

SYMBOLIC MEANING, SOCIAL CULTURE, AND BENEFIT ON ECONOMIC TANIMBAR WOVEN FABRIC

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Abstract :

West Southeast Maluku Regency / Tanimbar Islands, Maluku Province also has local wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation, namely the Ikat Weaving Fabric, which is better known as "Tanimbar Fabric". This study aims to find the symbolic and social, cultural, and economic meaning behind the Tanimbar Ikat Weaving Fabric. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with an ethnographic approach, and a sociological method with a social facts paradigm approach. The findings of this study from a symbolic aspect illustrate that Tanimbar Fabrics are usually passed down through life skills or skills from a mother or adult woman to her daughter, or young woman by seeing the way her mother weaves every day, which is done traditionally. The social aspect has certain meanings in the life of the Tanimbar community which positions women in a high social status. The economic aspect is that this cloth business, if occupied, provides additional potential income. So that optimal efforts are needed in the empowerment of Tanimbar Fabrics both from the symbolic, social, and economic aspects impact on wellbeing. The step is that the process for making and processing Tanibar woven fabrics is sought to be faster and cheaper.

Keyword : Symbolic Meaning, Social Culture, Benefit on Economic Tanimbar Woven Fabric

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional communities around the world and also in Indonesia have had a form of local knowledge about how to manage natural resources. Knowledge, which is commonly referred to as traditional ecological knowledge or traditional ecological knowledge, is obtained from the accumulation of observations over a long period and is passed down from generation to generation. One of the local cultures that is still being developed by the Tanimbar Archipelago generation is ikat cloth, which is a skill for the community from their ancestors. In the ikat cloth, there are many kinds of decorations or motifs that contain noble values of culture and identity for the people of the Tanimbar Islands Regency. As a result, this study critically explored the relationship between culture and peacebuilding in Africa by drawing on experiences within the continent and the theoretical propositions of the national culture and social role theories.

It further uses examples particularly from Sierra Leone to exemplify the topic for two main reasons: first, the country has experienced a civil war between 1991- 2002 due to struggles for political power among the warring factions including other armed conflicts

between communities along the border lines. This has necessitated efforts for post-conflict peacebuilding. Secondly, despite the patriarchal nature of culture of Sierra Leone, women were generally hailed for playing crucial roles in the post-conflict reconstruction in the country [1,2]. Power distance culture is defined as the extent to which societal members endorse inequality and unequal distribution of power. Power distance values discourage women from playing active roles [3]. Most African countries are characterized by power distance cultural values. Power distance is linked with social inequality and lack of tolerance for change [4].

In most societies, women are traditionally treated as subordinates whereas their male counterparts are seen from a position of authority. This is typical of patriarchal societies like African countries, where men are placed in a position of power and authority with women assuming subordinate positions [2]. Therefore concluded that weaving is a traditional cultural product originating from Indonesia. Weaving industry in Indonesian, which produces a distinctive cloth that characterizes the culture of the nation of Indonesia [5]. Weaving is a fabric dying method using wax to create patterns and designs [6]. Characteristic motifs and ornaments who have philosophical meaning-making part of the cultural heritage which should be preserved and developed [7]. Therefore, it needs to be implemented actions to increase public knowledge about Weaving, especially the younger generation and addressing the educational efforts to build character and pride in Indonesia, which has worldwide [8].

Therefore, research on required to uncover meaning in the present context weaving for the people of the Tanimbar Islands Regency is a hereditary culture since time immemorial. In the traditional way and still using non-machine looms, the women produce weaving with different motifs/flowers. This difference in motifs usually occurs because these motifs have meaning, not just an image but contain a certain meaning. Through these traditional woven fabrics, we can see the richness of cultural heritage which is not only seen from the techniques, various patterns and types of fabrics made. However, it can also be recognized the various functions and meanings of cloth in the life of the Indonesian people which reflect customs, culture, and cultural habits (culturalhabit), which leads to the identity of the community which is faced with providing benefits to social, cultural and economic aspects.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Symbols, in the most general sense are usually defined as “something – be it an arbitrary or conventional sign, an object or act or sound - that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention or accidental resemblance [9]. Therefore, the most general meaning of symbol is that it is something that represents something else. As for Charles Pierce – one of the founding fathers of semiology – symbols essentially serve the purpose of communication between the members of a given community, since the communication is the sine qua non of any human society [10].

Whatever function symbols might fulfill, either from the view point of anthropologists and sociologists who mainly tend to focus on their function in social cohesion and rituals or from the perspective of philosophers, structuralists and semiologists who are more concerned with the relationship between the symbol and what it stands [11].

It is evident that the symbols make possible for human beings to send and receive messages, first within their specific community and then with the whole world, and therefore, to establish relations with their overall social surroundings [12]. The symbols need to be considered from multiple dimensions, covering all the conflicting discourse and theories of the disciplines employed throughout, since the argument of this study is to present that the members of a given community make use of different symbols, - consciously or unconsciously – to form their identities and therefore to create common or distinctive features with whom they name as ‘the others’ through established relations of similarity and difference by employing the symbols valid in and derived from their given communities [13]. Culture as one of the potential limiting factors to women participation in peacebuilding is the interest and main focus of this study. According to [10], culture is “a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from another”. Cultural issues may provide fertile grounds for gender inequality in peacebuilding as countries in Africa are highly patriarchal and male-dominated, but it is scarcely examined in peace research”.

Culture consists of the “derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodement and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves [14]. The national cultural values that influence how members of a particular country behave can be grouped into: the individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, power distance, long-term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance [3, 12]. This article focuses only on masculinity/femininity (also known as gender egalitarianism), and power distance. Power distance culture can be defined as the extent to which power is unequally distributed among societal members and institutions. Similarly, masculinity or femininity highlights the extent to which the societal roles and attributes of men and women are different [15]. The existence of weaving is also a government policy because the principle of equalization of aesthetic principles, ethical principles (social life and development of insight), economic principles so that each particular region tries to find personal identity [16]. The existence of a strong motivation and then the spirit of competition emerged. To improve themselves, beautifying themselves has become a tertiary need. Shifting people's perception in seeing weaving clothing or art (Rachman, 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted with qualitative research methods and techniques of descriptive analysis using a hermeneutic approach. That; “descriptive is a method of

examining the status of a group of people, an object, a set of conditions, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present. The purpose of this research is to make a systematic, factual and accurate description, picture or painting of the facts, characteristics and relationships between the phenomena being investigated without going through hypothesis testing [17]. According to [18], that "Hermeneutics refers to the theory and practice of interpretation, where interpretation involves an understanding that can be justified. It describes both a body of historically diverse methodologies for interpreting texts, objects, and concepts, and a theory of understanding".

In this study, using the semiotic of Charles Sanders Peirce, who used to answer the symbolic meaning contained in Tanimbar weaving motif development. Then, from the symbolic meaning already missed its implications will be analyzed.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Tanimbar Woven Fabrics among the Tanimbar communities of West Southeast Maluku Regency (MTB) is generally relatively the same in all regions, only the motives and meanings are slightly different. According to the informant (weavers), weaving the Tanimbar Fabric begins by preparing the materials and tools. The main materials consist of factory-made white yarns purchased from local stores and dyes. In the past, the Tanimbar used the main materials out of cotton and bark as a dye. The cotton is turned into a yarn then soaked with bark according to the chosen color. The bark is cooked with water until it boils; the yarn is dyed for a few minutes then removed, after that it is dried and used for weaving. Before the above process, weavers have drawn patterns (motifs) which are then tied to the threads to be woven.

In the life of the people of Tanimbar, West Southeast Maluku Regency, a kinship value known as *Duan* and *Lolat* has been maintained for a long time. The word *Duan* means the master or owner of an item. This owner or owner functions as a protector of that item. Meanwhile, the word *Lolat* means the recipient of an item [19]. The institutionalization of the value of *Duan Lolat* occurs in the process of traditional marriage, where *Duan* is a predicate given to family groups who act as women givers. At the same time, *Lolat* is the predicate for family groups that act as recipients of women. The way of weaving the Tanimbar Fabric is inherited through the life skills or skills of a mother to her daughter from how the child sees the way her mother weaves every day which is done manually (traditionally). This weaving work has been internalized in the life of the Tanimbar society in general and has been integrated into the culture inherent in the life of a typical Tanimbar mother or woman. Due to such condition, Tanimbar women are often identified with the Tanimbar Fabric itself.

Tanimbar woven fabric is a local wisdom that is easy to find and is one of the characteristics of the Tanimbar Islands region. This is because the image of the Tanimbar woven fabric is included in the logo of the Tanimbar Islands district. This unique woven fabric has existed since ancient times and is still found today [20]. In ancient times, this

cloth was used to cover the body. In addition, this cloth also has other functions. Among them are used for traditional events, such as: at the time of death, marriage ceremonies, village head inauguration ceremonies and other inauguration ceremonies. In general, the Tanimbar people consider this cloth as something very valuable.

Various efforts have been made by the government in preparing the Tanimbar Islands region to welcome regional economic opportunities in the future. Many aspects need to be reviewed including education. One of the efforts that have been made is the Tanimbar Civilization House. This activity aims to encourage the development of archaeological research and cultural studies of the foremost islands and border areas in Maluku. In this activity, aspects of culture and education are key issues that must be encouraged to accelerate development in border areas, and archeology has contributed through these activities.

Tanimbar women is often considered very "expensive". Other manifestations can also be seen in the quarrel between men, and when a woman comes to intervene, the quarrel is immediately stopped, and there is also peace. Because of the high appreciation for women, Tanimbar makes women identic with peace (peacemaker) and cold (cooler). In addition, Tanimbar Fabric are not only used as a daily fashion and clothing on traditional occasions, but also as one of the customary objects for the marriage of newlyweds. Moreover, Tanimbar woven fabric is also used as goods or objects of awarding or honoring the families or relatives who pass away [19].

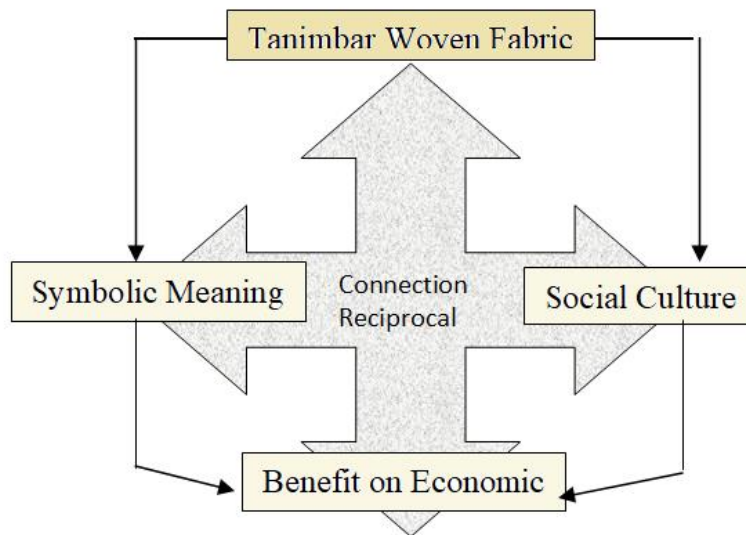
Figure 1. Tnabar Ila'ah Dance That Gets a Muri Record



Judging from the usefulness of this Tanimbar woven fabric, which is increasingly needed, and is one of the regional productions that has international appeal, it can indirectly improve the community's economy. Behind the beauty of this Tanimbar woven fabric, of course it has its own philosophy or cultural values contained, from the way it is made to the woven fabric which is reprocessed into handicrafts or other community needs, and is

faced with providing benefits to social, cultural and economic aspects. so that a model can be made as shown in the following figure.

Figure 2 :Building on the Contribution of Tanimbar Woven Fabric



Symbolic Meaning and Socio-Cultural

As already stated, Tanimbar generally has local wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation, namely the Ikat Weaving Fabric, which is better known as the Tanimbar Fabric. This Tanimbar cloth is usually passed down through life skills or skills from a mother to her daughter by the way the sianak sees the way his mother weaves, or an adult woman to a young woman which is done manually (traditionally). This weaving work has been internalized and institutionalized in the life of the Tanimbar people and has been integrated into a culture that is inherent in the life of a Tanimbar mother or woman. Therefore, Tanimbar women are often identified or symbolized by the Tanimbar cloth. Behind the Tanimbar Cloth also has certain socio-cultural and symbolic meanings. The manifestation of these meanings can be seen and understood in the socio-cultural (customary) structure of the Tanimbar community which positions women in "high social status". Because of that, dowry for Tanimbar women is often viewed or considered "expensive". Another manifestation, too, if there is a fight/dispute between men and if a woman or woman comes to intervene then the quarrel is immediately stopped, and at that moment peace occurs between those who are in conflict.

Tanimbar women are so respected and valued, that Tanimbar women are often identified with "peace" (peaceful) and "cold" (cooler). In addition, Tanimbar cloth is not only used as daily clothing and activities at certain traditional events, but also as one of the traditional objects for the newlyweds' wedding property, as well as items or objects for giving awards or final respects to people (family members, relatives) upon death [19]. The cloth that is usually or often given is a type of sarong or Tais Marin which is black or dark in color with a human skeleton patterned image/figure as a symbol of mourning. In the past, in certain areas, Tanimbar fabrics with types and motifs were reserved for certain people and could be worn/used on traditional occasions or events at certain moments. For example, Kain/Tais Susui, Tais Marin, and Tais Lelesor represent class/people from the nobility or Mela (a local term). Apart from this cloth, it cannot be used by people who are not from the nobility. At certain traditional events, if traditional dances are performed, for example the "Tnabar Ila'ah" dance (fortata language = great dance/noble dance or friendship dance), then from the type and motif of the fabric as well as the position/place in the dance configuration, it can be identified strata or a person's social class, or commonly referred to in the local term "mata rumah" (marga group or soa) a person in the village which is symbolized in the form of a traditional boat.

For example, in the front position of the boat, occupied by the clan or soa ulu or soruri (face) or soa command/king, the middle position is occupied by the clan/soa Tengah or sormudi or soa landlord (village land owner), while in the position of muri or sormuri (rear) is occupied by ordinary people. Sometimes also the fashion and jewelry worn by women or men from the eyes of a certain social class (noble) and non-aristocratic classes are also different. The meanings of the motifs, types, and fashions show certain symbolic meanings for the life of the local community and the Tanimbar community in general. In certain regions or peninsula, the type of cloth is interpreted differently, such as in the northern East Yamdena peninsula, Tais Susui, Tais Marin, and Tais Lelsor, called Tais Government (Kubani = local term) which symbolizes formal government clothing (village government officials, sub-district government officials). , or district or higher in government). Tais Marin or eyes, symbolizes the human eye as a vital tool used to see and distinguish good and bad. In addition, its function is specifically intended to wrap the dead / deceased, which is usually given by close relatives of the deceased. While Tais Marin or also called Tais / Bakhan Farindin (Fordata language) which means cold / cool, is usually used to pay the property (dowry) for marriage for the female family (duan), so that the new family / household will always live safely, peacefully and lasting / eternal, and always open to blessings (field of fortune). While Tais Kawatin or "stupid cloth", is an ordinary cloth that is used as everyday clothing. In addition, certain types and motifs, such as fish motifs, or certain flowers, are often used as souvenirs. The types and motifs of Tanimbar Fabrics also have the meaning of certain symbols, which are inspired by the natural environment, animals, and the natural wealth/potential (sea and land) of the Tanimbar Islands. In certain areas, such as the islands of Selaru, Seira, Larat and Fordata, each woven fabric has a specific meaning and philosophy.

Economic Value of Tanimbar Fabric

This Tanimbar cloth is well known both at home and abroad. In fact, it is not uncommon to receive orders from other regions, both from the Netherlands and other countries. With the widespread recognition of this Tanimbar fabric, it made quite a number of fans, encouraging groups of weaving craftsmen to emerge, not only in Tanimbar but also in Ambon City, and elsewhere. For example, the group of Ikat Kain Tanimbar weaving craftsmen who are members of the Joint Business Group [20].

Tanimbar cloth in addition to having traditional values also for everyday clothing, especially for women. But also on traditional occasions or certain moments it is usually used for traditional dances by both women and men. In the current development, Tanimbar cloth has been used for clothing at official MTB/KKT government events. Over time, the MTB/KKT government some time ago instructed the Education and Culture Office that school children from elementary school to high school levels as well as civil servants wear uniforms with dominant Tanimbar cloth on certain days. Seeing this as a golden opportunity, the weavers of Tanimbar cloth returned to their work to meet the needs of school children and civil servants. This condition provides an opportunity for the demand for Tanimbar woven clothing to increase in the market. Yarn as a basic material began to increase in availability. The tailors also increased their sewing turnover. This condition naturally affects income.

5. CONCLUSION

Apart from being clothing for the Tanimbar people, Tanimbar cloth is also one of the traditional goods (objects) used to pay dowry (dowry) from the male family (lolat) to the female family (duan). In addition, it is also used for traditional dances at traditional events in villages, sub-districts and in West Southeast Maluku Regency / Tanimbar Islands. Tanimbar cloth is not only used as an item or "customary object" that has social and cultural values, but has a symbolic meaning in the life of the Tanimbar community. Because the Tanimbar cloth is a woman's work, so that the Tanimbar woman is often identified with the Tanimbar cloth, which has the characteristics of the Tanimbar cloth, such as soft, cooling, and peaceful.

The Tanimbar woven fabric is an ancestral heritage that was left as one of the local wisdoms of the Tanimbar people, so it needs to be preserved. Therefore, it is hoped that the cooperation and support of the local government (West Southeast Maluku Regency/Tanimbar Islands), and the private sector through training and empowerment programs for weavers, both for conservation, social, cultural, and economic purposes. Tanimbar cloth has become a textile commodity that has economic value that is in demand both at the national and international levels, which is used for various types of modern clothing that brings income or income for weavers, tailors and traders or entrepreneurs.

6. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTEREST

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