

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM IN THE TRADITIONAL WEDDING CEREMONY OF THE PEOPLE OF TEMPIRAI VILLAGE, PALI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the role of symbolic interactionism in the marriage ceremony of the Tempirai village community. This research uses a qualitative approach through the use of case study methodology. Data collection methods were conducted through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. This research uses data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion making as its data analysis approach. The results of this study show that the traditional marriage ceremony procession of the Tempirai village community begins with the process of gathering the nuclear family, proposal, invitation notification, mipis bumbu, simbang ngambik, marriage contract, mapak, and tandang sujud. Secondly, the process of symbolic interactionism in the traditional marriage ceremony in Tempirai community includes the procession of making kanjang by prospective bride groom, process invitation notice with mokon, and honest sen or request of the bride-to-be to the groom-to-be.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is said to be a pluralistic nation due to racial, religious, cultural, and ethnic heterogeneity. In Indonesia, diversity encompasses several aspects such as occupation, education, social standing, socioeconomic level, regional dialect, and skin pigmentation showing the inevitability of plurality (Baihaqi and Birsyada 2022). Indonesia is a pluralistic country, characterised by ethnic, religious, racial, class, and cultural diversity (S and Birsyada 2022). In addition, being a pluralistic nation entails variations in social structures and value systems. Both are diverse and result from many civilisations, customs, races, nationalities, religions, and tribes (Alvat 2020). This diversity gives

rise to variations in ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, religion, and cultural practices. The presence of many tribes and cultures helped shape the distinctive cultural order of Indonesian society, which was developed in the form of education and customs (Birsyada and Handoko 2020).

One aspect of community diversity relates to the issue of tradition. Customs are complex social standards that are seen as important by those who follow them for harmonious coexistence in society (Muhammad Iqbal Birsyada 2019). These conventions serve as norms of behaviour and regulations that govern every human action. Customs and societies serve as channels for transmitting and preserving cultural values and practices. Culture is a collection of information that humans learn and use to understand their experiences and shape their behaviour (Pratama & Wahyuningsih, 2018: 4). This behaviour continues to be developed both outwardly and inwardly. Therefore, culture is the support of community character values (Tumarjio and Birsyada 2022).

Each community has customs, traditions and culture that become identity and character as guidelines for behaviour (Permata and Birsyada 2022). These customs and cultures that have been agreed upon are then passed down from generation to generation (Birsyada, , Triwahana, and Bayu Ananto Wibowo, Darsono 2022). One of the elements that form the customs and culture of society is the institution of marriage. Marriage is a very important thing in society. It refers to a legally recognised union between a man and a woman. Therefore, some scholars consider the institution of marriage to have a very important meaning. Marriage is a legal, lifelong partnership between a man and a woman, recognised by the government. Thus, marriage can be considered legally valid, both because of its inherent nature and the elements contained in it (Tutik, 2008: 99). Etymologically, the term "marriage" comes from the Arabic language, which is a combination of two words: "Zawwaja" and "Nakaha". Subsequently, this term is used in the Qur'an to denote marriage in Muslim societies. In Arabic, the term "Nakaha" translates to "spouse". From a linguistic point of view, marriage can be succinctly described as the act of bringing two individuals together into a single entity. Through marriage, two individuals are brought together by Allah SWT. In order for the relationship between husband and wife to be considered harmonious, it is important for both individuals to compensate for each other's weaknesses (Cahyani, 2020:1).

Law number 1 of 1974M/1394H defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman, both physically and mentally, with the aim of creating a happy and lasting family or household, rooted in belief in the Almighty (Tutik, 2008: 103). In Tempirai Village, which is located in North Penukal Sub-district, Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir Regency, there is a marriage tradition in which the residents highly value their local culture. This can be seen in several rituals, such as the dowry request ceremony and the bride's march to the groom's house. The traditional marriage ceremony of the Tempirai Village community has extensive and festive characteristics, because it involves the participation of all individuals and families from both sides. Each stage of the procedure takes place in different places, starting with the wedding ceremony at the bride's residence and then at the groom's residence. The stages in the procession of the traditional wedding ceremony carried out start from the first *pintaan*, namely a prospective groom asking for money to be requested in the traditional wedding ceremony, the second handing over the *pintaan* money according to the agreement between the two families, the third *besangge*, namely making an announcement to the surrounding community about the procession of traditional wedding ceremonies to be held, the fourth *mipis*, namely the prospective bride receiving donations from the surrounding community in the form of goods or money, the fourth marriage contract, the fifth *mapak* or the bride's procession to the groom's house.

Today, communities are faced with the risk of losing some of the important cultural components that have historically underpinned the continuity of the Indonesian state. These include a loss of understanding of local cultural values due to exposure to Western culture, changing communication patterns, shifting lifestyles and changing cultural orientations. The wider public lacks a clear understanding of the symbolic connotations associated with many of the traditional artefacts used in wedding rituals. The researcher is interested in examining symbolic interactionism in Tempirai Village group marriages within this specific environment.

Researchers have conducted several studies on the correlation between symbolic relationships and marriage. One of the studies was conducted by (Noviantari 2015) who focused on 'The Symbolic Meaning of Tonjokan Tradition; Symbolic Interaction of Tonjokan Tradition in Tales Village Community, Ngadiluwih District, Kediri

Region'. This study examines the meaning of the Pujungan tradition which functions as a means to show mutual respect between individuals in Tales Village. Tonjokan symbolises the respect of the people of Tales Village which aims to strengthen the relationship between the sender of tonjokan and the recipient. This research uses the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism that interprets the mound as a symbolic interaction. Tales villagers consider sticky invitations to be more formal and obligatory than paper invitations. When receiving paper invitations, people feel less compelled to attend, while sticky invitations have the expectation that they must fulfil the invitation by bringing donations. Based on the theoretical framework used, both this study and the study used the theory of symbolic interactionism. However, the difference lies in the focus of the research: this study investigates community customs, while the other study specifically explores community customary marriage rituals.

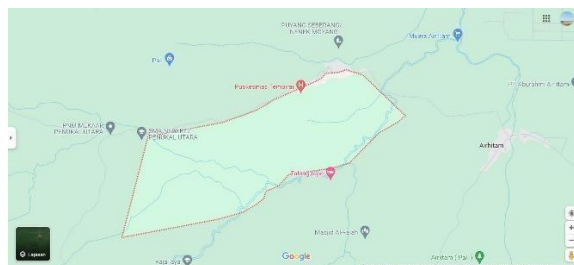
Another study on the symbolic meaning in marriage was conducted by Fitriani (2017) with the title 'Symbolic Meaning of Langkat Malay Traditional Wedding Procession'. This research uses qualitative methodology using Roland Barthes Semiotics theory. The results showed that the Langkat Malay traditional marriage ceremony includes the presentation of rice face-to-face, consisting of 4 main parts and 9 series of actions. The four components consist of the bride's seat, the guests from both sides of the family, the dayang, and the main sustenance in the form of rice and side dishes.

This sequence of events provides instructions to the bride and groom on how to live married life in accordance with Islamic jurisprudence. Derived from the philosophical principles of Malay culture in household management. That research and this article differ in terms of their emphasis on analysing the meanings embedded in the wedding process, investigating the symbolism present in the wedding reception, and using Roland Bathes' theory. In contrast, other researchers have concentrated more on the process of symbolic interaction during conventional wedding rituals. Based on the above arguments, it can be concluded that there are still few studies among social researchers, especially those using symbolic interaction theory analysis, regarding special studies on the marriage traditions of the Tempirai Village community. The purpose of this research is to analyse the symbolic interactionist process in the traditional wedding ceremony of Tempirai Village. Therefore, the study in this research is important for the development of social research literacy around traditional marriage traditions in society.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach, namely a case study design. Qualitative case study research, as explained by (Cresswell, 2015: 135), focuses on investigating temporary systems in real life by collecting extensive in-depth and comprehensive data from several sources. This research method emphasises on providing a description of the case. The research strategy was chosen based on its goal of obtaining a comprehensive understanding and interpretation of data, rather than testing hypotheses. In this study, the researcher aims to reveal the symbolic relationships that occur during the traditional marriage rituals of the Tempirai village community.

This research was conducted in Tempirai village, which is located in North Penukal sub-district of PALI district. Administratively, the village is divided into four different village areas: Tempirai Selatan, Tempirai Utama, Tempirai Timur, and Tempirai Uara. The approximate area of Tempirai settlement is 75 hectares. The western boundary of this area is marked by West Tempirai Village, while the eastern boundary is marked by East Tempirai Village. To the south is Mangkunegara Village, and to the north is North Tempirai. The population of Tempirai Selatan Hamlet is 4,008 people, consisting of 2,030 men and 1,978 women. There are 874 families with permanent jobs and 162 families with irregular jobs. The population based on education level consists of 560 people who are in primary school, 426 people who have finished primary school, 280 people who have not finished primary school, 576 people who are in junior high school, 442 people who have finished junior high school, 536 individuals who are currently enrolled in senior high school, and 472 people who have completed senior high school. A total of 117 individuals are currently engaged in academic activities, while 112 individuals have successfully completed their tertiary education. Figure 1 shows where the research was conducted. The research was conducted in Tempirai Selatan village, Pali district (<https://kampungkb.bkkbn.go.id/kampung/1722/Tempirai-selatan>, accessed on 7 June 2024).



Tempirai village map (source: Google Maps)

The commencement of this investigation took place from 12 to 25 May 2024. The participants in this study were the people of Tempirai Village who had previously held a marriage, traditional leaders and the local dusun head. The research approach included observation of the bride and groom who will carry out the marriage process by following the procession from the beginning of the proposal to the mapak process, followed by interviews with the bride and groom, interviews with traditional leaders or elders and the dusun head. The interview methodology utilises the snowball method to identify informants who have a genuine fit and comprehensive understanding of the issues relating to the subject under investigation. The methodology began by identifying knowledgeable individuals who had an in-depth understanding of marriage customs in Tempirai Village. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with other sources of information, guided by the insights and recommendations provided by the aforementioned key informants. This research uses the researcher as the main research instrument, utilising people as data collection and analysis tools. In addition, the tools used include observation rules, interviews, and documentation. The data collection methods used in this qualitative research include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis approach used is data reduction, which includes the selection process of reducing, abstracting, and transforming raw data obtained from field notes. Secondly the data display is organised in such a way that allows the potential to make conclusions and implement actions. The final phase of data analysis is the process of forming findings and their verification.

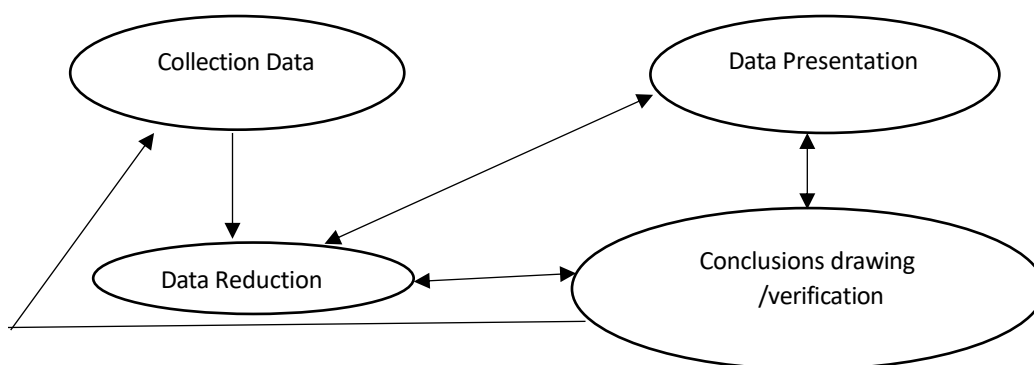


Chart 1: Miles and Huberman Interactive Data Analysis Model (Patilima, 2011:102)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings answer two main research questions: the nature of the traditional wedding procession in Tempiran village community, and the dynamics of the symbolic interaction process in the traditional wedding ceremony.

1. Traditional Wedding Ceremony Procession

The wedding ceremony begins with the determination or "brasan" from both sides of the family. "brasan" in the understanding of the Tempirai community can be interpreted as a request for the intent and purpose of asking for help. To agree on this is done after the boy or bujang tells his parents that he had approached a girl and the girl welcomed his desire to start a family. In relation to this story, the family deliberates on who will have the initial conversation at the girl's family home on behalf of the family. The girl then tells her family "there is wang nak datang" and is told the time usually understood by her parents. The sentence 'ada wang nak datang' can be interpreted that there will be people coming to stay at the house. At the appointed time, the person appointed as the initial speaker conveys the purpose of his visit, told by the male family and conveys the agreement of the two children. If there is an agreement at the meeting the male family will come to propose.

The following is an excerpt from an interview with Mrs Jusna:

"the male party asks the prospective betino if there is any money, or if there is no money, or if he asks for a certain amount of money, or if he asks for a certain amount of money, and then he answers iyo nian."

Free translation:

the groom's family asks the bride-to-be if it is true with my son if yes is it true to ask for so much money is it true or not if there is a promise of proposal money of so many million then the bride-to-be answers yes it is true (source: researcher interview with Mrs Jusna on 15 May 2024).

Based on the results of the interview above, it can be concluded that it is the family of the male party who carries out the proposal procedure, namely asking the bride-to-be to give a gift in the form of money or mentioning the amount of money they should ask for. After a predetermined period of time, the male family visits the female family to formally propose. This traditional act is often performed by respected parents and elders, who provide traditional food such as jadah, lemang, kue bolu and grilled chicken. At the time of this proposal a "pintakan" is set. "Pintakan" is money and food from the prospective groom given to the bride based on the bride's request, usually consisting of "jujur" money and "mukun" cakes, wedding gold, a time to report to the village head called "kawin adat" and the wedding day. Several stages are carried out for each family.

Excerpt from an interview with Mr Mardani:

"the monitoring of family events invitations to drink, mipis bumbu and many more series such as mapak at the end of the event. Usually what happens in Tempirai before the event there is anyone who is represented by the male / female party to hold an approach for rembug or introduction to bring jadah, wajik according to community customs" (source: researcher interview with Mr Mardani on 15 May 2024).

Based on the interview above, it can be interpreted that the traditional wedding procession begins with gathering the nuclear family, holding a "mertau" notification event (inviting to the houses of the bride and groom to invite drinks with simple dishes related to the time of the wedding ceremony), *mipis bumbu* (cooking) at the time of cooking the family receives donations from family and friends, *timbang ngambik* (taking the groom to the bride's house for the marriage contract the next day), marriage contract, marriage contract, marriage contract, marriage contract, marriage ceremony the next day), marriage ceremony, *mapak* (taking the bride to the groom's house by the extended family and neighbours), the groom brings food to the in-laws after the mapak event is over and many guests have gone home, the groom's job is to deliver food in the form of rice and side dishes to the in-laws' house using a level bushel.

The traditional wedding procession begins with a proposal. A prospective groom and his family visit the home of the prospective bride to ask if their two children really love each other and continue to the level of marriage. If it is true, the two families will determine the date of the "antar sen jujuran" event, the akad, *pantauan*, *mipis bumbu*, and *mapak*. In this process also discusses the money or "sen jujuran" requested by the woman if there is an agreement between the two families then say goodbye home. After the proposal process, the groom's family delivers the sen jujuran. This procession is carried out after the proposal process. The groom's family hands over the money for the wedding as requested by the woman's family. The event is carried out only by the nuclear family and knows the village head apparatus. Furthermore, the notification of wedding invitations is divided into two, namely *mokon* and *pantauan*. *Mokon* is a wedding notification invitation in the form of food, such as bread, *jadah*, *wajik*, noodles, which is usually done by the bride's family to close relatives or distant families outside the village so that those invited come to the event and hope to make a large donation. So the form of *mokon* is like a printed wedding invitation but under the invitation is tucked food. While in the process of monitoring the bride-to-be's family invites residents and closest relatives to gather at their home.

Monitoring is usually done in the morning before 12 noon. Residents are gathered and then flocked in an open car to the centre of the village and unloaded to then walk to tell the villagers a series of events that will be held by the bride and groom. The content of the message conveyed is about the event, for example "serisok pantauan at sianu's house on Wednesday the 7th *mipis bumbu*, Thursday marriage, Friday *mapak*". Like an invitation but delivered in oral form. The next procession is the *night of drinking*. Villagers come to the bride-to-be's house after the previous day's invitation or notification. The *drinking night* is held after maghrib around 18.00 WIB. In the *drinking night* the people who come will be served typical village food made by the residents themselves such as sponge bread, *wajik*, lapis, and snacks such as *tekwan* depending on who has a big or simple event. In the drinking night the female family tells a series of traditional wedding events that will be held starting from the implementation of *mipis bumbu*, marriage contracts, and *mapak*. In this activity it is also a form of notification to the residents of the prospective bride and groom who will carry out the wedding. The male party and his family are usually present at this event.



The implementation of *mipis bumbu* attended by family, relatives, and the surrounding community (source: personal documentation)

The next procession *mipis bumbu* is an event where the bride-to-be receives donations from relatives and neighbours at the bride's house. Inside the house, a small aisle with wedding decorations is provided for residents who want to just take pictures together. The bride-to-be sits at a large table accompanied by her mother to record the donations given by relatives or neighbours. Guests who come on average bring *rice tampan* to put their donations. So the *tampan* is filled with one canting of rice and then inside is a donation envelope. The *rice tampan* is given to the host and then brought back and the *tampan* is filled with 2 noodles as a form of gratitude for the host to the guests who have attended. After giving donations, invited guests usually gather briefly to taste the snacks served such as layer cakes, sponge cakes, *pempek*, *jadah*, and *wajik*, and usually there are *tekwan* or models served. In the wedding

tradition in Tempirai village, the donation process is only carried out during the *mipis seasoning* when the bride and groom no longer accept donations or there will be no donation box provided in this traditional wedding event. The core event in the wedding procession, namely the marriage ceremony, is held the day after the *mipis bumbu* procession. The marriage ceremony is usually held at the mosque closest to the bride-to-be. The akad procession is carried out in accordance with Islamic religious law in general, after the akad process is complete, it is usually continued with *sungkeman* to parents, shaking hands with residents who are present during the akad. After completing the marriage ceremony at the mosque, the bride and groom are then escorted back to the bride's house. The invited guests are then invited to have lunch and the event is over.

The last procession, *mapak*, is the last procession in the traditional marriage of the Tempirai village community. *Mapak* begins with the groom and his family coming to the bride's house then being picked up to be taken to the groom's house. *Mapak* is carried out in procession and the bride and groom must walk to their destination. During the journey the bride and groom are required to eat *siri* or *pelimansiri* as a condition of the *mapak*. The *mapak* procession is followed by close relatives of the family and local residents. All the luggage obtained at the *mipis bumbu* along with the donation money obtained by the bride and groom are also carried in the procession. The procession is also accompanied by typical music, namely *jaz* or *tanjidor*. After arriving at the groom's house they carry out the traditional procession of bribing food with *besan* or in-laws. Then when finished, they go to the main stage that has been prepared by the groom.



The implementation of the *mapak* procession (source: personal documentation)

After the *mapak* procession is complete, another additional process, namely *tandang sujud*, is carried out in the evening to visit the groom's in-laws' house with his wife and several close relatives by bringing a few souvenirs in the form of food such as sponge cakes and drinks known as the *tandang sujud* event. During the son-in-law's visit, the family of the girl's parents usually prepare themselves. *Tandang sujud* is an event to visit each close family's house to find out what they are called. In *tandang sujud* the groom is accompanied by one or two men from the bride's family who understand the arrangement or order of the bride's family tree.

2. Symbolic Interactionism in the Traditional Marriage of Tempirai Village People

Herbert Blumer conducted research on several social aspects such as social systems, social structures, culture, status positions, social roles, traditions, institutions, collective representations, social conditions, social norms, and values (Ritzer, 2014: 377). It begins with the human learning process that occurs throughout encounters and is facilitated by the socialisation they experience. Symbolic interactionism focuses not only on socialisation, but also on

interaction in general, which has its own significance (Ritzer, 2014:394). Blumer's assumptions about symbolic interactionism, as explained by (Ritzer, 2014:392), are based on three premises. The first premise is meaning, which asserts that human behaviour is influenced by the significance of an object to the individual. Second Language refers to the language a person learns in addition to their native language. Objects do not have intrinsic meanings; instead, meanings are formed through the process of language negotiation. These meanings arise from collective social interactions between individuals in human civilisation. These meanings do not stand alone, but emerge through social contact, where values and beliefs are shared. Furthermore, the process of interpreting and understanding meaning is influenced and managed by each individual's engagement with the signs they encounter. Added to this is the process of social interaction. Meanings are derived from interpersonal contact, particularly with individuals of considerable importance. According to Blumer, an individual's understanding of the meaning of something is obtained from the interactions he has with other people in relation to the object. The activities carried out will cause constraints on others (Poloma, 2007: 259). Blumer's symbolic interactionism is based on three fundamental ideas. First, human behaviour is driven by meanings that it gives to something. Secondly, meaning comes from social interaction. Finally, meaning can be changed through the process of interpretation.

The Tempirai community in their traditional marriage ceremony carries out each process based on the meaning that has been passed down from generation to generation. The community believes that by carrying out this tradition, their lives will be blessed. Many objects are used in the traditional wedding ceremony including tampan rice, kujur, peliman siri, and kanjang.

Interview quote with pera:

"Here before the D-day, the groom paints the basket for the bride, the basket must be painted by the bride-to-be herself and cannot be represented". (source: researcher interview with Perawati on 18 May 2024)

The basket functions as a tool or instrument used in the traditional wedding parade of the Tempirai community. The shape of the basket is adjusted to the ability of the groom-to-be. The task of painting the basket is only given to the groom and cannot be delegated to other family members. The basket is usually decorated with bright colours according to the groom's artistic vision. This basket will later be used to put provisions or items for the fulfilment of daily life. The basket is carried during the tandang sujud procession where the groom's family visits the bride's house. The basket is carried by the bride who is usually filled with drinks, sponge cake, or kitchen utensils such as sugar, salt etc. When the bride returns from the tandang sujud procession, this basket will be filled again by the bride's family with toiletries such as soap or household supplies such as hangers and so on. The above incident is in line with Blumer's view that symbolic interaction includes three basic concepts: action, object, and significance. Human behaviour towards something is influenced by the meaning that the object has, which is obtained from social interactions between people.



The procession of painting the basket carried out by the bridegroom-to-be
(source: personal documentation).

The pintakan procession often involves the groom giving gifts of money and food to the bride, as requested by the bride. The gifts are usually small amounts of money, mukun cakes, wedding gold and the official introduction of the groom to the village chief, known as the adat wedding.

The groom's formal introduction to the village chief, known as the wedding custom and the wedding day. In this procession there is a symbol of *sen jujur*, which means that the marriage has taken place. *Sen jujur* is given according to the bride-to-be's request, usually according to the bride-to-be's education and occupation. If the prospective groom agrees to give honest *sen* according to the family agreement then the wedding is ready to be held. *Mokon* is a notification invitation to the relatives of the bride-to-be. The form of *mokon* varies, such as one box of noodles, one pan of sponge bread, 1 packet of bread and the like. In a traditional wedding the host always prepares *mokon*. *Mokon* aims to expect the arrival of the recipient of the invitation. If one box of noodles has been given, it means that the recipient is able to interpret for himself how much he will contribute to the invitation giver. In line with Blumer's theory that individuals will act in accordance with the meaning given to the recipient of the *mokon*, the law is obligatory to attend wedding ceremonies with large donations where one cardboard noodle as a symbol. The emergence of *mokon* has long been believed to be a form of family support. *Mokon* is usually reserved for distant relatives or close friends. From *mokon*, there is an interpretation from each individual that if he or she gets *mokon*, he or she has an obligation to attend and contribute more than the *mokon* that has been given.



Figure 5. Example of invitation notification with mokon (source: personal documentation).

The younger generation in Tempirai Village views traditional wedding ceremonies as an important part of their identity and cultural heritage. For many, traditional processions such as the drinking night, mipis bumbu, mapak, wearing traditional clothes, and dancing local dances are symbols of pride that strengthen the sense of community. They see it as not just a ceremony, but also a medium to introduce the noble traditions of the Tempirai community to the next generation. However, economic factors also influence their attitude. A complete traditional ceremony requires a lot of money and time, so some prefer to do a simple procession without leaving the core procession in the marriage custom according to the norms in the community.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research reveals that firstly how the traditional marriage procession in the Tempirai village community is carried out. Starting from the process of gathering the nuclear family, proposal, invitation notification, mipis bumbu, simbang ngambik, marriage contract, mapak, and tandang sujud. All of these processes must be carried out by the bride and groom in a coherent manner. The second process of symbolic interactionism occurs in the traditional marriage procession of the Tempirai community, including in the process of giving pintaan money symbolically the prospective bride and her family ask for a certain nominal to the prospective groom, in the process of notification of invitations to distant relatives given mokon or invitations accompanied by food where this mokon is interpreted by the community as a symbol that those invited are required to come and make a large contribution, and finally the basket means that a husband must be responsible for the needs of his wife so that in making and decorating the basket must be done by the prospective groom himself cannot be represented by others. The younger generation of the Tempirai community is still very enthusiastic in carrying out traditional marriage ceremonies to participate in preserving the traditions of their ancestors, although sometimes there are some processions that are adjusted to the current situation. The suggestion in this research is that the traditional wedding ceremony of the Tempirai village community may survive in the midst of the emergence of modern wedding culture. The traditional wedding ceremony of the Tempirai village community is a local culture that is not owned by other regions and is a special attraction. Secondly, hopefully the community can continue to maintain local wisdom in this traditional wedding ceremony.

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