

THE WALIMA TRADITION IN THE SULA ISLANDS COMMUNITY IN UMALOYA VILLAGE (SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS IN THE STRUCTURATION PERSPECTIVE)

THE WALIMA TRADITION IN THE SULA ISLANDS COMMUNITY IN UMALOYA VILLAGE (SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS FROM A STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVE)

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ABSTRACT

The Walima tradition represents one of the enduring legacies of local Islamic culture that continues to thrive in the Sula Islands, North Maluku, particularly in Umaloja Village. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Walima tradition and to analyze the social and cultural values embedded within it through the lens of Anthony Giddens' structuration theory. The research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and field documentation. The findings reveal that Walima is not merely a religious ritual but also a social practice that fosters solidarity, strengthens mutual cooperation, and reinforces the community's cultural identity. Within the framework of structuration theory, Walima is understood as the dialectical reproduction between agency (the community as actors) and structure (norms, values, and traditions), which are continuously renewed in response to social change. Furthermore, Walima functions as a form of informal social regulation governing community relationships, possessing an authority comparable to formal rules in organizing social interactions. Nevertheless, its existence today faces challenges from modernization and shifting values among the younger generation. This study emphasizes the importance of preserving local traditions as social capital to reinforce community cohesion amidst the forces of globalization.

Keywords: Walima, structuration theory, social solidarity, local Islamic culture

ABSTRACT

Tradition Eitheris one of the local Islamic cultural heritages that still survives strongly in the Sula Islands, North Maluku, especially Yes, in Umaloja Village. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Walima tradition while analyzing the social and cultural values contained within it using a traditional perspective. Anthony Giddens' structuration theory This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and field documentation. The research results show that Walima is not merely a religious ritual, but also a social practice that fosters solidarity, strengthens mutual cooperation, and reinforces the cultural identity of the community. Within the framework of structuration theory, Walima is understood as the result of dialectical reproduction between agents (community actors) and structures (norms, values, and traditions), which are continuously updated to follow social changes. In addition, Walima functions as a form of non-formal social regulation The traditions that govern social relations in society have a similar power to formal rules in managing social interactions. However, their existence is now faced with the challenges of modernization and changing values among the younger generation. This research emphasizes the need for efforts to preserve local traditions as social capital to strengthen community cohesion amidst the rapid flow of globalization.

Keywords: Either, structuration theory, social solidarity, local Islamic culture

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian social life is rich with traditions that have grown from the intersection of religious values and local culture. Religious traditions serve not only as forms of spiritual expression but also as a means of strengthening collective identity, building social solidarity, and regulating community behavior. One local Islamic tradition that remains enduring today is the *Walima*, which is a characteristic of the Sula Islands community, especially in Umaloya Village.

Historically, *Walima* is rooted in the tradition of celebrating the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. However, over time, this practice has expanded in meaning: it has become not only religious but also a forum for social interaction, a symbol of togetherness, and a means of strengthening ties between residents. This activity involves all elements of society—from children and youth to traditional leaders—in a collective space that reflects the spirit of mutual cooperation.

From a social theory perspective, the *Walima* phenomenon can be analyzed using the theoretical structure developed by Anthony Giddens (1984). According to Giddens, social action cannot be separated from existing social structures, but at the same time, these structures are continuously renewed through the actions of social actors. In other words, social practices are the result of a dialectic between agents and structures. In the context of *Walima*, the people of Umaloya Village play an active role as agents who continue to reproduce this tradition, while adapting its form and meaning to remain relevant to contemporary realities.

In addition, understanding of *Walima* can be strengthened with the perspective of social regulation, as shown by research *Analysis of the Implementation of Regional Regulations Concerning Building Licenses* (Ibnu, 2023). The study explains that social life is always governed by various forms of rules—both formal, such as state law, and informal, such as traditions and customs. *Walima*, in this case, functions as a non-formal social rule which is obeyed because of its cultural and religious legitimacy, not because of legal coercion.

Based on this framework, this research focuses on two main questions:

1. How is the *Walima* tradition carried out in Umaloya Village?
2. What social and cultural values are contained in it when analyzed using structuration theory?

The aim of this research is to enrich the study of local Islamic culture and provide a theoretical perspective on how tradition plays a role as a social structure that is continuously reproduced in the life of modern society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies of religious traditions in Indonesia show that practices such as *Walima* serve as social mechanisms to strengthen collective bonds and affirm cultural identity (Koentjaraningrat, 2004; Subagyo, 2012). Umar, Napu, & Sutisna (2022) revealed that *Walima* serves as an important social capital that strengthens solidarity in the Sula Islands community.

In a way theoretical, Giddens' structuration theory positioning social practices as the result of reciprocal relationships between agents and structures (Giddens, 1984). In a broader context, research *Exploring Political Socialization through the Lens of Giddens' Structuration Theory* (Ibnu, 2024) also shows how social structures are formed and reproduced through the actions of agents within a particular social space. Structure, according to Giddens, is not static, but is continuously maintained and transformed through repeated social actions.

Meanwhile, the social regulation approach asserts that every society has both formal and informal regulatory systems that maintain social balance. *Analysis of the Implementation of Regional Regulations Concerning Building Licenses* (Ibnu, 2023) shows how formal rules shape the interaction patterns of urban communities. This analogy can be used to understand informal *Walima* association rules that serve to direct collective behavior, although it is not of a formal legal nature.

By combining these two approaches, this study attempts to read Walima as a social practice that reflects the dialectical relationship between agents and structures, as well as a tradition-based social regulatory mechanism that has cohesive power at the community level.

3. METHODS

This research uses qualitative approach with the method descriptive-analytical. The research location was Umaloya Village, Sanana District, Sula Islands Regency, North Maluku. Informants included traditional leaders, religious leaders, community leaders practicing traditional customs, and representatives of the younger generation. Informants were selected selectively, purposive sampling based on their involvement and knowledge of the implementation of Walima.

Data is collected through:

1. Participatory observation, during the Walima procession.
2. In-depth interview, with traditional and religious figures and implementing residents.
3. Documentation study, including village archives, local historical records, and documents/visual notation.

Data analysis follows the model Miles & Huberman (1994) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. Validity The data was maintained through triangulation of sources and methods to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research has found that the Walima tradition in Umaloya Village is held annually during the month of Maulid. The ceremony begins with the preparation of traditional culinary delights and home decorations, and concludes with a communal prayer and the recitation of the Prophet's Birthday. Community involvement is comprehensive, encompassing all social strata without distinction of status.

The main values contained in this tradition include:

1. Social solidarity is evident from the collective work of the community in carrying out activities.
2. Mutual cooperation, seen in the cooperation in preparing materials, decorating, and organizing the event.
3. Cultural identity, making Walima a unique symbol of the Sula people.
4. Religious legitimacy, because the tradition is directly linked to the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

However, Walima also faces several challenges such as:

1. Modernization, which makes some of the younger generation consider this tradition no longer relevant.
2. Commercialization, where Walima began to become an event to show off social status.
3. Erosion of value, because some activities now rely more on professional services than collective work.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that Walima is a real example of social practice that produced continuously by the community. Within the framework of Giddens' structuration theory Walima reflects a dialectical process between agents and structures. Structures, in the form of norms, values, and traditions, provide guidance for society, while society, as agents, actively maintains, interprets, and adapts their implementation. Thus, Walima is not a static tradition, but rather a dynamic social structure that lives through everyday social practices.

From the perspective of social regulation, Walima functions like informal rules which regulate collective behavior. Such as formal regulations that regulate public spatial planning (Ibnu, 2023), Walima also creates social order based on cultural legitimacy. The strength of this tradition lies not in legal sanctions, but rather in the moral and spiritual awareness of the community, which views violations of tradition as violations of shared values.

These findings align with studies by Umar et al. (2022) and Thomas & Mursalim (2023), which show that local traditions like Walima serve to strengthen social solidarity and community identity. Furthermore, the value of mutual cooperation, which is a hallmark of Walima, also contributes to the development of the Walima culture. Suitable with the concept of social capital which was put forward by Subagyo (2012) and Nafis & Widyastuti (2019).

However, contemporary dynamics indicate a transformation in the meaning of tradition due to globalization and changing lifestyles. From a structuration perspective, the shift in younger generation participation marks a change at the agent level that has the potential to modify cultural structures. Therefore, efforts to preserve Walima need to be directed toward an adaptive model, for example by integrating traditional values into more contextual socio-religious activities for the younger generation.

Thus, Walima can be understood as:

1. Religious rituals, which emphasizes local Islamic identity.
2. Social practices, which strengthens solidarity and mutual cooperation.
3. Non-formal social structures, which functions to regulate social interactions.
4. Dynamic tradition, which adapts to social change without losing the substance of its values.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that Walima in Umaloya Village is a socio-religious practice that combines spiritual and socio-cultural values. This tradition plays a crucial role in strengthening solidarity, mutual cooperation, and the cultural identity of the Sula community. From the perspective of structuration theory, Walima embodies the dialectic between agents and structures that is constantly being renewed. Walima functions as...informal rules affirming its role as a regulator of social interactions based on values and morals.

However, modernization, commercialization, and changing values among the younger generation pose major challenges to the sustainability of this tradition. Therefore, preserving Walima requires adaptive strategies to ensure its noble values remain alive and relevant amidst changing times.

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