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'Arisan Rukun': The Cultural Strategy of the Lahendong Community, North Sulawesi in Maintaining Brotherhood Ties from Generation to Generation (Study of Social Solidarity Theory of Emile Durkheim)

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Abstract

'Arisan Rukun' is an activity that is held regularly by the Lahendong community and is attended by several families who come from the same lineage. The existence of this tradition is a hallmark of the Lahendong community which belongs to the Minahasa ethnic group, which emphasizes solid relationships between one family and another. Emile Durkheim's Social Solidarity Theory views social solidarity as the collective consciousness of a society, and underscores the shift in social work. This study aims to explore the philosophical meaning of the existence of 'Arisan Rukun' as part of a cultural strategy in maintaining harmony between families and community members from the perspective of Emile Durkheim's Social Solidarity Theory. This study is a qualitative study that uses observation and in-depth interviews with Lahendong residents in the data collection process. The data processing was carried out by using philosophical hermeneutic analysis techniques from verbatim data transcription and using Emile Durkheim's Social Solidarity theory as an analytical tool. This study illustrates that 'Arisan Rukun' is passed down from one generation to another as a form of awareness to maintain kinship ties, especially to remember where people come from. As a consequence of the change in people's perspective, the social system in Lahendong, which was originally a mechanical community group to an organic working community group, turned out to have an impact on the existence of 'Arisan Rukun'. This can be observed from the form of the 'Arisan Rukun' activity, which is adapted to the conditions of the times and the financial capabilities of the family members involved. Collective awareness as the basis for the existence of 'Arisan Rukun' becomes a pillar in overcoming conflicts between families in Lahendong village, so that this tradition continues to be passed down from generation to generation.

Keywords

Arisan Rukun, Emile Durkheim, Lahendong, Minahasa, Social Solidarity

Introduction

Lahendong Village is located in Tomohon Selatan District, Tomohon City, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. People who lived in Lahendong is dominated by Tombulu sub-ethnic, as a part of Minahasa ethnic group. Based on the findings of field observation, the name of "Lahendong" is taken from the Tombulu language, *Lumahendong*, the name of giant tree that grew up in the forest near of Lahendong village about hundreds of years ago. The ancestors of Lahendong are believed to have come from Sarongsong (Graafland, 1991). The ancestors initially owned agricultural land in the area around the Lahendong forest, then decided to build settlements around the land they owned. Lahendong village was built since the early 19th century. The monument with an inscription that bearings the names of Hukum Tua or Village Heads stands in the center of the village, and mentions Legi Kapele as the first Hukum Tua in Lahendong (1812-1828). It also explains that Lahendong was built about in the early 19th century.

In the past, Lahendong was the one of village which was located in Minahasa Regency and had regional expansion, then becoming part of the administrative area of Tomohon City. As the region that has an agricultural background, Minahasa grows and develops with cultural diversity, especially in the agriculture (Lombok, 2014). The life of the ancestors as farmers produces a culture that is closely related to livelihoods



in agricultural fields. Farmers generally worked in the fields in groups, and it continued for decades after the population of Lahendong grew. The cultural system is known as *Mapalus*. *Mapalus* is a cooperative technique or system to maintain common interests in the Minahasa culture. These cooperation techniques are commonly defined by togetherness or mutual cooperation. *Mapalus* groups can be formed based on common interests by a number of individuals who are willing to work together on the basis of the principle of reciprocity which in its implementation is organized as an activity in the form of associations or groups (Nelwan, Widjajanto, Andarini, Djati, & Sumampouw, 2018; Pangalila & Mantiri, 2020; Parengkuan, 2006; Sumangkut, Mumu, & Goni, 2021; Yusrifa, 2020). Individual who wants to fulfill a need that is a common need, but is difficult to fulfill individually, can form an association that aims to help each other in fulfilling it (Rantung, Tambas, & Sagay, 2020). *Mapalus* as the great value system in Minahasa culture is divided to several types. In Lahendong society, one of these types is *Arisan Rukun* or *Kumpulan*.

According to the results of observations in the field, *Arisan Rukun* is one of the routine activities carried out every month within the circle of kinship based on the same clan or *fam*. This activity has become a tradition inherited from generation to generation, and continues to develop according to the conditions of the times. Each family can join at 2-3 *Arisan Rukun* groups. The life of the Lahendong people who are dominated by togetherness value makes the *Arisan Rukun* activity continues to be sustainable, especially the Tombulu sub-ethnic upholds values that are rooted in a close kinship system. The concept of social solidarity is the central concept of Emile Durkheim, which is a state of relationship between individuals and/or groups based on shared moral feelings and beliefs and strengthened by shared emotional experiences. Solidarity emphasizes the state of relations between individuals and groups and underlies a common bond in life that is supported by moral values and beliefs that live in society. The real manifestation of a shared relationship will give birth to emotional experiences, thereby strengthening human relations. Seeing how the social phenomenon "Arisan Rukun" grows in the midst of Lahendong community life and studying it from the perspective of Emile Durkheim's social solidarity theory is one thing that will be discussed in this study. This research aims to analysis the cultural strategy of the Lahendong community, North Sulawesi in maintaining brotherhood ties from generation to generation based on social solidarity theory of Emile Durkheim's perspective.

Methods

This research is a qualitative research that uses data collection methods in the form of participant observation and in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted with 10 selected informants from residents with various categories of livelihood, age, religion, length of stay, gender, educational background, and location of residence. These aspects are socio-cultural characteristics that can determine how individual perceptions in social groups respond to phenomena that occur around them. This classification of sources is intended so that researchers can later obtain a comparative picture of the perceptions and feelings of each category, in accordance with the socio-cultural relations that exist between each source.

The data were obtained then processed through interview transcription. The researcher quotes directly from the interview results as part of the research data categorization and data reduction. Furthermore, the data that is considered representative of the research question will be analyzed using a philosophical hermeneutic approach to find the deepest meaning of the research conducted, as well as to answer the research questions. Another analytical method used is to find a common thread from the information from 10 sources regarding the explanation and the meaning of social solidarity value behind *Arisan Rukun's* existence. The conclusions drawn depart from the acquisition of common threads and patterns of perception in the community related to the phenomenon of *Arisan Rukun*.

Result

Lahendong Village has an area of 6,605 Ha and is divided into eight neighborhoods (*Lingkungan*). The population of Lahendong in 2022 reached 2466 people, with 1251 male residents and 1215 female residents. As a part of the Minahasa ethnic group, the Lahendong community who are rooted from the Tombulu sub-ethnic system value, lives in traditional and religious traditions, which known as social relations that represent a life full of collective values. The Lahendong people live within a close kinship

circle. To maintain family and kinship ties, an activity is made to bring extended families together regularly, generally once a month. The people of Lahendong call this activity as "*Arisan Rukun*".



Fig 1. Study Area Map: Lahendong Village in South Tomohon District, Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province

"*Arisan Rukun*" is a part of social gathering activities in Lahendong. The social gathering activity, is an activity that is participated usually in by a group of women in the Lahendong sub-district. "*Arisan Tanggal*" is held every day for one month, according to the date followed. The amount of dues is determined by each group. As for one person can take part in more than *Arisan Tanggal* group in Lahendong sub-district. The purpose of holding a social gathering is as a place to socialize between neighbors, as well as to save money without burdening the family's finances.

There are various forms of "*Arisan Tanggal*" held in Lahendong, including *genang leos* which consists of all members of the community, without distinction of family or clan; and a special social gathering for families with members of the same extended family called "*Arisan Rukun*". "*Arisan Rukun*" invites big families from the same clan or family on a regular basis. The place where this activity takes place can be made in rotation, according to the results of the previous social gathering. As a consequence of the alignment of collective life values, the existence of "*Arisan Rukun*" is essential in the life of the Lahendong people.

We join the "Rukun Fam" as part of remembering our family roots. The meetings are regular, almost every month. At any time, children and grandchildren will know who their siblings are if there is an activity that can bring all members of the extended family together, and we have a way for that, it's called "Rukun Fam", yes through the "Arisan Rukun" activity (Interview with Mrs.Deice Wungouw).

There is "genang leos", the same as "arisan tanggal". The event is just worship together arisan. If I. I'm participating in the social gathering on the 7th. Every 7th of every month I definitely participate. Oh if "fam arisan" is a family with a surname or a fam like that. Anyone can do "genang leos" (Interview with Mrs.Ester Ruata).

So far, Kaum Ibu has made a program plan, for example, if there is a wedding, we provide assistance, either in terms of labour or for grief. We are like that here,

whatever the organization, for example involving the church or the community, each has its own program like that. For example, if a member of the "serikat tanggal 1" dies, a relative will help. Especially for large families, you have to help. In Lahendong, the kinship ties are still strong. It's been like that since the past (Interview with Mrs.Meivi Lori).

In the *arisan* or social gathering activity, the participants will do small discussions about their daily lives and plans for what activities will be carried out on a small scale, such as families, neighborhood groups or columns, as well as sub-districts. This social activity was stopped for the last two years due to following up on social restriction rules due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the *arisan* system is still carried out by coordinating through the Whatsapp group. This social activity has a big positive impact on the people of Lahendong, especially for people who take part in more than one *Arisan* group. The benefits can be seen in grief ceremony. The funds will be given to residents who became members in more than one *Arisan* group will get more funds than those who do not join at all.



Fig 2. Members of the "Arisan Rukun" group are praying for one of the group members who passed away (Source: Researcher Documentation)

Humans live together and interact in society, so that a sense of togetherness arises (Salaki, 2014). This sense of togetherness belongs to the people who consciously give rise to collective feelings. Furthermore, collective feelings which are the result (resultant) of togetherness, are the result of actions and reactions between individual consciousnesses (Khairulyadi, Ikramatoun, & Nisa, 2022). If each individual consciousness echoes a collective feeling, it is sourced from a special impulse that comes from that collective feeling. When mechanical solidarity plays its role, the personality of each individual can be disappeared, because the individual is no longer an individual self, but merely a collective being. So, each individual is absorbed in the collective personality.

Solidarity based on the results according to Durkheim can be divided into positive solidarity and negative solidarity. Negative solidarity does not result in any integration, and thus does not have specificity, while positive solidarity can be distinguished based on the following characteristics: first, one binds the individual to society directly, without intermediaries. Durkheim's view of society is something that lives, people think and behave in the face of social phenomena or social facts that seem to be outside the individual (Yusrifa & Supartiningsih, 2017). Social facts that are outside the individual have the power to coerce. Initially, social facts originate from the thoughts or behavior of individuals, but there are also the same thoughts and behaviors from other individuals, so that they become the behavior and thoughts of society, which eventually become social facts. This social fact which is a general phenomenon is collective in nature, caused by something that is imposed on each individual (Johnson, Brookes, Wood, & Brewster, 2017; Khairulyadi et al., 2022; Yusrifa & Supartiningsih, 2017).

Durkheim views social solidarity - as with every moral phenomenon - which cannot be measured directly, so as a consequence of this the missing internal facts need to be replaced with an external guide that institutionalizes them. It also aims to map the changing forms of social solidarity (Arif, 2020; Johnson et al., 2017). The social solidarity development from traditional to modern society can experience dynamics and development. The same thing is the case with the development of the division of labor, where it is necessary to compare various principles according to how less developed societies are managed with the principles governing advanced societies.

The Lahendong people dynamically follow the flow of the times. As part of the area resulting from division and now included in the administrative area of Tomohon City, Lahendong continues to strive to maintain its ancestral culture amidst the increasingly rapid developments of the era. "Arisan Rukun" is a reflection of social solidarity which is maintained, as well as absorbing socio-cultural values from the Mapalus cultural system. *The Mapalus* cultural system emphasizes the unity and integrity aspect of a kinship group or circle of friends, which must reciprocate one another's kindness. As a part of Minahasa ethnic, the Lahendong people believe that society is united by the philosophy of life of *Torang Samua Basudara*, so to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, awareness is needed that all human beings are brothers to others. In addition, the "Sitou Timou Tomou Tou" value system contained in "Mapalus" also strengthens this belief. The Lahendong people also live in togetherness which is supported by Christian learning, which are dominated by the teachings of love for others. This belief becomes the basis for the growth of moral values that support the structure of social solidarity.

Social solidarity is also supported by shared emotional experiences, which originate from Lahendong's historical roots. The term of "Lahendong" is rooted in the term Malendong which means "hold on to all of you!". This terminology cannot be separated from the incident when the Lahendong ancestors first discovered a large tree measuring 10 pairs of adult arms at that time, the Lumahendong tree. However, the Lumahendong tree cannot be found at this time, because it has collapsed due to the age of the tree which is too old. According to one resident, namely Mr. Hendrikus Samola, the last Lumahendong tree in Lahendong was on the resident's land, but in the end it fell, because it was too old and was then used to make a table. Another version states that Lahendong is the name of the mountain where large logs were found which became the forerunner of the Lahendong village, considering that the topology of the Lahendong village area is dominated by hills and mountains. This tree also marks the opening of residential land for the first time on the shores of Lake Linow and the Rano Rainandang River by the Sarongsong-Lansot ancestors.

The origin of Lahendong is actually from Sarongsong too. But coincidentally, the dotu-dotu used to come to work here in Linow Lake, and immediately lived here in Lahendong. The ancestors were indeed from Sarongsong-Lansot. In the past, Sarongsong-Lansot was an office. What did he say that was, Opa, not yet the sub-district head, how come he used to say that. The district office, right? During the Dutch era, it's called the Sarongsong district office. Now it's the Camat's office (Interview with Mrs. Nelly Albertina Palenden).

Seeing from the historical roots of Lahendong which prioritizes collective work, social solidarity is an essential thing for the people of Lahendong. The existence of "arisan rukun" as part of a social activity becomes an implementation of the values of togetherness, as well as a moment to remember where the community came from. Social solidarity does not only talk about cohesiveness and awareness of living together, but also how society reflects its existence among a group of other humans. "Arisan Rukun" is certainly an inevitable part of forming awareness of human existence in social circles, and how individuals try to position themselves well in society.

Conclusion

Through the "Arisan Rukun" group, the people of Lahendong not only remember where the community came from, but also realize how important to cultivate relationships with one another and place the collective consciousness above all else. It can be a momentum to reflect on socio-cultural forces for developing regions too. The social life of the Lahendong people, which is full of togetherness, has made activities such as social gatherings run well to this day. The people of Lahendong, who are dominated by the Minahasa ethnic group, believe that working hand in hand and living in harmony with their neighbors is a reflection of unity that must be maintained until the end of their lives.

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