

Research article

Between Tradition and Modernity: Social Responses to Infrastructure Development in Maros Regency

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Abstract

Infrastructure development in buffer zones such as Maros Regency of Indonesia's Sulawesi Island presents a dilemma between the push for modernization and the preservation of local traditional values. Amid the rapid expansion of roads, bridges, and tourism projects, local communities face disruptions to the social, cultural, and economic spaces that have long sustained their way of life. This study aims to analyze the social responses of the Maros community to infrastructure development, particularly in the context of the tension between tradition and modernity. A qualitative approach was employed, using an exploratory case study design conducted in three villages: Jenetaesa, Tukamasea, and Salenrang. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and local documentation, and analyzed using Pierre Bourdieu's theories of habitus and social fields. The findings reveal that development has led to the transformation of symbolic spaces, shifts in power relations, and the emergence of unequal access to development benefits. Community responses vary, including forms of cultural resistance, conditional social negotiation, and hybridization between traditional values and modern elements. This study concludes that technocratic development, when lacking cultural sensitivity, poses a threat to social cohesion. Therefore, sustainable development in local contexts requires a participatory approach that recognizes communities as active agents in shaping the direction of change.

Keywords

Infrastructure Development; Maros Regency; Social Responses; Symbolic Resistance; Tradition and Modernity.

Article history

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1. INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure development serves as a strategic pillar within the framework of national and regional progress, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia. Physical infrastructure—such as roads, bridges, ports, and other transportation facilities—is not merely understood as a technical tool to facilitate mobility, but also as a catalyst for economic growth, regional integration, and the improvement of community welfare (Awandari & Indrajaya, 2016); (Sukwika, 2018). Over the past two decades, both central and regional governments have prioritized infrastructure development in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), emphasizing equitable access and accelerated interregional connectivity, particularly through decentralization and regional autonomy (Ferlita et al., 2024; Baidarus, Anggraeni, & Mauliza, 2018). Within this framework, development is not only a technocratic undertaking but also a political-economic instrument that reflects the broader macro strategy of national development (Dwiatmaja et al., 2024).

In this context, urban buffer zones, such as those in Maros Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, are experiencing intense development pressure. Maros, which is geographically adjacent to Makassar City—a metropolitan center in eastern Indonesia—has become a contested space between macro-level development interests and the preservation of local values. Infrastructure development in this area includes the expansion of inter-district transportation networks, the construction of connecting bridges between regions, and the utilization of natural tourism potential in karst landscapes and rice field areas (Mandong et al., 2023). This accelerated development phenomenon has not only transformed the physical landscape of the region but has also begun to influence social dynamics, patterns of community relationships, and the value orientations of residents (Marthalina, 2019).

Given this background, it is essential to examine more closely how this seemingly top-down development process impacts local communities, both structurally and culturally. This study is relevant not only within the context of development policy but also within the theoretical framework of development sociology, which seeks to understand the complex and dynamic relationship between the state, society, and social transformation. A top-down development approach often overlooks local community participation, potentially leading to social inequality and the marginalization of certain groups (Hidayat et al., 2024 & Shoesmith et al., 2020). Therefore, a deeper understanding of these dynamics is crucial for developing policies that are more inclusive and sustainable.

However, accelerated infrastructure development does not always align with the social dynamics of local communities. In the context of Maros Regency and its surrounding areas, initiatives to construct new roads, expand tourist access, and develop residential zones often disrupt social spaces that were previously governed by customary norms or traditional values. Frequently, these projects lead to the conversion of agricultural land, forced relocations without adequate consultation mechanisms, and the disturbance of sacred or symbolic sites within certain communities. A study by Widiatri et al. (2014) revealed that the development of the Mamminasata area, which includes Maros Regency, has brought significant changes to the social structure of local communities, including the release of productive agricultural land and the weakening of social cohesion due to the transformation of living spaces.

Such impacts create tensions between the logic of state-led development, which emphasizes technocratic efficiency, and community values that uphold harmonious relationships with nature, ancestors, and fellow human beings. In this context, development does not merely produce physical infrastructure but also has the potential to reshape the structure of social relations, marginalize customary practices, and create unequal access to newly emerging resources. This situation demonstrates that development carries profound social consequences, which—if not addressed inclusively—can lead to silent resistance or open conflict at the community level. Therefore, examining the social responses of local communities is essential to understanding how infrastructure projects are accepted, rejected, or negotiated by those affected (Dwiatmaja et al., 2024).

The tension between tradition and modernity in the development process is not new in the field of development sociology. Tradition—as a set of values, norms, and social practices passed down through generations—is often positioned in opposition to modernity, which brings rationalization, efficiency, and sweeping social changes across various aspects of life. In the context of Maros Regency, local communities face a complex ambivalence: on the one hand, they require modernization to access education, healthcare, and economic opportunities; on the other hand, they strive to preserve their cultural identity, family-based social relationships, and customary practices that have long served as the glue of communal life. This situation reflects a similar phenomenon found in Irwandi and Taufik's (2023) study of the Mentawai indigenous community, where the pressures of modernization have triggered resistance to the erosion of collective values. Comparable tensions were also identified by (Bandura, 2001) in the context of the Ogoh-Ogoh culture in Bali, which is challenged

by modern logic and commercialization, thereby diminishing the spiritual and social meanings of traditional practices. Their study reveals that the Ogoh-Ogoh tradition, a vital part of Balinese cultural heritage, is under pressure from modernity, leading to shifts in cultural values and practices. Therefore, understanding the relationship between tradition and modernity is essential for interpreting the social dynamics of local communities amidst the tide of infrastructure development.

The dialectic between tradition and modernity within the development process creates a dynamic social space in which communities must continuously negotiate their positions. According to Pierre Bourdieu, society exists within a *habitus*—a dispositional structure shaped by social history and cultural practices—that operates within a specific social field (Schirato & Roberts, 2020). When this social field is disrupted by development projects driven by the logic of capital and state power, symbolic clashes often occur, frequently giving rise to various forms of resistance. For instance (M et al., 2024) illustrates that infrastructure development in South Sulawesi—particularly the railway project in Maros Regency—has triggered issues related to land acquisition and social conflict, threatening the stability of local communities. In contrast, classical modernization theory tends to assume that traditional societies will progress linearly toward modernity. However, in practice, this transition is rarely uniform and often generates value conflicts, identity uncertainty, and even social fragmentation. Under such conditions, infrastructure development projects can become arenas of contestation between the state's logic and the community's logic—between narratives of progress and narratives of cultural sustainability.

Infrastructure development is one of the central pillars of Indonesia's national and regional development agenda. As a developing country, Indonesia has prioritized infrastructure in its economic policy through the *RPJMN*, which emphasizes connectivity, equity, and regional integration. However, infrastructure projects are not merely physical or economic interventions; they are also social and cultural processes that reshape local relations, values, and identities. This dual nature makes infrastructure development an important object of study within the sociology of development.

Previous studies have shown that local infrastructure development does not always yield positive social outcomes. Several studies have highlighted community resistance to development projects perceived as non-participatory, exploitative, or disruptive to the established social and cultural order. For instance, a study conducted in the urban area of Yogyakarta demonstrated how local communities rejected the

construction of a hotel that was perceived as a threat to their living space (Sulistyaningsih et al., 2022). In other regions, such as Papua, the construction of the Trans-Papua road has led to agrarian conflicts and the marginalization of local communities from the decision-making process (Kambu et al., 2022). These findings suggest that local resistance is not merely an act of rejection, but also an expression of a broader crisis of representation and power imbalance within the development narrative.

However, studies on community responses to infrastructure development in Maros Regency remain limited, particularly within the socio-cultural context of South Sulawesi, which is marked by strong local traditions and identities. The lack of attention to how the Maros community interprets, responds to, and adapts to development—whether through cultural resistance, social negotiation, or limited participation—reveals a significant gap in the academic discourse of development sociology. For instance, Mahbub et al. (2018) found that the community of Sambueja Village in Maros Regency generally had a positive perception of the karst ecotourism development plan, emphasizing the importance of environmental preservation and the protection of local cultural values throughout the process. Furthermore, studies highlighting the involvement of local communities in the planning and implementation of infrastructure at the village and district levels remain scarce. This raises a fundamental question: *to what extent are local communities involved as active subjects, rather than passive objects, of development?* Therefore, this article aims to address this gap by providing a contextual analysis based on field data that examines the social dynamics surrounding infrastructure development in Maros Regency.

In the theoretical context, this study is situated within the framework of the sociology of development, which critically examines the relationship between structural transformation and social change. Classical modernization theory (Rostow, 1960) views development as a linear process toward progress and rationality, while dependency theory (Frank, 1967) emphasizes the structural inequalities created by global capitalism. In contrast, post-development perspectives (Escobar, 1995) question the very notion of “development,” highlighting its colonial and discursive dimensions. This study bridges these perspectives by employing Pierre Bourdieu’s (1990) concepts of habitus, capital, and social field to analyze how development operates as a symbolic and material field of power. It argues that infrastructure development in Maros embodies both economic and cultural logics, where actors continuously negotiate their positions through resistance, adaptation, and symbolic contestation.

Comparatively, similar patterns of socio-cultural tension have been observed in other parts of the world. In India, large-scale dam construction projects have triggered displacement and disrupted traditional social structures (Roy & Hartmann, 2021). In Vietnam, rapid urban expansion and tourism development have redefined rural identity and commodified cultural rituals (Nguyen & Turner, 2020). Meanwhile, in Sub-Saharan Africa, Bourdieu's theoretical lens has been applied to understand how development aid reproduces class hierarchies through symbolic domination (Mosse, 2019). These global parallels suggest that the Maros case is part of a broader sociological phenomenon, where development simultaneously generates both inclusion and exclusion, progress and displacement, as well as empowerment and marginalization.

Based on the background, social dynamics, and theoretical debates outlined above, this article aims to analyze the social responses of the Maros Regency community to the rapid infrastructure development that has occurred over the past decade. The main focus is on how local communities—both individuals and collectives—respond to, negotiate with, or resist the social changes brought about by development projects, particularly within the context of the tension between preserving tradition and meeting the demands of modernity. For example, M et al. (2024) demonstrated in their study of public digital discourse surrounding the construction of the Solo–Jogja Toll Road that the community expressed a range of opinions through social media, reflecting the complex dynamics involved in responding to major infrastructure initiatives. Using a qualitative research design and the theoretical framework of the sociology of development, this article seeks to understand these dynamics not only from a structural perspective but also through the lens of social actors as agents of change.

Both theoretically and practically, this study holds significant importance for the development of community-based development discourse. In terms of policy, the findings are expected to provide policymakers and development practitioners with constructive input to become more sensitive to the local socio-cultural context. For example, a research by Rahman and Putri (2022) highlights the importance of leveraging both natural and human resource potential to enhance people's lives through programs that foster local community empowerment. Sustainable development not only demands technical and economic success but also requires recognition of the values held by living communities and active community involvement throughout the entire process. In this regard, the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach is particularly relevant, as it focuses on

local assets—such as skills, knowledge, and resources—rather than solely identifying needs and deficiencies (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Thus, the contribution of this article not only fills an academic gap in local studies of Maros but also broadens the scope of development sociology toward a more inclusive and reflective understanding of the social realities of contemporary Indonesian society.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing an exploratory case study design, to gain an in-depth understanding of community responses to infrastructure development in Maros Regency. This research design was chosen because it allows for the exploration of subjective meanings, social dynamics, and power relations that emerge during the development process—factors that cannot be adequately captured through a quantitative method alone. The study done in a fieldwork in January – May 2023 focuses on three purposively selected villages due to their significant involvement in infrastructure development projects: Salenrang Village, as an area of ecotourism development within the Rammang-Rammang Karst region; Jenetaesa Village, which is affected by the widening of inter-district roads; and Tukamasea Village, the site of a newly constructed inter-regional connecting bridge.

The research subjects consisted of residents directly affected by the development projects, community leaders, traditional elders, village youth, and village government officials. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their roles and knowledge of the development processes and their impacts on the surrounding environment; akin to, for instance, a study by Muliadi et al. (2023) which employed purposive sampling to select respondents with relevant knowledge and experience in the ISPO adoption study in Sambas Regency of Kalimantan Island. Data were collected through three primary techniques: (1) in-depth interviews with 18 key and supplementary informants to explore their perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding development; (2) limited participatory observation to capture social interactions and the dynamics of changing community spaces; and (3) document analysis, including village archives, meeting minutes, local news, and visual documentation from before and after the development.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), involving the processes of coding, categorization, and the identification of key themes. To sharpen the analysis beyond descriptive accounts, data interpretation was guided by Pierre Bourdieu's theories of habitus, capital, and social fields. These concepts were

not only employed to examine symbolic resistance but also to critically investigate how relations of power between the state, local elites, and communities were negotiated within the development arena. For example, the state often mobilized economic capital and regulatory authority, while local elites leveraged social and political capital to secure influence. Communities, in turn, activated cultural capital and symbolic resources to protect traditions or resist displacement (Santos & Silva, 2022). This framework allowed us to identify infrastructure development as a contested field where domination, negotiation, and resistance intersect.

To ensure data validity, both source and method triangulation techniques were applied, along with member checking by key informants to verify the accuracy of the findings and interpretations (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The entire research process was conducted ethically, adhering to the principles of informed consent, maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities, and upholding scientific integrity at every stage of the study (Resnik, 2020).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Transformation of Social and Symbolic Space of Community

Infrastructure development in Maros Regency, particularly in the three villages that served as study sites, has led to a shift in community spatial planning with direct impacts on the social and cultural dynamics of the local population. In Jenetaesa Village, an inter-district road widening project resulted in the displacement of approximately 13 hectares of productive agricultural land owned by residents. Interviews with eight farmers directly affected by the project revealed that not all of them received fair compensation, and most were not actively involved in the public consultation process. One informant, a 58-year-old male farmer, stated that the land he had cultivated for over 30 years was seized without any clear information regarding the timing or form of compensation.

From a sociological perspective, this phenomenon illustrates what Bourdieu (1990) describes as the unequal distribution of capital within a social field, where actors possessing greater economic or political capital—such as local elites and state agents—gain privileged access to decision-making processes. The farmers, by contrast, occupy a subordinate position in the field, constrained by limited social and symbolic capital, making them vulnerable to exclusion from formal negotiations. The absence of participatory consultation not only reflects a procedural deficiency but also

demonstrates a symbolic domination in which technocratic rationality overrides local moral economies. Thus, the loss of land in Jenetaesa is not merely a material displacement, but also a form of dispossession of meaning and identity tied to the community's habitus as agrarian actors. One informant, a 58-year-old male farmer, stated that the land he had cultivated for over 30 years was seized without any clear information regarding the timing or form of compensation (Field Interview, Jenetaesa Village, 2023).

In Tukamasea Village, the construction of a connecting bridge required the relocation of ancestral graves located along the riverbank. The local government carried out the relocation process without prior involvement of customary deliberations or the performance of specific rituals that have long been integral to the local belief system. This was supported by participatory observation findings, which indicated that after construction began, some residents became reluctant to perform ancestral veneration rituals at the site. One traditional leader stated, *"Since the bridge was built, we no longer have the space to maintain a spiritual connection with our ancestors"* (Field Interview, Tukamasea Village, 2023).

This phenomenon illustrates what Bourdieu (1990) conceptualizes as a disruption of the social field, in which the state, acting through its technocratic apparatus, redefines the symbolic meaning of space and marginalizes traditional authority. The transformation of sacred areas into development zones signifies not only a physical displacement but also a symbolic dispossession—a process in which local communities lose control over spaces that once held collective spiritual significance. As Kusumastuti (2021) observes in similar cases in Central Java, the reconfiguration of ritual spaces under state-led projects often erodes communal cohesion and weakens the reproduction of local habitus. In the context of Tukamasea, the bridge project therefore represents more than infrastructure; it is a manifestation of symbolic domination that replaces moral and spiritual order with economic and administrative rationality (Schirato & Roberts, 2020).

Meanwhile, in Salenrang Village, located in the Rammang-Rammang Karst area, the construction of road access and tourist routes has impacted the frequency of traditional community gatherings. In the past, the traditional hall, used for village meetings and customary ceremonies, was often filled with residents. Still, it is now frequently empty, as many have shifted to working in the tourism sector. This shift has also altered patterns of social communication among residents, who were previously closely connected through kinship ties.

In addition to spatial changes, development has also created unequal access to newly established spaces. For example, souvenir shops and parking lots built around tourist areas are often managed by external investors. At the same time, residents are relegated to roles as laborers or street vendors, without adequate training or business capital support. This situation fosters a sense of marginalization among local communities, who feel that their social space has been overtaken by outsiders with greater access to information and capital.

Infrastructure development in Maros Regency has brought about significant changes to both the social and symbolic spaces of the community, as excerpted in Table 1. In Jenetaesa Village, the inter-district road widening project led to the eviction of agricultural land that had served as the primary source of livelihood for residents. According to interviews with a key informant, a 58-year-old farmer, his cultivated land was replaced by an asphalt road without receiving adequate compensation (Field Interview, Jenetaesa Village, 2023). Meanwhile, in Tukamasea Village, the construction of a regional connecting bridge necessitated the relocation of several ancestral graves considered sacred, triggering cultural anxiety within the community (Field Interview, Tukamasea Village, 2023). Similar findings have been documented in other parts of Indonesia, where infrastructure expansion often leads to the dispossession of land and cultural spaces, thereby weakening community identity and social cohesion (Kusumastuti, 2021; Schirato & Roberts, 2020; Hidayat & Prasetyo, 2022). Participatory observations also revealed a decline in the intensity of social activities in spaces that were once centers of interaction, such as village barns, traditional halls, and open fields.

Table 1. Impact on Social and Symbolic Space Transformation

Village	Types of Infrastructure	Physical Impact	Social and Cultural Impact
Jenetaesa	Inter-district Road Widening	Eviction of ±13 ha of agricultural land	Loss of economic resources; citizens not involved in public consultation
Tukamasea	Bridge Construction	Relocation of ancestral graves on the banks of the river	Loss of ritual and spiritual space; no customary rituals in the relocation process
Salenrang	Karst tourism roads and access	Decrease in the function of traditional halls and communal spaces	Frequency of customary meetings decreases; shift of residents to the tourism sector; loss of social cohesion

Survey conducted across the three research sites revealed that approximately 194 households were directly affected by infrastructure development projects in Maros

Regency: 85 households in Salenrang, 62 in Jenetaesa, and 47 in Tukamasea. In Jenetaesa Village, about 72% of farmers reported losing more than half of their agricultural land, with only 46% receiving compensation they considered fair. In Tukamasea, 68% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the relocation of ancestral graves due to the absence of customary rituals. Meanwhile, in Salenrang, the number of residents participating in traditional communal meetings dropped from 82% before the project to 54% after. Additionally, economic benefits from tourism development were unevenly distributed: external investors controlled approximately 60% of revenue, while residents received only 30%, primarily through informal and low-wage sectors.

This change reflects the transformation of the social field, as discussed by Schirato and Roberts (2020), wherein the symbolic capital attached to traditional spaces is deconstructed as a result of state intervention. In this context, the state functions as a dominant actor that introduces the logic of capital and technocratic efficiency, thereby redefining the meaning and function of space. The habitus of local communities—previously shaped by values of kinship, spirituality, and ecological proximity—is now compelled to adapt to a spatial order oriented toward economic connectivity and accessibility. This finding resonates a similar research conducted by Judijanto et al. (2024) which shows that the development of communication and navigation infrastructure around the Nusantara Capital City (IKN) in Kalimantan has had a significant impact on environmental degradation, including deforestation and habitat loss, which in turn affects the social and cultural structures of local communities.

Furthermore, social spaces that were once organized around kinship relations and customary practices have become fragmented and increasingly competitive. This phenomenon has led to a form of social disorientation in which communities no longer have full control over the spatial organization of their environments. In this context, infrastructure development not only generates material benefits but also disrupts the social structures that have long sustained community cohesion.

3.2. Cultural and Symbolic Resistance

The results of the study in three villages show that local communities do not passively accept development projects entering their areas. Various forms of cultural and symbolic resistance emerge in response to the disruption of values, space, and meaning brought about by infrastructure development. In Salenrang Village, resistance is carried out through the open revitalization of traditional rituals around

the karst site. Residents carry out mass rituals involving traditional leaders and community leaders as a form of affirmation that the area has sacred value and is not just an economic space.

In Tukamasea, cultural resistance emerged through verbal and emotional opposition to the relocation of ancestral graves. Residents were reluctant to move the graves and refused to accept material compensation. In an interview with a 64-year-old female informant, she stated, "Money can be earned, but we cannot simply replace the resting place of our ancestors' spirits" (Field Interview, Tukamasea Village, 2023). This form of resistance reflects what Scott (1985) refers to as "moral economy," where local values and spiritual ethics take precedence over economic rationality. Similar findings are also noted by Kusumastuti (2021), who highlights that in many Indonesian communities, the relocation of sacred sites is perceived as a violation of cultural order rather than a compensable transaction. Thus, the refusal to accept material compensation in Tukamasea represents not merely economic dissatisfaction but a symbolic defense of moral and ancestral integrity within the community.

Meanwhile, in Jenetaesa, resistance is symbolic and manifests in everyday discourse. Residents use the term "urban development" to express their feelings of exclusion from the process. During several village meetings, community leaders emphasized that development was carried out unilaterally, without considering the residents' aspirations. This creates a form of discursive resistance, where the community constructs a counter-narrative to challenge the state's narrative dominance.

Survey results indicate that approximately 57% of residents in Salenrang actively participated in collective ritual revitalization events around the karst area, compared to only 32% before the development projects were initiated, suggesting a deliberate strengthening of traditional practices as a form of resistance. In Tukamasea, 74% of households expressed disagreement with the relocation of ancestral graves, with 61% stating they would not accept monetary compensation regardless of the amount offered. Meanwhile, in Jenetaesa, discourse-based resistance was evident, as 68% of village meeting participants voiced dissatisfaction with the unilateral nature of infrastructure planning, and 43% of youth groups reported using alternative terms such as "urban development" to highlight their sense of exclusion.

These forms of resistance align with Bourdieu's concept of symbolic struggles within the social field. Marginalized communities utilize symbols, rituals, and narratives as a means of resistance against the dominance of larger structures. The resistance that emerges is not only physical but also deeper—an effort to preserve the

system of meanings that has shaped their habitus. Santos and Silva (2022) explain that symbolic resistance serves as a strategy for maintaining identity and existence in the face of power inequalities. This demonstrates that development is not merely a process of material transformation but also a field of contestation over meaning, legitimacy, and social symbols.

3.3. Social Negotiation and Conditional Participation

In addition to resistance, the study also found that communities in the three villages tended to engage in social negotiation in response to infrastructure development. In Tukamasea Village, the youth group played a strategic role as a mediator between the local government and the older community members. They compiled a list of community demands, including relocation compensation, the involvement of traditional leaders, and local empowerment in the bridge construction project. One youth leader stated, *"If we simply refuse, we risk being left behind; but if we get involved, we can ensure that the outcomes are not detrimental to the community"* (Field Interview, Tukamasea Village, 2023). This response reflects the form of adaptive participation described by Arnstein (1969) in her "Ladder of Citizen Participation," where communities engage in limited negotiation to influence outcomes within the constraints of power. Similarly, Hidayat and Prasetyo (2022) emphasize that in rural Indonesian contexts, social negotiation often emerges as a pragmatic strategy that allows communities to maintain agency and cultural relevance within state-led development frameworks.

In Jenetaesa Village, some residents have begun to participate in deliberation meetings facilitated by the village government. However, this participation is selective and conditional. Some residents are willing to attend discussion forums only if there is a guarantee that their voices will be taken into account. One informant said, *"We attend meetings because we want to hear directly what is going to be done, but if it is just a formality, we would rather work in the fields."*

Meanwhile, in Salenrang Village, social negotiation is more visible in the efforts of residents to reorganize social relations amidst the influx of the tourism industry. Traditional leaders, hamlet heads, and local tourism actors formed working groups to share business profits, designate tourism zones that do not disturb sacred sites, and propose skills training for young residents. This form of participation arose not from a state initiative but from the community's need to ensure that development remains relevant to local values.

Survey results show that in Tukamasea, approximately 64% of youth group members reported being actively involved in drafting and submitting community demands. In comparison, 71% of older residents acknowledged the mediating role of youth as crucial in bridging communication with the government. In Jenetaesa, 58% of households stated that they only attend deliberation meetings if there is a clear assurance that their input will influence decision-making, whereas 29% admitted that they stopped attending meetings because discussions were perceived as symbolic. In Salenrang, 46% of traditional leaders and tourism actors have joined newly formed working groups, and 52% of participating households reported receiving economic benefits from tourism management schemes negotiated at the local level.

Social negotiations carried out by the community show that development is responded to not only with resistance but also through conditional adaptive strategies. Within Bourdieu's theoretical framework, local actors use their social and symbolic capital to maintain a bargaining position in the social field of development. Hidayat and Prasetyo (2022) argue that society should not be viewed merely as an object of development but as an active subject capable of negotiating its interests within a complex social space. This perspective reinforces the idea that community participation in development is not passive compliance but a strategic form of engagement aimed at preserving agency and cultural values amid structural constraints.

Conditional participation, which emerged in Jenetaesa and Tukamasea, also indicates the community's critical understanding of the development process. They do not immediately reject or accept it but rather assess the extent to which the development accommodates local values and needs. Rahman and Putri (2022) argue that authentic community participation is only possible when there is a reciprocal relationship and trust between residents and policymakers.

3.4. Inequality of Access and Controlled Fields

This study found that infrastructure development in Maros Regency not only resulted in the transformation of physical space but also deepened social inequality. In the three study villages, access to development benefits was largely determined by the social position and the strength of capital held by individuals or groups within the community. For example, in Jenetaesa Village, residents with kinship ties to village officials received information about land acquisition first, enabling them to negotiate

higher compensation. In contrast, sharecroppers without land certificates faced difficulties obtaining fair and documented compensation.

In Tukamasea, land acquisition for bridge construction was coordinated by a local elite group with close ties to the project contractor. Residents who were not part of this social network tended to be excluded from decision-making and were often relegated to the role of listeners during village deliberations. In Salenrang, tourism operators from outside the area were able to obtain business permits more quickly than residents. They monopolized access to strategic facilities such as parking lots and souvenir stalls, while residents had only limited opportunities to trade informally.

Survey results show that in Jenetaesa, 64% of households with kinship ties to village officials received early information about land acquisition, compared to only 27% of ordinary farmers. In comparison, 78% of sharecroppers without certificates reported not receiving any formal compensation. In Tukamasea, 59% of residents belonging to elite-associated networks reported being invited to private meetings with contractors. In comparison, only 21% of general residents stated that their voices were considered in village deliberations. In Salenrang, 65% of tourism permits were issued to external investors, while local traders controlled only 25% of formal business spaces, leaving the remaining 10% for traditional tourism operators with informal arrangements.

This phenomenon of inequality can be understood through Bourdieu's theoretical framework on the structure of the social field. Access to development benefits is largely determined by the ownership of capital—whether economic, social, or symbolic—held by individuals within the field. In this context, the development field in Maros becomes a competitive arena that reinforces the dominance of local and external elite groups, while marginalized groups face systemic exclusion. Consistent with Djufri's findings (2023), infrastructure often serves as a tool for reproducing inequality because it primarily benefits groups with strong negotiation skills.

This argument is reinforced by research conducted by Shoesmith et al. (2020), which shows that Indonesia's decentralized structure has not yet provided an equitable participatory space in infrastructure development, particularly in eastern regions. The study highlights that decentralization, while intended to enhance local autonomy, often strengthens the dominance of political and economic elites at the local level. Consequently, this inequality in access to information and bargaining power causes citizens with limited capital to lose not only their land rights and economic opportunities but also control over the future of their communities.

3.4. Ambivalence between Tradition and Modernity

The findings from the three villages show that local communities have ambivalent attitudes toward infrastructure development. On the one hand, they acknowledge the importance of development for improving access and economic opportunities. On the other hand, they are concerned about the loss of local values and traditional practices that form part of their community identity.

In Salenrang Village, this ambivalence is evident in the changing function of traditional rituals, some of which have been modified to attract tourists. For example, the Mappalili ritual, which is usually held behind closed doors, is now performed openly as a cultural attraction. Although this increases village income, some traditional leaders are concerned about the loss of the ritual's sacred meaning. In an interview, a traditional elder stated, *"We are happy if outsiders are interested, but if the ritual is turned into a spectacle, we lose its meaning."*

In Jenetaesa, young people have shown acceptance of the road construction because it opens up access to employment and educational opportunities. However, older people remain concerned about the disruption of local value systems, especially regarding the declining respect for inherited land and the increasingly strained relationships between residents. These generational differences reflect a shift in social habitus resulting from the influence of modern logic.

In Tukamasea, residents try to integrate elements of modernity into the local social structure. For example, youth groups use social media to promote local culture, but with the approval of traditional leaders to ensure sacred values are not violated. This illustrates a process of cultural hybridization, where tradition and modernity are neither completely rejected nor fully accepted, but are selectively renegotiated.

Survey results indicate that in Salenrang, 61% of residents agreed that opening traditional rituals such as Mappalili to tourists increased village income, while 39% expressed concern about the loss of sacred meaning. In Jenetaesa, 72% of youth respondents supported the road widening project for its economic and educational benefits, compared to only 34% of older residents, who instead emphasized the erosion of kinship values and land inheritance norms. In Tukamasea, 48% of youth groups reported using social media to promote local culture, but 67% of traditional leaders emphasized that this must be supervised to prevent the violation of customary values. These figures demonstrate that ambivalence is not merely confusion, but a nuanced stance that balances material benefits and cultural preservation.

The ambivalence of society toward tradition and modernity reflects the complexity of the social terrain they face. According to (Schirato & Roberts, 2020), *habitus*—formed from past social experiences—confronts new structures introduced by development. The tension between continuity and change creates space for hybridization, where social actors choose to maintain, adapt, or abandon old values based on their strategic interests.

This phenomenon aligns with the study by (Irwandi & Taufik, 2023), which shows that indigenous peoples do not completely reject modernity but engage in "cultural negotiations" to maintain their collective identity. In the context of Maros, the community does not outright oppose tradition or development but instead treats them as symbolic resources that can be renegotiated. This ambivalence is not a sign of ignorance or incompetence, but rather a social strategy to remain relevant amid rapid structural change.

4. CONCLUSION

Infrastructure development in Maros Regency has not only brought about physical changes in the form of roads, bridges, and improved tourism access, but also contributed to the overall development of the region. Still, it has also caused profound transformations in the community's social and symbolic spaces. This study demonstrates that development driven by technocratic logic has altered the meaning of traditional spaces and social relations, which were previously defined by customary values, spirituality, and kinship.

Projects such as road widening and bridge construction have led to the eviction of agricultural land and the relocation of ancestral graves without adequate consultation mechanisms, resulting in feelings of alienation, loss of meaning, and decreased social cohesion within the community. This reflects the imbalance of power relations between the state and local communities in the development process. Community responses to these changes are neither singular nor passive. This study identified three main forms of response: cultural and symbolic resistance, conditional social negotiation, and efforts to hybridize values between tradition and modernity. Resistance manifested in the revitalization of traditional rituals, verbal rejection of symbolic relocations, and the creation of counter-narratives to state domination.

Meanwhile, forms of negotiation were evident in the social mediation carried out by young people, as well as in their conditional participation in village deliberations

and the formation of local collaborations in tourism governance. Communities also demonstrated adaptive abilities by selectively integrating modern elements while maintaining local values. This shows that communities are not merely objects but active subjects who negotiate their positions within the social field of development.

Theoretically, the results of this study emphasize the importance of understanding development not only as an economic and physical transformation but also as a symbolic field of contestation involving clashes of habitus, social capital, and power structures. In the context of Maros Regency, the tension between tradition and modernity does not end in polarization but rather unfolds as a continuous negotiation process that reflects complex social dynamics. From a policy perspective, several recommendations can be drawn. *First*, it is crucial to ensure meaningful community participation at every stage of infrastructure development to prevent social exclusion and strengthen trust. *Second*, local governments should play a proactive role as mediators between the state, investors, and local communities, ensuring a balance of interests. *Third*, policies must prioritize the protection of cultural heritage and sacred sites affected by development projects. *Fourth*, development planning should be grounded in local wisdom and aligned with the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thereby integrating economic growth with cultural sustainability and social inclusion. By integrating these recommendations, the study not only identifies socio-cultural challenges in infrastructure development but also provides practical and context-sensitive solutions that can guide policymakers, local governments, and stakeholders toward more inclusive and culturally responsive development in Maros Regency and beyond.

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