



The Role of Bugis Women in Pre-Islamic Era as a Strengthening of Local Wisdom Culture

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengupas peran perempuan Bugis pada masa pra-Islam sebagai penguat budaya kearifan lokal di Sulawesi Selatan. Perempuan Bugis tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai anggota keluarga, tetapi juga sebagai penggerak utama dalam berbagai aspek religi dan budaya. Sebagai madrasah utama bagi anak-anaknya, melalui kepiawaiannya dalam tradisi lisan dan adat budaya yang dijunjungnya, perempuan berperan penting dalam pelestarian dan transmisi nilai-nilai budaya kepada generasi selanjutnya. Selain itu, mereka aktif dalam mengelola sumber daya alam, mengatur kehidupan sosial, serta melibatkan diri dalam upacara adat yang menjadi penanda identitas masyarakat. Dengan demikian, wanita Bugis berkontribusi secara signifikan dalam mempertahankan dan memperkuat kearifan lokal, yang menjadi fondasi bagi kehidupan komunitas Bugis. Kajian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan analisis terhadap dokumen sejarah, wawancara, dan pengamatan langsung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa wanita Bugis memiliki kontribusi signifikan dalam penguatan identitas budaya, baik melalui praktik ritual maupun dalam pengelolaan sumber daya alam. Dengan demikian, artikel ini menyoroti pentingnya peran Perempuan dalam membangun dan mempertahankan kearifan lokal yang menjadi ciri khas masyarakat Bugis.

Kata kunci : Perempuan Bugis, Perempuan Bugis Pra Islam, Kearifan lokal

Abstract

This study examines the role of Bugis women in the pre-Islamic era as strengtheners of local wisdom culture in South Sulawesi. Bugis women not only function as family members, but also as the main movers in various aspects of religion and culture. As the main madrasah for their children, through their expertise in oral traditions and cultural customs that they uphold, women play an important role in preserving and transmitting cultural values to the next generation. In addition, they are active in managing natural resources, organizing social life, and involving themselves in traditional ceremonies that are markers of community identity. Thus, Bugis women make a significant contribution to maintaining and strengthening local wisdom, which is the foundation for the life of the Bugis community. This study uses qualitative methods with analysis of historical documents, interviews, and direct observation. The results of the study show that Bugis women have a significant contribution to strengthening cultural identity, both through ritual practice and in managing natural resources. Therefore, this article highlights the importance of the role of women in building and maintaining local wisdom that is characteristic of the Bugis community.

Keywords: Bugis women, Pre-Islamic Bugis women, Local wisdom

Introduction

The Bugis people, who inhabit South Sulawesi, have a rich and diverse cultural heritage. One important aspect of this society is the role of women in building and maintaining their cultural identity, especially in pre-Islamic times. Bugis women not only function as family members, but also as the main pillars in various social, economic, and spiritual aspects. Furthermore, in Bugis society, women are often considered as the main *madrassah* for their children. They are responsible for transmitting cultural values, norms, and traditions to the next generation. Through informal education provided at home, Bugis women teach their children about the customs, language, and ritual practices that characterize their society (Abdulrahman, 2018).

The history of the Bugis people can be traced back thousands of years, where they developed a complex social system. Before the arrival of Islam in the 15th century, Bugis society already had a strong social structure and rich traditions. Bugis women, in this context, play an important role in maintaining and developing local culture. One of the main ways Bugis women contribute to cultural preservation is through oral tradition. They often act as storytellers, singers, and dancers in traditional ceremonies. Through this art and oral tradition, women not only convey stories of their ancestors, but also strengthen their cultural identity. This activity serves as a medium to teach moral and ethical values to the community (Lestari, 2020)

In addition to their social and cultural roles, Bugis women are also active in economic activities. They are involved in agriculture, crafts, and local trade. With the skills they have, Bugis women contribute to the economic resilience of families and communities. Their presence in this economic sector shows that their role is not limited to domestic affairs, but also includes broader resource management (Suhardi, 2019).

Quoting from Abdullah (1985), the Bugis people in early history had a belief system that worshiped the highest god or *To PalanroE*. This belief system is called *attoriolong*, which means "following the ancestral ways". Through *attiorolong*, values, instructions, rules and norms in community life are inherited. Until now, the Bugis community still practices this belief.

Bugis women also have an important role in rituals and spiritual practices. They often become leaders in traditional ceremonies, where they organize and carry out various rituals related to daily life, such as marriage, birth, and death. Through this role, they not only maintain traditions but also strengthen the spiritual values that are the basis of Bugis people's lives (Hamdani, 2021).

Method

This article discusses the lives of Bugis women from a historical perspective. This study uses a historical method that involves several stages: *heuristics*, *source criticism*, *interpretation*, and *historiography*. In the *heuristic* stage, data and historical sources are collected, where researchers use secondary sources such as books and articles from various authors and researchers. The second stage is *source criticism*, which includes both internal and external assessments. External criticism aims to test the authenticity and accuracy of published research results, while internal criticism focuses on the credibility of the information contained in the source. Furthermore, *interpretation* is carried out to analysed data and relate one piece of information to another. By connecting the facts that emerge, researchers can obtain a comprehensive picture of the lives of pre-Islamic Bugis women in South Sulawesi. The last stage in the historical method is *historiography*, where historical facts are compiled and written in a descriptive analytical manner. This historical research method aims to provide a clearer understanding of the

process of emergence, development, dynamics, and changes that occurred in the history of Bissu in Bugis society in South Sulawesi (Suliyati, 2018).

Result and Discussion

Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi peran krusial wanita Bugis pada masa pra-Islam dalam memperkuat budaya kearifan lokal di Sulawesi Selatan. Wanita Bugis tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai anggota keluarga, tetapi juga sebagai pelestari tradisi dan norma budaya. Melalui peran mereka sebagai pendidik pertama di rumah, perempuan Bugis mengajarkan anak-anak tentang nilai-nilai moral dan etika yang menjadi landasan kehidupan masyarakat. Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan informal yang diberikan oleh perempuan di rumah sangat penting dalam menjaga keberlanjutan budaya lokal (Zulkarnain, 2020).

Selanjutnya, peran wanita dalam tradisi lisan terbukti signifikan dalam pelestarian budaya. Wanita Bugis sering menjadi pengisah cerita dan penyanyi dalam berbagai upacara adat, yang membantu menyampaikan pengetahuan dan pengalaman nenek moyang kepada generasi muda. Tradisi lisan ini bukan hanya sarana hiburan, tetapi juga alat penting dalam menguatkan identitas budaya. Dalam hal ini, penelitian menunjukkan bahwa partisipasi aktif perempuan dalam tradisi lisan berkontribusi pada kesadaran budaya dan identitas komunitas (Mastika & Adnan, 2021).

Di bidang ekonomi, wanita Bugis berperan penting dalam kegiatan pertanian, kerajinan, dan perdagangan. Penelitian menemukan bahwa perempuan Bugis terlibat dalam pengelolaan sumber daya alam dan kegiatan ekonomi yang mendukung ketahanan keluarga. Dengan keterampilan yang dimiliki, mereka tidak hanya memenuhi kebutuhan rumah tangga tetapi juga berkontribusi pada perekonomian lokal. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa peran wanita di masyarakat Bugis

melampaui ranah domestik dan mencakup dimensi ekonomi yang signifikan (Sari & Wati, 2019).

Dalam konteks spiritual dan ritual, wanita Bugis juga memegang peran penting. Mereka sering menjadi pemimpin dalam berbagai upacara adat, termasuk pernikahan dan upacara kelahiran. Peran ini tidak hanya menegaskan posisi sosial perempuan dalam masyarakat, tetapi juga membantu melestarikan nilai-nilai spiritual dan tradisi. Ritual yang dipimpin oleh wanita memberikan ruang bagi mereka untuk mengekspresikan kekuatan dan pengaruh dalam konteks budaya (Rahman, 2021).

Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa peran wanita Bugis pada masa pra-Islam sangat signifikan dalam memperkuat budaya kearifan lokal di Sulawesi Selatan. Melalui pendidikan, tradisi lisan, kegiatan ekonomi, dan peran dalam ritual, perempuan Bugis telah menjadi agen perubahan yang menjaga dan melestarikan warisan budaya mereka. Pemahaman tentang kontribusi ini penting untuk mengapresiasi dan mempertahankan kekayaan budaya Bugis dalam konteks yang lebih luas dan modern (Muliadi, 2022).

Conclusion

The role of Bugis women in pre-Islamic times has great significance in strengthening the culture of local wisdom in South Sulawesi. They not only function as caregivers and educators, but also as the main movers in various aspects of social life. Through informal education methods, Bugis women have succeeded in transmitting cultural values to the younger generation, which is very important for maintaining the identity of their community.

In addition, Bugis women also contribute to the oral tradition which is an integral part of cultural heritage. Through stories, songs, and traditional ceremonies, they become transmitters of ancestral knowledge and experiences. Their

involvement in economic activities, such as agriculture and crafts, also shows an active role in building family and community welfare, thus strengthening social networks within the community.

By understanding these important contributions, we can better appreciate the richness of Bugis culture and explore how local values can continue to live in modern

society. Awareness of the role of women in maintaining and preserving their cultural heritage will help us in caring for and respecting traditions that have existed for a long time, while also allowing us to utilize local wisdom as a source of inspiration in facing the challenges of the times.

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Curriculum Vitae

Andi Dwi Resqi Pramana is the second of three siblings, a daughter of Mrs. Darwianah who is a disciplined and hard-working teacher and Father Andi Useng who is an extraordinary father figure so that, Kiki, her nickname, becomes a lecturer and a woman who is persistent in pursuing a career as a lecturer. Currently studying for a doctorate in Arts Education.