

Social Reproduction of Pinisi Boatmakers in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the process of adaptation and preservation of cultural identity by Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba district, South Sulawesi, in the face of modern-day dynamics. This research uses a qualitative methodology and a case study approach to explore how this long-standing boatbuilding tradition adapts while maintaining important cultural elements. Results show that boatbuilders blend traditional skills with changing market demands, maintaining cultural symbols such as the 'seven masts of sail' that have functional and symbolic value. The study also highlights the importance of structural support from the government and community that enables boatbuilders to continue their practices in a modern economy. The findings offer valuable insights into how cultural heritage preservation and sustainable economic development can be achieved through adaptive social reproduction processes, underscoring the importance of integrating traditional values with contemporary innovations.

INTRODUCTION

Pinisi boat, as a symbol of Indonesia's maritime culture, not only has its beauty value but has also traveled to various parts of the world, such as Vancouver Canada, and Madagascar (Madani, 2022). However, behind the fame of Pinisi boats, there is a story about the people who make them, who have unique skills and traditions. The Konjo people, a sub-ethnic group of Makassarese mostly from Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi, have long been known as the master Pinisi boat builders (Parera, 2021). The ritual procession of Pinisi Boatbuilding in Ara Village, Bontobahari District, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi, not only maintains customary traditions but also prioritizes modern elements in its manufacture (Setiawan, 2021).

Despite preserving traditional knowledge and rituals, Pinisi boat builders also transform their culture from traditional to modern. This shows an adaptive social reproduction process in facing the times. The social reproduction of Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi Province is a very important and interesting topic. The complex interplay between tradition, culture, and socio-economic dynamics in the context of boatbuilding highlights the resilience and adaptability of these craftsmen in the face of modern challenges (Demmalino, 2019). Moreover, it also has important implications for the local economy and tourism in the region (Sirayasa & Jam'an, 2020). Understanding and supporting the social reproduction of Pinisi boat builders can contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage, sustainable economic development, and empowerment of local communities. The success of Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba Regency in maintaining their skills and cultural identity through adaptive social reproduction processes is a testament to their resilience and commitment to their craft.

Despite facing challenges such as changing market demands and technological advancements, the boatbuilders have demonstrated their ability to adapt while maintaining the traditional techniques and designs that are an integral part of the Pinisi boatbuilding tradition (Hastuti, et al, 2018 & Akhmad, et al, 2022). This study aims to shed light on the complex and adaptive processes that enable boatbuilders to maintain their craft and cultural identity, providing valuable insights for cultural preservation and economic resilience. By delving into the historical context of Pinisi boatbuilding in Bulukumba Regency, we can discover the factors that enable boatbuilders to maintain their cultural heritage while facing modern challenges.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology by adopting a case study approach, which allows for a thorough exploration of the cultural and social practices associated with Pinisi making. a case study is a research strategy that involves a careful investigation of a particular program, event, activity, process, or group of individuals over some time. The selection of informants was done incidentally, using the technique of randomly selecting individuals who are believed to have the information or data needed for this research.

The data collection methods used in this research include in-depth interviews, recording, and documentation. In-depth interviews involve a direct question-and-answer process with informants to collect the required data. This

method is widely used for research purposes and involves face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the informant, without relying on predetermined guidelines. The recording method is used to capture the original data from the informants' narratives and can also serve as data documentation. Documentation is done by collecting data from existing sources such as books, scientific works, and documents related to the research.

RESEARCH RESULT

Based on the results of the research using in-depth interviews and theme analysis for qualitative data, several themes or concepts resulting from social reproduction efforts by Pinisi boat builders in Bonto Bahari Sub-district, Bulukumba Regency, were obtained as a discussion.

Structured Adaptation and Habitus

Pinisi boat builders do not merely maintain traditional skills; they also adapt to changing market demands. Although boat models still follow consumer demand, boatbuilders retain traditional elements that mark their cultural identity (Dewi, 2016). Interviews with several Pinisi boatbuilders (Punggawa) revealed that:

"customers or those who intend to make a pinisi boat, usually provide the design or model of the boat they want and we always give a note that whatever model they want, the characteristics of the pinisi boat must always be present in every boat, namely the shape and number of sail poles because this is our agreement (the retainer) including also with the government (regional and central) to maintain the identity of our ancestors who have been making this boat for a long time."

The results of this interview reflect the concept of structured habitus, where social practice (in this case, Pinisi-making) adapts but also maintains basic socially and culturally accepted structures (Gartman, 2002). In this context, habitus is a deep system of structures and practices that operate below the surface of social consciousness but strongly influence individual and collective actions.

The Pinisi boatbuilders' adaptation to contemporary demands while retaining traditional elements demonstrates a structured habitus, a durable and transferable system that guides behavior and practice (Mukti, 2022). According to Bourdieu's theory, boatbuilders not only maintain but also adapt their craft to harmonize market demand and preservation of cultural identity, reflecting the delicate balance between cultural capital and financial sustainability (Hayes, 2020). This adaptation is visible in the growing demand for Pinisi boats that are customized to traditional functional and aesthetic needs. This reflects the delicate balance between cultural capital (traditional heritage) and financial sustainability (Akbar, 2023).

The survival and resilience of Pinisi boatbuilders can be attributed to their deep-rooted understanding of the concept of adaptation and structured habitus. Throughout their history, boatbuilders have not only maintained traditional craftsmanship but have also adeptly adapted to changing market demands

(Amar, 2020). This adaptive nature reflects the boatbuilders' commitment to preserving their cultural heritage while navigating the ever-evolving market dynamics.

Maintaining the symbolism of Pinisi boats

Pinisi boats are not just physical objects; they are rich cultural symbols (Demmalino, 2019). The key symbolic elements of Pinisi boats are deeply embedded in the culture and traditional practices of the boatbuilders. Elements such as the 'seven masts' are not only functional but also have deep symbolic meanings, relating to the beliefs and values of the local community. They serve as a bridge connecting the past with the present, ensuring the craft adapts while maintaining its essence.

The preservation of these symbols, even in the face of technological and economic change, demonstrates the importance of cultural capital as part of the selling point. This confirms the theory of symbolic interactionism, which emphasizes meanings made and shared through social interaction (Hasniar, 2020). The results of interviews with informants revealed that:

"On average, the boat builders here do not have a basic school for making boats because there is no school, like me from a boarding school but because I was often shown and invited by my parents, I finally understood how to make boats. In addition, because my family did not continue this business, I inevitably had to continue this business so that this is a source of income for my family."

From the interviews, in this context, cultural capital-knowledge, skills, and inherited symbols are not only preserved through Pinisi making but also function as economic capital that allows boatbuilders to benefit from the preservation of this tradition. Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba make efforts to maintain the symbols and characteristics of Pinisi boats while ensuring the sustainability of their manufacturing business in the modern era. Playing in the symbolic world, Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba district engage deeply with the symbolic elements of their craft. Interview result from a resource person:

"I have been receiving orders for more than 30 years to make boats from both foreign and national sources. In the past, the story goes that this Pinisi boat was made with a smaller stern because it was used for sailing, but there were many orders/requests from customers who wanted the stern to be made wider because this Pinisi boat would be used as a commercial boat. So the characteristics of the pinisi boat are left with 1, namely the type and number of sail poles, now this characteristic is what we maintain until now because this characteristic shows that the pinisi is a strong and tough boat and most consumers do not reject it".

The maintenance of certain symbols, such as the distinctive seven (7) masts, serves not only as a hallmark of the Pinisi but also as a repository of cultural capital, which is crucial in maintaining a unique identity in the marketplace (Amar, 2020). This dual value system system symbolic elements are converted into economic benefits-illustrates the conversion of cultural

capital into economic capital, a concept that is central to Bourdieu's theoretical framework.

The symbolism of the Pinisi boat is not just an aesthetic choice, but also linked to the identity, history, and social practices of its makers, making it an integral part of the craft's sustainability in the modern era. Maintaining these symbols helps keep this tradition alive, allowing it to evolve while still preserving its core cultural values.

Capital Contestation and Structural Support

Bourdieu's concept of habitus and capital also helps us understand how cultural capital and boatbuilders have unique knowledge and skills passed down through generations, which are recognized and valued by society and consumers. And financial capital, financial resources to obtain materials and pay labor wages as well as access to markets where they can sell their boats competitively which then contest in a conducive social arena (Musyafir, 2023). Interviews with several interviewees revealed that:

"We are happy that there is support from the local government to make our area a tourist spot and the pinisi boat manufacturing industry. There is also support from the state/central government which has made pinisi boats a cultural heritage. When we also take care of the letters related to the wood used, the government is very helpful because foreign consumers really question the validity of the wood we use."

Based on the interviews above, the provision of government support and recognition of the Pinisi as a cultural heritage not only strengthens the practice of boatbuilding as social and economic capital but also strengthens the boatbuilders' position within the broader socioeconomic structure (Demmallino, 2019). This is an example of how social structures and economic conditions interact in Berger and Luckmann's social construction, resulting in a new reality where old traditions are renewed and given new value in a modern context.

In addition, the continued practice of boatbuilding, supported by conducive arenas such as government policies and programs aimed at preserving traditional crafts, contributes significantly to the socio-economic capital of the community. These interactions reflect the constructivist paradigm proposed by Berger and Luckmann, where community structures and knowledge are created through social interactions. Boatbuilders in Bulukumba not only make boats but also social realities that strengthen their cultural and economic survival.

The Bulukumba local government plays a role by issuing policies and programs to foster and develop the capacity of Pinisi Boat craftsmen (Taufik, 2020). Although not yet optimal, these efforts help maintain the sustainability of this craft in the modern era.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research successfully reveals how the social reproduction process of Pinisi boatbuilders in Bulukumba not only maintains but also adapts traditional

ritual knowledge and symbols of ancestral heritage in the face of modern challenges. The results show that adaptation to changing market demands and integration of technical innovations with traditional methods help maintain and improve the sustainability of this boatbuilding business. Government support through conducive policies and recognition of Pinisi boats as cultural heritage play an important role in ensuring that the practice remains relevant and competitive in the global market.

The research also highlights the importance of a structured habitus as a mechanism that allows boatbuilders to adjust to contemporary demands while still maintaining the traditional elements that are the hallmark of Pinisi boats. This reflects the delicate balance between preservation of cultural values and adaptation to modern economic dynamics. In conclusion, the adaptive social reproduction process carried out by Pinisi boat builders in Bulukumba not only contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage but also to sustainable economic development and empowerment of local communities.

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