cooperation that we hold" (RH Interview, July 15, 2024).

Through the *Balombot* institution, marriage is an important moment for the bride and groom and an opportunity for the entire community to strengthen the cultural values that have long characterized them. With togetherness, mutual cooperation, and social responsibility embodied in every event step, the Adean community ensures that these values remain alive and relevant in the present and future generations.

Overall, when analyzed through the concept of social interaction, the *Balombot* tradition reflects the process by which everyone in the Adean community communicates, cooperates, and helps each other achieve a common goal, namely the success of every major event, such as weddings, deaths, and other major events. The social interaction that occurs through *Balombot* is not only temporary but also a pattern of behavior that takes place continuously. This process creates attachment and harmony between individuals, forming closer and stronger relationships within the community.

On the other hand, the concept of social integration is also very relevant in understanding the influence of *Balombot*. Through this structure, there is a process of unification in which individuals with different backgrounds feel bound by the same goals and values. *Balombot* allows for the realization of mechanical solidarity, where the equality of duties and responsibilities creates a sense of unity. In this case, *Balombot* not only maintains the continuity of customs but also facilitates the creation of strong social integration, where every member of the community feels that they have an important role in supporting the survival of communal life.

3.3. Factors affecting the sustainability of Balombot in Adean Village

The *Balombot* institution will continue to survive in the lives of the people of Adean Village as a social value that is understood and embraced by the local community, even though during globalization, social changes and modernization have occurred. However, it will depend on several factors that can affect the sustainability of this *Balombot* institution in Adean Village, namely the role of family and community and the support and awareness of all parties, be it the community, traditional leaders, and the government.

3.3.1. The role of family and community

In the *Balombot* institution, which has taken root in the community of Adean Village, the great role of family and community has become the initial foundation for the institution's sustainability. In a society that closely holds the value of togetherness within the scope of family and community, it is not just a social unit; it is the main foundation that keeps traditions alive and becomes an integral part of daily life.

In the context of the *Balombot* institution, families and communities support the continuation of this tradition in various ways, ranging from instilling values to active participation in every activity involving each family member. In this regard, SM (29 years old/female) said:

"When activities are carried out, Balombot applies where all residents will gather, and each is involved in every activity in our village; this is a habit in

our village. No one works alone, and everything is done together. Even children are involved, even if it is only a small help. We deliberately involve them so that they have knowledge and experience so that our culture can remain sustainable." (SM interview, July 16, 2024).

As SM said, from an early age, children in Adean Village have been introduced to the values inherent in *Balombot*, such as mutual cooperation, mutual respect, and concern for others. The family is the main forum in which these values are instilled. Parents consistently teach their children the importance of working together in a group and helping other members of society, especially in important moments like marriage. The informal education provided in this family greatly influences the formation of children's character, which will later help preserve the *Balombot* tradition.

On a broader stage, the community in Adean Village becomes an environment where children can practice the values they have learned from their families. All community members, regardless of status or age, have a role to play in supporting *Balombot's* activities. When there is a wedding, for example, the village elders usually coordinate the duties and roles of everyone, including children and teenagers, so that they can participate in mutual cooperation activities. With this involvement, *Balombot's* values are passed on from generation to generation through active participation.

Not only in the context of marriage, families and communities in Adean Village also often involve children in various other social activities that reflect the spirit of *Balombot*. For example, when there is a traditional event or annual celebration, all family members, including the younger generation, prepare and implement the event. With this experience, children become living witnesses of the *Balombot* tradition and experience firsthand the benefits of the cooperation and togetherness built within their community.

The role of the community as a forum for the preservation of *Balombot* is further strengthened by the close relationship between each family in Adean Village. The sense of mutual belonging and responsibility for others makes people feel obliged to support each other in every major event. When a family gets married, they will not feel alone because all community members will be involved, whether as a committee, food supplier, or provider of needed equipment. This commitment shows that in the context of *Balombot*, every family is part of a larger and broader social structure.

The division of roles in each major event that is carried out collectively is one way for every community member to feel involved. In performing roles, there is no distinction based on social status or hierarchy; everyone works together according to their respective abilities and capacities. This equal division of roles shows that the values of equality and solidarity are still upheld in *Balombot*.

In addition, interactions in the family and community during the *Balombot* process also create emotional bonds that strengthen relationships between individuals. When everyone supports each other in joint activities, a sense of mutual trust and closeness emerges that strengthens social bonds. This bond then becomes the foundation for the

people of Adean Village in facing various social challenges that may occur, including the threat of modernization's influence, which can shift traditional values.

The family and community's commitment to maintaining the *Balombot* also reflects the principle of togetherness that has long been a characteristic of the Adean community. Through various activities in this *Balombot*, the community shows that this tradition is not only part of the traditional ceremony but also a symbol of unity that unites every member in a close bond. Families and communities, as the main movers, have succeeded in making *Balombot* a social mechanism that strengthens social cohesion in this village.

Thus, the role of families and communities in maintaining the *Balombot* tradition is not just physical participation, but also a form of long-term commitment to preserving cultural values. Through repeated interactions and cooperation, *Balombot* is not only seen as a ritual, but also as a way for the Adean people to maintain their solidarity, identity, and cohesiveness.

In the end, through *Balombot*, families and communities in Adean Village managed to create a social system that not only emphasizes cultural preservation, but also fosters a strong sense of community among its members. In every stage of *Balombot* implementation, family and community are the main keys that ensure that this tradition stays alive and is passed on to future generations.

3.4. Awareness and support of various parties

The awareness of the people of Adean Village on the importance of preserving the *Balombot* tradition is the main driver in their efforts to preserve their local culture. This tradition is not just a series of traditional events but also a symbol of togetherness and identity that strengthens the bond between villagers. In facing the challenges of modernization, the Adean people strive to maintain and pass on *Balombot* values to remain relevant for current and future generations.

One of the main efforts in preserving *Balombot* is to hold regular cultural events involving all residents, from children to the elderly. Through the event, they maintain the *Balombot* tradition and introduce it to the younger generation who will be the successors. Major events such as these are important moments to revive the values embedded in *Balombot* and ensure its sustainability. In addition, other support and awareness, especially from local or even national governments, can also impact the preservation of this institution. LD (55 years old/male), a community leader said:

"Balombot must be maintained as an ancestral heritage. If this tradition is lost, we lose our identity as Adean people. Not only the community, but government support will also be very important to support the sustainability of this institution. The support of researchers and the university media will also be crucial to promote this tradition to the outside world." (LD interview, July 17, 2024).

As LD said, the commitment of the Adean community to the preservation of *Balombot* can also be seen from the support provided by various levels of society. All

groups, from the village government, community leaders, universities and the media, to ordinary citizens, are actively involved in various activities that support the preservation of traditions. The presence of all parties shows that the conservation of *Balombot* is not just a task of a specific individual, but a collective responsibility carried out by the entire community.

In the end, the people of Adean Village's efforts to preserve *Balombot* preserve their cultural heritage and strengthen social ties among residents. By involving all levels of society and opening themselves up to the times, this tradition will survive and develop according to society's needs. *Balombot* is proof that traditions based on the value of togetherness have the strength to survive in facing various challenges of the times.

CONCLUSION

The *Balombot* is an ancestral heritage that still survives in Adean Village, a fishing village on the coast of Banggai Laut Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. This mutual cooperation mechanism has glued and formed social solidarity between communities not only with fellow families and relatives but also with fellow residents. This institution will survive if there is family, community, and local government support. The support of universities or other educational institutions and the media is also expected to help maintain this tradition.

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