

Sustaining Social Harmony: Exploring Community Cohesion through the Kondowa-Dongkala Village Festival in Buton

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Abstract

The traditional village festival demonstrates the essence of unity values, catalyzing social cohesion within the community. Various cultural manifestations, such as customary deliberations, traditional ceremonies, and local arts performances, signify the underlying social system. This study aims to elucidate the social cohesion among the Kondowa-Dongkala community through the village festival in Buton. Employing a qualitative research method, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, including Parabela Anamohane and local community members actively involved in the festival proceedings. The findings reveal that the village festival is an annual event, preceded by a village deliberation to establish customary laws governing community behavior on land and sea. Conservation efforts are evident in prohibiting marine resource extraction within the kaombo area for one year, followed by communal utilization during the festival. Each night is marked by local art performances featuring traditional drumming and dances by various age groups, underscoring the village festival's cultural richness and social cohesion.

Keywords

Village Party; Traditional; Baruga; Kaombo and Parabela

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1. INTRODUCTION

The study of social values in the customs of behavior for a rural community is of little interest to other researchers because it is assumed that the perspective used is very classical and focuses on past studies. However, this article is considered important in revealing how customary behavior through a village festival can provide social bonds and harmonization between cultural supporters even though the impact of modernization is increasingly being felt. Social and cultural values in Anthropology have been written before by experts describing the relationship between social systems, the natural environment, and various elements of culture and society (Koenjaraningrat, 2007). Initially, these



cultural values were always discussed when they came into contact with development issues. However, there was no certainty whether the discussion about cultural values was related to a nation's mentality or mental attitude. Conversations like this were expressed by Koentjaraningrat when the Indonesian nation entered the development stages from the old order to the new order. However, is the concept discussed by Koentjaraningrat still relevant today for photographing people's lives in a district quite far from the province, even the central region of Indonesia? To develop a perspective on social and cultural values, the introductory part of this article will explain how mental attitudes can be developed through traditional village festivals held every year to create a harmonious code of conduct for the community. From the village party, we learn about highly respected customs, where the village party can build a mental attitude and mentality of harmony, which is always shown in our behavior and attitude towards life.

The village celebration, known as the Kabaria festival, holds profound significance in the Buton Regency, particularly in the Pasar Wajo District, encompassing Kondowa and Dongkala Villages. This annual event manifests gratitude, fostering solidarity among communities and nurturing a sense of togetherness among villagers and visitors alike. Rooted in the Kabaria custom, which emphasizes the respectful and sustainable relationship between humans and nature, the village festival underscores the importance of responsible stewardship of marine resources. Central to the Kabaria custom is the principle of not exploiting sea products indiscriminately, reflecting a belief in the need for restraint and moderation in resource management. This custom is intertwined with the kaombo system, a method of sea monitoring aimed at preserving the ecological balance and ensuring the long-term viability of marine wealth. By adhering to these customs, the community upholds its collective responsibility to maintain the health and abundance of the sea.

The village party spans four days and nights, encompassing various activities that unite the entire community. Notably, individuals who have migrated from other cities return to their hometowns to partake in these festivities, underscoring the event's significance. The anticipation and excitement leading up to the village festival are palpable, with households bustling with preparations, including crafting dulang containers and trays for serving traditional Butonese cuisine.

In the broader context of traditional village parties, such as Nyadran and Methil, the Kabaria celebration stands out due to its unique focus on environmental stewardship and communal solidarity. Unlike other people's parties, the Kabaria celebration is deeply rooted in local customs and beliefs, emphasizing the interdependence between humans and nature.

To provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of the village's location, it is essential to offer a detailed description that captures its geographical context. Situated within the Buton Regency, Pasar Wajo District, the villages of Kondowa and Dongkala are nestled amidst the lush landscapes of

Buton. Its proximity to nearby towns, such as Pasar Wajo, and its location along the coast offer insights into its interconnectedness with surrounding communities and its reliance on marine resources. Notable landmarks, such as the baruga where village gatherings occur, further enhance readers' perception of the village's cultural and social significance within the region. Through this descriptive approach, readers can envision the village's unique character and appreciate its integral role in the broader fabric of Butonese society.

The village traditional party was held for four days and four nights, starting with a traditional meeting led by Parabela and attended by the community to agree on the traditional rules, which are the rules of life for the community in Kondowa-Dongkala Village. After that, the pikolambu event is held, which is held every night accompanied by drum and gong music, followed by a Kabaria in the Kaombo Sea area to collect sea products, followed by traditional ritual processes such as taking Popalia (old village) water to honor the first Baruga which is located in the village. for a long time, and visit ancestors' graves to recite prayers. On the main day of the village festival, activities are centered in Baruga with the installation of traditional flags in the morning by traditional officials, then the slaughter of animals as a sign of gratitude, followed by the sorodua ganda-ganda event for families with children aged 7-9 years to dance and sing together. traditional devices. The afternoon event was filled with pencak silat dance performances by groups of men representing the community, village officials and traditional officials. In the evening, badenda dances were held by groups aged 50 - 90 years, men and women, and the closing evening was filled with dances by young groups of men and women aged 17 - 40 years. The event's highlight was a meal together on the fourth day, which was attended by guests from neighboring villages and Baubau City guests. This is where village parties always bring a sense of solidarity and harmony. Being in this village feels homely for newcomers because the behavior and mental attitude of the people are friendly and love peace.

Research on social values in customary behavior for rural communities is often considered less interesting by researchers because it is assumed that the perspective used is too classical and focused on studying the past. However, this article is important because it reveals how customary behavior, through village festivals, can build social bonds and harmonization between cultural supporters amidst the increasingly felt impacts of modernization. Social and cultural values in Anthropology have been widely discussed by experts, such as Koenjaraningrat, who describes the interconnectedness of the relationship between the social system and the natural environment and cultural elements (Koenjaraningrat, 2007).

Several previous studies have also provided valuable contributions in understanding the phenomenon of traditional village festivals and their role in rural communities. Smith (2005) highlights the transformation of traditional parties in rural communities in Indonesia. This study examines

changes and transformations in traditional feasts in rural Indonesian communities, providing insight into how traditional cultural practices develop and adapt along with social and economic change. Meanwhile, Abdullah (2010) examined the importance of traditional village festivals in the context of developing underdeveloped villages. This research explores local wisdom through analysis of traditional village festivals in underdeveloped villages, highlighting the important role of local traditions in maintaining cultural identity and strengthening social ties amidst the development challenges faced by remote villages.

Wibowo (2012) conducted an ethnographic analysis of social interaction patterns in traditional village parties in West Java. This research presents an ethnographic analysis of social interaction patterns in traditional village festivals in rural villages in West Java, providing an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of social relations and cultural structures in the local context. Meanwhile, Utama (2014) examined the role of local traditions in maintaining cultural identity through traditional village festivals. This research highlights the importance of local traditions in maintaining cultural identity through a case study of traditional village festivals in a particular district, illustrating how local cultural values are a strong foundation for the sustainability of rural communities.

Apart from that, Surya (2016) highlighted the role of youth in preserving local culture through a case study of traditional village festivals. This research examines the important role of youth in preserving local culture through case studies of traditional village festivals in rural areas, highlighting the younger generation's contribution in maintaining and developing traditional cultural heritage. Meanwhile, Putri (2018) observed the transformation of cultural values in traditional village festivals in small villages on the island of Java. This study reveals the transformation of cultural values in the context of traditional village festivals, using a case from a small village on the island of Java as an example, providing an understanding of how cultural values change and adapt over time. Research conducted by Santoso (2020) takes an approach more related to local development, analyzing traditional village festivals' social and economic impacts. This research analyzes the relationship between traditional village festivals and local development, providing insight into the social and economic impacts of traditional cultural practices in the context of modernization and development of rural areas.

Although cultural values are often discussed in the context of development, it is not yet clear whether discussions about cultural values are related to a nation's mentality or an individual's mental attitude. Koentjaraningrat, in Indonesia's development from the old order to the new order, has expressed concepts related to cultural values and mentality. However, the relevance of these concepts in understanding people's lives today, especially in rural areas far from the center of state activities, needs to be explored further.

This research endeavors to comprehensively explore the intricate social and cultural dynamics within Buton Regency, particularly within the Pasar Wajo District, encompassing Kondowa Village and Dongkala. The focal point of this study lies in dissecting the village festivals, which serve as poignant examples of how traditional cultural practices shape societal attitudes and values.

The village festival, an annual occurrence deeply ingrained in the fabric of Butonese society, transcends mere expressions of gratitude; it embodies a profound sense of solidarity and communal togetherness. These festivals nurture and celebrate a symbiotic relationship between humanity and nature. The Kabaria custom, emblematic of this reverence for nature, underscores the community's conscientious approach to marine resource management, refraining from wanton exploitation of sea products. Within this framework, regulatory measures such as the kaombo system play a pivotal role in safeguarding the sustainability of marine ecosystems.

Moreover, the village festival serves as a unifying force, drawing together diverse community segments, including migrants from other cities. This convergence engenders an atmosphere of anticipation and camaraderie, eagerly anticipated year after year.

Analyzing the factors shaping community relationships unveils a multifaceted tapestry of interwoven elements. Firstly, the shared participation in cultural events like village festivals fosters a sense of belonging and collective identity among residents. These gatherings provide platforms for interpersonal connections to flourish, transcending social barriers and fostering a sense of unity.

Secondly, the presence of immigrants within the community introduces a dimension of cultural diversity that enriches the social fabric. Immigrants often bring unique perspectives, traditions, and practices, contributing to the cultural tapestry of the locality. When embraced and celebrated, this diversity can promote tolerance and acceptance within the community. Interactions between native residents and immigrants facilitate cross-cultural exchanges, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation for differences.

The village festival is a microcosm of the broader social landscape, encapsulating the intricate interplay between tradition, nature, and community dynamics. Through a nuanced analysis of these festivals, we can glean insights into the mechanisms through which social cohesion, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship are intricately intertwined, shaping the collective consciousness of Butonese society.

Village party events involve not only social and cultural activities but also traditional rituals that are strongly rooted in spiritual values. From traditional meetings, pikolambu, and Kabaria to visits to old villages and ancestral graves, all are integral to this tradition. In fact, on the main day of the event, activities such as animal slaughter, sorodua ganda-ganda, pencak silat dance, and badenda dance are important markers for the community to strengthen social and spiritual ties.

This research adopts Malinowski's (1960) anthropological approach to analyzing data, focusing on elucidating the underlying motivations and functions behind traditional village party rituals practiced by the Kondowa-Dongkala community. Traditional village festivities, beyond mere customs, serve as profound cultural expressions imbued with religious and social significance. By delving into the essence and purpose of these rituals, the study aims to unveil their intricate role in sustaining the community's equilibrium and livelihood.

The utilization of Malinowski's approach in this research allows for a comprehensive exploration of the "why," "how," and "for what purpose" aspects inherent in these traditional practices. This methodological framework provides a holistic lens to examine the interplay between cultural traditions, societal values, and individuals' everyday lives within the Kondowa-Dongkala community.

Moreover, this research endeavors to extend beyond a mere documentation of traditional cultural practices. It seeks to foster discourse on the relevance of cultural values amidst the backdrop of modernization and development. By understanding how rural communities uphold and adapt their cultural heritage, insights emerge for preserving local identity and fostering sustainable development initiatives.

Through detailed examination, this study aims to elucidate village festivals' intricate process and significance in upholding social cohesion and spiritual harmony within the community. Furthermore, it endeavors to shed light on the implications of these cultural practices within the context of broader development and modernization narratives. Ultimately, this research aspires to contribute meaningfully to understanding the social and cultural dynamics prevalent in rural Indonesia, serving as a foundation for formulating inclusive and sustainable policies.

2. METHODS

This qualitative research explores the cultural dynamics within the Kondowa and Dongkala Villages, Pasar Wajo District, Buton Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province, particularly during the annual village festival. The selection of this location was deliberate, coinciding with the village festival, providing an exceptional opportunity to study traditional cultural practices firsthand.

The research team meticulously adhered to the festival schedule, predetermined through consultations with traditional officials. By immersing ourselves in the festivities, we aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the cultural significance and intricacies inherent in each stage of the event.

Data collection was multifaceted, combining observational methods with participatory involvement throughout the village festival. Researchers actively engaged in various festival activities from morning until evening over four days and four nights, ensuring direct participation and firsthand

experience.

Prior to engagement, consultations were held with traditional officials to seek permission and guidance regarding our involvement in specific events. This collaborative approach aimed to cultivate positive relationships with key informants and ensure cultural sensitivity throughout the research process.

With endorsement from the parabela traditional apparatus, the research team gained access to collect data at each festival stage. Data were acquired through in-depth interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders, including large and small parabela traditional officials and ordinary informants occupying leadership roles in village party events.

Furthermore, the festival proceedings were documented using photography and video techniques, using an iPhone camera. This facilitated the comprehensive analysis of visual data, aiding in interpreting cultural values and practices manifested at each stage of the festival.

In summary, this research embraced a holistic and participatory approach to investigate the cultural dimensions of the village festival. By integrating various data collection methods, the aim was to capture the richness and nuances of traditional practices, ultimately illuminating the event's cultural significance.

Regarding specific aspects observed and documented through participant observation, the focus primarily encompassed interactions, rituals, and activities throughout the festival. Stakeholders and ordinary informants were identified through purposive sampling and selected based on their roles and involvement in village festival events. The qualitative data collected through interviews and observations will be analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing for the identification and exploration of recurrent themes and patterns within the dataset.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The village party, held once a year by the Kondowa-Dongkala community in Pasar Wajo District, South Buton Regency, is carried out with various cultural ritual events and begins with deliberation between traditional officials and the community to agree on rules of behavior. These rules are implemented as something that regulates behavior and can be guided by.

The decisions of the 2022 Kondowa-Dongkala Village annual traditional party deliberation are:

"Today, Monday, the Twelfth of December, Two Thousand and Twenty-Two, at 01.00 at Baruga, Kondowa-Dongkala Village, a traditional deliberation has been established for approximately 14 days starting from the opening of the traditional party (Hendeano Ganda) until today the main event of the party customs in 2022 with the following deliberation results:

1. Reaffirmation of the rules prohibiting selling and drinking alcoholic beverages;
2. Reducing the Kaombo Tai area;
3. Prohibition of the use of fish poison in marine areas in the Kondowa-Dongkala Village administrative area, if obtained, sanctions or fines will be imposed;

4. The marriage must be known or reported to the customary authorities, if the customary officials/sara does not know it, then sanctions or fines will be imposed, and
5. Prohibition of crowd events (dancing/sounding loud musical instruments) when someone in the area (neighbors) dies.

This is the decision of the Kondowa-Dongkala Village Annual Traditional Party Deliberation, which was mutually agreed upon, led by parabola, and attended by all elements, including the village government, traditional leaders, religious leaders, babies, babhinkamtibmas and the entire Kondowa-Dongkala Village community with a full sense of responsibility. This decision comes into effect from the date of stipulation.

We apologize profusely if there were any errors in preparing this traditional deliberation.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh."

Judging from the rules that society has agreed upon, cultural values function as the highest guide for the behavior of the people who practice them. In the Kondowa Dongkala community, which strongly adheres to its cultural values through traditional parties, every implementation of a village traditional event is considered valuable. For example, pikolambu is played by village elders by beating gongs and drums, followed by a white cloth dance that symbolizes the traditional leadership between parabola and imam. These two traditional leaders, symbolized as a married couple between religion, custom and culture, must go hand in hand and be integrated into their duties in society.

This concept is related to the theory of functionalism in anthropology, which Malinowski coined. According to him, each element in culture fulfills certain needs. In the context of traditional village festivals, the Kondowa Dongkala community follows the guidelines and directions of leading figures, senior people, or people who occupy positions of authority. This shows that in their culture, each individual feels dependent on each other in a group.

In other words, the presence of traditional leaders in village festivals is not only a symbol of power but also part of a social structure capable of fulfilling various important functions in the culture of the Kondowa Dongkala community. They act as leaders and maintainers and guardians of cultural values, which are the basis for harmony and social harmony in society. In this way, traditional leaders play a key role in maintaining and continuing the traditions and cultural values that form the community's collective identity.

The village party in Kondowa Dongkala, with all its series of traditional events such as pikolambu accompanied by gong and drum music dances, banda dances accompanied by local music, dancing by young couples, as well as special silat dances performed by traditional apparatus, is proof of close integration with elements of universal culture. Experts, such as Koentjaraningrat (2009: 165-167), consider it the essence of culture, which is always realized through patterned interactions between event organizers, dancers, musicians, and audiences.

In the context of village festivals, elements of artistic culture are the starting point for exploring the entire existing art system in detail. A series of events such as collecting Popalia water in the old village,

visits to ancestral graves, and sorodua ganda-ganda events for children aged 7-9 years, all strengthen cultural elements in the context of a religious system. Experts also highlight this religious element as a manifestation of a belief system regarding the relationship with God the creator, fellow humans, and the existence of heaven and hell, which is always realized through seasonal ceremonies and belief in sacred and religious objects.

For example, the installation of traditional flags in Baruga, as the center for holding traditional parties, and respect for ancestral graves in the old village, are manifestations of beliefs and mental attitudes rooted in the culture of the Kondowa Dongkala people. In Malinowski's thinking, every series of events in a village party is an inseparable part of the culture passed down from generation to generation and has become institutionalized in society. These habits are strong guidelines in creating and maintaining social ties among the residents of Kondowa Dongkala, illustrating how close the relationship between culture, religion and their daily lives is.

The village party is a tradition that describes the entire life of the Kondowa Dongkala community, of which the Kabaria event is a prominent part. In the Kabaria event, people gather to collect marine products annually in the Kaombo area. This is an effort by traditional leaders, parabola and village imams to control the community's desire to excessively manage marine natural resources. By using it wisely, together they can experience marine products as their main source of livelihood. This process reflects the importance of a balanced relationship between humans and their environment, where the Kondowa Dongkala people view the sea as important in their lives.

Malinowski's perspective provides an understanding that interdependence or interrelationship in a culture is not a coincidence, but rather the result of an entire system oriented towards survival. In this context, this research can be strengthened by previous research conducted by Indasari (2019), Marti (2020), Amalia (2019), Melvina (2016), and Rahmat (2016). They show that Palanja'Kampong, as a village party tradition, is an asset and national characteristic that can strengthen brotherhood ties among the people of Boerang. On the other hand, implementing village parties in Kondowa-Dongkala also supports research on fishermen's parties in Ogotua Village, Toli-toli Regency, Central Sulawesi. This tradition is carried out as a form of respect for the heritage of our ancestors, which is still well maintained.

Meanwhile, the Sakura party at Pekon Way Ngison, West Lampung also shows togetherness and loyalty among the community. As a place for friendship and forgiveness on Eid al-Fitr, this party symbolizes closeness and social unity. In the overall context, this research shows that the village festival is not just a ceremonial event but a reflection of cultural values and local wisdom passed down from generation to generation. Thus, through village festivals, people celebrate traditions, strengthen social ties, and maintain their cultural identity.

The village festival in Buton, which is held every year, reflects every cultural element in the community's customs and behavior. In this context, customs become an important link between various aspects of the life of the Kondowa Dongkala community, placing their cultural values in various artistic expressions that can be enjoyed through local art.

One prominent example is the performance of drum and gong players in the Pikolambu dance, Pencak Silat dance, Badenda dance and Joget together. This is a real manifestation of local culture, which is an integral part of village festivals. In Malinowski's view, all cultural elements benefit the society in which these elements are present. Furthermore, Malinowski stated that the function of cultural elements is to fulfill society's basic needs, both secondary and primary.

From this explanation, it is clear that traditional village festivals as a cultural element have an important role in building the mental attitude and social ties of the Kondowa Dongkala community. This is also supported by the views of several experts, such as McClelland, Koentjaraningrat, and Ahimsa Putra, who emphasize the importance of orientation toward the creation of works and the satisfaction felt by the creator and society. In this context, cultural values reflected in arts and crafts can be developed further to increase their intensity to show a clearer orientation towards achieving a better mentality and work for the Kondowa Dongkala community in Buton Regency.

This kind of village party process has also been supported by the research results of several experts, such as Kim Duhan, Musaini Hamzah, Bakshi Kaustav, Dasgupta K. Rohit, Teeuwen Mark, and Dousek Roman. These studies provide a strong foundation for understanding the importance of village festivals as a medium for strengthening cultural values, expanding local artistic expression, and building strong social ties within the Kondowa Dongkala community. In this way, the village festival is not only an annual event, but also a celebration of life and cultural identity that must be maintained and preserved by the entire community.

Apart from that, village parties are also a celebration that celebrates togetherness and harmony between communities. This tradition allows residents to meet each other, interact and strengthen their social relationships. In busy events such as pikolambu, dances and other traditional ceremonies, people can celebrate their cultural identity and strengthen their solidarity with each other.

The importance of village festivals is also reflected in their role in strengthening local identity and showing the rich culture of the Kondowa Dongkala people to the outside world. Through traditional arts, traditional clothing, and traditional ceremonies performed at village festivals, they proudly present their cultural heritage and pay tribute to the values they profess.

Previous research has also highlighted the importance of village festivals to maintain and preserve local culture. For example, research conducted by Kim Duhan, Musaini Hamzah, Bakshi Kaustav, Dasgupta K. Rohit, Teeuwen Mark, and Dousek Roman shows that village parties are not only a

recreational event, but also an effort to maintain the continuity of traditional culture and values. amidst the ever-growing flow of modernization.

Thus, the village festival in Buton is a local celebration and a vehicle for strengthening social ties, maintaining cultural identity, and conveying messages about cultural richness and local wisdom to future generations. In this era of globalization, maintaining traditions such as village festivals is becoming increasingly important to maintain cultural diversity and enrich the world's cultural heritage.

The village festival in Kondowa-Dongkala is a local celebration and a reinforcement of cultural elements passed down from generation to generation. Various aspects of the lives of the Bhutanese people living in the village are reflected in various artistic expressions, religious practices, social structures, and kinship systems. This is important because maintaining and strengthening cultural identity is not an easy challenge amid modernization and globalization.

Nicola Forst (2004) highlights the importance of what is done in villages on the Buton Islands as a marker of identity to maintain the balance of the traditional alliance system between villages. This shows that village parties are not just social events, but are also a form of respect for traditions and values that have existed for a long time.

This approach is supported by research by PM Laksono (2004, 2009), which highlights traditional ideas in maintaining the availability of local resources through preserving the kaombo system marine area. In this context, village parties are not only a place to have fun, but also a moment to strengthen awareness of the importance of protecting the environment and natural resources for society's economic and social sustainability

Additionally, Brown's (1980) view about the structure and function always maintained by traditional communities as a local unit is also relevant in the context of village festivals. This traditional event unites the community physically and symbolically strengthens social ties and maintains the cultural values that are the basis of Bhutanese people's lives.

Thus, the village festival in Kondowa-Dongkala has a very important role in maintaining and strengthening the cultural identity of the Butonese people. Cultural values passed down from generation to generation are inherited and maintained through various artistic expressions, religious practices, and kinship systems carried out in these traditional events. This reflects awareness of the importance of maintaining traditions and cultural values in changing times and globalization's dynamics.

4. CONCLUSION

The village festival held in Kondowa-Dongkala Village serves as a significant platform for preserving cultural identity and fostering social cohesion within the community. It strengthens cultural

elements and nurtures strong bonds of solidarity among villagers, including those who have migrated elsewhere. Traditional ceremonies like sorodua ganda-ganda and Kabaria underscore the community's commitment to maintaining social ties and sustainable resource management practices.

From Malinowski's perspective, the village festival can be viewed as a system that fulfills the community's basic needs, both primary and secondary. It provides a venue for cultural expression and instills a strong sense of communal identity and values.

However, it is imperative to acknowledge the implications and limitations associated with the village festival. As societal dynamics evolve, strategies must be devised to ensure the event's relevance and sustainability. This entails exploring avenues to attract younger generations and incorporating sustainable practices into festival activities to safeguard ecological balance and natural resource sustainability.

Furthermore, addressing limitations such as limited resources and community participation requires concerted efforts to increase awareness and involvement. Encouraging active participation and investment in preserving cultural traditions can help ensure the continuity and benefits of the festival for future generations.

In conclusion, future research endeavors could explore the adaptation of village festivals in the context of globalization and the transmission of cultural knowledge through these events. By examining how these festivals evolve in response to contemporary challenges, valuable insights can be gained into traditional practices' resilience and adaptive capacity in the face of changing societal landscapes.

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