

Cultural Assimilation of the Bajo Tribe in Enhancing Educational Quality

Akhmad Marhadi^{1*}, Syahrin Syahrin¹, Muhamad Chairul Basrun Umanailo², Decka Pratama Putra³, Annisa Retrofilia Umanailo⁴, Rosmiati papalia⁵, Rhisanda Nitma Tesyawa⁶

¹Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Indonesia

²Fakultas Pertanian dan Kehutanan, Universitas Iqra Buru, Namlea, Indonesia

³Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Politik, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia

⁴Fakultas Sains dan Teknologi, Universitas Pattimura, Ambon, Indonesia

⁵Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Iqra Buru, Namlea, Indonesia

⁶Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Wijaya Kusuma, Purwokerto, Indonesia

¹akhmadmarhadi@uho.ac.id, ²syahrin_antro@yahoo.com, ³chairulbasrun@gmail.com,

³deckapratamaputra@fisip.unsri.ac.id, ⁴annisaretroo@gmail.com, ⁵rosmiatipapalia571@gmail.com,

⁶rhisandanitma01@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

The Bajo community is concerned about the lack of education and human resources. Traditional values and formal education must be balanced by the Bajo tribe. The Bajo tribe's poverty is exacerbated by unemployment, limited medical care, crime, a food shortage, and low commodity prices. This study was driven by the need to preserve the Bajo tribe's culture and improve education. This research reconstructs the Bajo tribe's cultural assimilation to describe local opportunities and resources for improving education and escaping poverty. Qualitative case study methods are used to reveal the substance of events. Purposeful sampling was used to select informants for interviews. Researchers choose based on predetermined criteria and research goals. The study suggests that Assimilation can be achieved by incorporating Bajo Tribe customs into education and learning as cultural advocacy. While this assimilation will reduce the Bajo Tribe's human resource vulnerability, further research is needed to identify the most effective practices.

KEYWORDS: Cultural, Assimilation, Tribe, Quality

1. INTRODUCTION:

Both agriculture and fishing are practiced on the land and along the coastline of the West Muna Regency. These conditions do not contribute to the improvement of community welfare and continue to perpetuate poverty. Because they migrate and rely on marine resources for their livelihood, the Bajo Tribe is impacted by poverty. The lack of qualified education is a significant problem for Bajos. The Bajo Tribe's educational participation rates are further lowered due to a lack of motivation from their families and communities, as well as incomplete comprehension of the significance of education.

Muna Regency's coastal communities face complex issues, such as the Bajo Tribe's education issues. As a maritime minority ethnic group, the Bajo Tribe faces many challenges that affect education accessibility, quality, and relevance. Many studies on the Bajo Tribe's education have been done (1). In her research on the educational process for Bajo Tribe children in Tinakin Laut Village, Banggai District, Banggai Laut Regency, Dewinta Rizky Hatu found that the international Bajo Tribe had changed their attitudes due to the community. Ririk expressed the Bajo Tribe's awareness and need for government assistance on the research theme of parents' opinions of children's education (2). In the context of globalisation, Rasid Yunus examined the Bajo Tribe's identity and characteristics in Torosiaje to explain how they preserve their culture.

The role of the Bajo Tribe's cultural assimilation in improving educational quality must be examined to determine the need for reconstruction. Incorporating Bajo Tribe wisdom into formal education may improve quality. Eliciting Bajo culture's maritime knowledge and practices can help conserve the environment and create innovative and contextually relevant educational curricula (3).

In Maginti District, West Muna Regency, preliminary observations of Bajo Tribe educational dynamics were used to examine cultural assimilation. Most Maginti District Bajo Tribe members fish because human resources have declined. They believe local knowledge passed down through generations is enough for survival, so education is unimportant. However, development requires reliable human resources, and the Bajo Tribe community may struggle to compete due to their culturally influenced low educational attainment. The Bajo Tribe community in Maginti District is unwittingly losing human resources, which in turn reduces its competitiveness and competence, and perpetuates poverty. By using cultural potential to promote Bajo Tribe collaboration, this study encourages stakeholders to support quality education.

2. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY:

The author is able to investigate and comprehend particular occurrences or occurrences that take place within real-life contexts; this is accomplished through the in-depth examination of one or more specific cases. A qualitative model that employs a case study approach is the research method that is currently being utilized in this investigation by the researchers. A case can be investigated by researchers by analyzing a variety of influencing factors, such as social, cultural, political, and historical contexts, as well as the dynamics that occur within that framework. This enables researchers to reach a successful conclusion. The case study methodology is what makes this a genuine possibility. Maginti sub-district was chosen as the location for the research because of its predominantly ethnic population and its interior location within Muna Regency, which shields the socio-cultural life of the Bajo Tribe from the influence of modern society. This was the primary reason for the selection of this sub-district.

In order to collect information about the experiences of informants, this qualitative study makes use of interview techniques (5). The author chose to select informants through the use of the "purposive sampling" method, which is a research technique that involves the deliberate selection of samples in accordance with predetermined criteria (6). The author employs a methodology that consists of four stages for the purpose of data analysis. These stages include category collection, direct interpretation, pattern formation, and equivalence seeking among categories. The final stage of this methodology is the development of naturalistic generalisations by researchers. The methodology utilized offers sensitivity to identify all symptoms present within the research subject (social situation), the capability to explore data sources through extensive interviews, and the potential to communicate research findings to a wider community.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Indonesia, the Bajo people, who are also referred to as "sea nomads," primarily live on the islands of Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Nusa Tenggara. They belong to the coastal and oceanic regions of Indonesia. It is possible for Bajo people to live in locations that are inaccessible to the general public, such as on boats or stilt houses (8). Due to the fact that their homes are situated at a significant distance from the mainland and public institutions, it is challenging for them to gain access to fundamental necessities such as schools for their children. The Bajo people face challenges in obtaining a formal education due to the scarcity of schools and the time-consuming nature of traveling by boat to the mainland (9). There is a severe lack of adequate educational facilities in many coastal communities.

There is a significant dependence on fish and other marine resources among the Bajo people. Marine life and other valuable resources can be captured by scuba divers who are skilled in their craft and have extensive experience underwater (10). They are able to dive to great depths without providing oxygen, and a significant number of them live on stilt houses or "lepa-lepa" boats. They are also able to dive to great depths. While they are on the water, they participate in a wide range of activities, such as eating, sleeping, and interacting with one another (11). Children of Bajo descent start their formal education at a young age, learning how to survive in the underwater environment. Their culture places a higher value on natural skills such as swimming, canoeing, and diving than it does on formal education because these activities are essential to their survival. Consequently, their culture places a lower value on formal education. There are a number of Bajo children who do not place as much importance on going to school as they do on assisting their parents in participating in activities such as fishing or scuba diving.

The Bajo Tribe is frequently confronted with economic challenges, despite the fact that it is prominently recognized for its maritime prowess and cultural wealth. The community that is economically dependent on the sea is confronted with a wide range of challenges, particularly in light of the fact that modernization and environmental change are occurring (12). One of the most important sources of food for the Bajo people is fishing. Traditional methods of gathering marine resources, such as fishing, diving, and harvesting, are utilized by these individuals in order to accomplish this task (13). There has been a decrease in catches, which has a negative impact on the welfare of marine animals. This decrease is a result of changes in marine ecosystems, overfishing, and climate change. An unstable income often results from the small catches. Due to the difficult economic climate, many Bajo families opt to work instead of sending their children to school. When it comes to fishing or other marine-related tasks, it is common practice to ask children for assistance. A low level of educational attainment is a consequence of unstable economic conditions, according to the assumption. This is in contrast to the fact that the deterioration of economic conditions is a result of inadequate educational opportunities and a deficiency in skills that are transferable throughout different contexts. Due to the fact that most Bajo children do not complete their education, they often find themselves trapped in a traditional economic cycle based on occupation. The likelihood of them securing stable employment or making the transition to other fields is reduced as a consequence of this.

The low number of children enrolled in schools is often attributed to the Bajo community's limited awareness of the importance of formal education. It would appear that the Bajo tribe makes use of social institutions such as traditional organizations and regional languages in order to acquire knowledge and improve their abilities. Also, it would appear that they practice regional languages. It is highly valued in the Bajo culture to possess skills in activities such as fishing, diving, and boating. These are the kinds of skills that are required in order to not only survive but also to make a living (14). In the short term, the majority of parents believe that teaching their children these skills is more important and beneficial than formal education, which may not be applicable to everyday life (15). This is because formal education may not be able to teach them skills that are applicable to everyday life. Bajo children who are still young are already familiar with marine life. They learn new skills such as swimming, diving, and fishing from their parents, family members, or community members (16). It is essential to the culture that they practice they engage in these activities. It is possible that their theoretical formal education does not have any bearing on the activities that they engage in on a daily basis while they are at sea. This is because of the circumstance described above.

Given that fishing and sailing have been integral to the Bajo culture for generations, many parents and community members believe that acquiring maritime skills is crucial for securing their children's future. It's possible that their lives at sea would not benefit from formal education. A significant number of Bajo communities struggle to understand the long-term benefits of formal education due to limited exposure to modern society and information. On the other hand, they overlook the fact that education can lead to more secure jobs outside the maritime industry (18). Therefore, investments in education are frequently considered to be pointless. The Bajo Tribe does not believe in formal education because they believe it is incompatible with their way of life and culture. It is possible for children to lose their cultural skills or to leave their community as a result of formal education. Education has the potential to alienate children from marine life, which is an essential component of the identity of the Bajo Tribe.

Language barriers are something that Bajo children have to deal with when they are attending formal schools. The children speak Bajo, which is the indigenous language of the Bajo people. This language is distinct from Indonesian, which is the national language that is taught in schools (19). As a consequence of this, it is becoming increasingly challenging for them to comprehend instructions, educational resources, and instructions from teachers and classmates who speak Indonesian. Bajo children are required to learn Indonesian from the very beginning of their formal education, and the majority of the time, they have a limited ability to do so. It takes some time for them to adjust to this new language, and they also struggle with the academic material. When there is a lack of comprehension of the language that is being used in instruction, it can prevent academic progress from being made.

Twenty percent of teachers in schools lack a strong command of the language commonly used in the community. In light of this, the Bajo children do not possess a linguistic bridge that enables them to comprehend the subject matter. Children's capacity to comprehend explanations is hindered due to the scarcity of teachers fluent in Bajo. It is of the utmost importance that the Bajo Tribe's values, customs, and local traditions be incorporated into formal education in order to improve the overall quality of education. The Bajo Tribe, a maritime community with nomadic roots and local knowledge, is struggling to adapt to the conventional educational system. There is a possibility that indigenous knowledge of fishing techniques, ecological systems of the coast, and marine environments could be incorporated into the educational program of the Bajo Tribe. The combination of traditional values and formal education allows students to acquire knowledge of general subjects as well as culture. This is made possible through the combination of the two practices. In the context of education, particularly in elementary school, the utilisation of the Bajo language enables Bajo children to acquire knowledge. Consequently, this has the potential to enhance both the quality of education and the motivation of students. For the purpose of developing pertinent educational programs, it is essential for educational institutions, government agencies, and leaders of the Bajo Tribe to collaborate with one another. The continuation of educational programs in the region can be aided by traditional leaders in several ways, including sharing the values associated with local culture.

4. CONCLUSION:

If the Bajo Tribe wants to improve their educational opportunities and the quality of their education, they must assimilate culturally into the educational system. A major goal of Bajo cultural assimilation in education is to ensure that Bajo children have access to formal education without compromising their cultural identity. Educational quality, future opportunities, and inclusive development can all be improved through effective assimilation in coastal communities. The study's findings suggest that the Bajo Tribe can advocate for their culture by incorporating their traditions into the educational system, which can lead to assimilation. Because of this integration, the Bajo Tribe's human resources will be less vulnerable.

5. Acknowledgement:

The author thanks the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, precisely the Directorate General of Higher Education, for providing the 2024 Research and Community Service Program Grant. The author expresses gratitude to the Directorate of Research, Technology, and Community Service, Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, for the 2024 Fundamental-Regular Research Grant scheme, along with all individuals who contributed to the completion of this research and publication process.

6. Data Availability:

Data supporting the findings of this study are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author.

7. Conflict of interest:

The authors declare that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

8. REFERENCES:

1. Haris OK, Syahbudin, Yunus A. Legal existence of local wisdom for bajo fishery tribe on Indonesian maritime border. *Hasanuddin Law Rev.* 2019;5(1).
2. Obie M, Lahaji. Coastal and marine resource policies and the loss of ethnic identity of the Bajo tribe. *Acad J Interdiscip Stud.* 2020;9(3).
3. Basri LOA. Multiculturalism in the Local Wisdom of Bajo Tribe. *Asian Cult Hist.* 2018;10(1).
4. McMullin C. Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research. *Voluntas.* 2023;34(1).
5. Collins CS, Stockton CM. The Central Role of Theory in Qualitative Research. *Int J Qual Methods.* 2018;17(1).
6. Flynn C. Qualitative methods in social work. In: *How to Conduct Qualitative Research in Social Science.* 2023.
7. S.M. T, D. R, S.J. H. A qualitative study of factors affecting mental health amongst low-income working mothers in Bangalore, India. *BMC Womens Health.* 2014;14(1).
8. Sulaiman U, Wilkins DE, Rahmawati R, Subair S, Bakri W, Suban A, et al. Contribution of Local Wisdom of the Bajo Tribe to Preserve Indonesia's Mangrove Forests. *Acad J Interdiscip Stud.* 2023;12(3).
9. Halim, Rianse U, Kadir I, Sukotjo E. Characteristics of the Bajo Tribe Settlements in Lagasa Village, Muna County, Southeast Sulawesi-Indonesia. *Futur Cities Environ.* 2023;9.
10. Mallapiang F, Syarfani S, Aeni S. Trust and Occupational Safety Behavior Related to Decompressive Diseases on Bajo Ethnic Divers. *Divers Dis Prev Res Integr.* 2023;
11. Sulmayana N, Suharini E, Sholeh M. Local Wisdom of Sasak Tribe Community in Dealing with Earthquake Disasters. *Int J Res Rev.* 2023;10(8).
12. Hajuan MA, Marzuki M. Establishment of Environmental Care Character Based on Local Wisdom of The Bajo Tribe In Bajo Village, Selatan Halmahera Regency, Indonesia. *Eur J Soc Sci Stud.* 2022;7(5).
13. Wahyuni I, Budiarti B, Budiarti B, Sri Lestari A, Kuraedah S, Fatimah Kadir S. Interdisciplinary Education: The Natural Learning of a Coastal Community in Southeast Sulawesi. *KnE Soc Sci.* 2022;
14. Ilyas K. Utilization of the Coastal Area as a Settlement Area by the Bajo Tribe in Torosiaje Sea Village. *Golden Ratio Law Soc Policy Rev.* 2022;1(2).
15. Prasetio DE, Ronaboyd I. Bajo Tribal Marine Customary Rights Supervision: A Reform with Archipelagic Characteristics. *J Kaji Pembaruan Huk.* 2022;2(2).
16. Setiadi AH, Wulandari LD, Asikin D. Typology of Coastal Traditional Houses of the Bajo Tribe in Bajoe Village, Soropia District, Southeast Sulawesi. *Budapest Int Res Critics Institute-Journal.* 2021;4(4).
17. Maulidyna A, Hartawan Bs, Agustin Hn, Irfan An, Septiasari A, Utina R, et al. Review: The role of local belief and wisdom of the Bajo community in marine conservation efforts. *Int J Bonorowo Wetl.* 2021;11(1).
18. Sinapoy MS, Djalante S. Protection of rights of community of bajo tribe from the impacts of climate change. In: *Springer Climate.* 2021.
19. HM S. Socioeconomic Factors and Participation of KB Suku Bajo Jaya Bakti Village, Pagimana District Banggai County Town, Central Sulawesi Province. *Return Study Manag Econ Business.* 2023;2(2).
20. Maemunah M, Haniah S, Mukramin S. Education Marginalization of Bajo Children Based on Local Wisdom. *Int J Educ Res Soc Sci.* 2021;2(3).