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TRADISI *ALEK BAKAJANG* SEBAGAI MODEL KONSELING BERBASIS KOMUNITAS DALAM KONTEKS BUDAYA MINANGKABAU

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Abstract

In modern society, social relationships tend to undergo significant shifts. Interactions that were once close-knit have gradually become more distant, including in *the Lima Puluh Kota* region. Increasing busyness, changes in lifestyle, and the rise of individualistic attitudes are among the main factors contributing to the weakening of interpersonal relationships within the community. This condition leads to various psychological issues, such as feelings of loneliness, lack of social support, and unresolved interpersonal conflicts. Amid these conditions, *Minangkabau* society actually possesses cultural-based social mechanisms that function to maintain social harmony, one of which is the tradition of *Alek Bakajang. Alek Bakajang* is a customary activity that involves many members of the community in a collective gathering or celebration. Within this process, intense social interactions occur, including the exchange of ideas and the collective resolution of problems. This tradition not only serves as a social activity but also carries therapeutic values that support individuals' psychological well-being. Historically, *Alek Bakajang* is part of the social practices of *Minangkabau* society that have existed for a long time, evolving from traditions of communal gatherings in customary events, deliberations, and collective celebrations. This tradition is rooted in the *Minangkabau* philosophy of life, which emphasizes togetherness, as reflected in the principle *"duduak samo randah, tagak samo tinggi"* (sitting equally low, standing equally high), highlighting equality and solidarity in social life. Initially, *Alek Bakajang* was not merely understood as a ceremonial event, but also as a space for social interaction that enables community members to exchange ideas, resolve conflicts, and strengthen kinship ties. In this context, the tradition functions as an effective medium of social communication as well as a form of social control that maintains balance within community life Over time, the function of *Alek Bakajang* remains relevant and can even be understood as a form of community-based counseling or indigenous counseling. This tradition provides space for individuals to express themselves, receive emotional support, and find solutions to the problems they face through a collective approach. Therefore, examining *Alek Bakajang* as a model of community-based counseling becomes essential, particularly in addressing the challenges of weakening social relationships in modern society. This tradition serves not only as a cultural heritage but also as a preventive and curative strategy in maintaining mental health and social harmony within *Minangkabau* society.

Keywords: Alek Bakajang; Community-Based Counseling; Minangkabau Society; Mental Health; Social Interaction

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The development of modern society today shows a shift in patterns of social relationships. Interactions that were once close and collective are now gradually declining due to increasing busyness, changes in lifestyle, and the rise of individualistic attitudes. This condition leads to the weakening of interpersonal relationships within society, which in turn can give rise to various social and psychological problems, such as feelings of loneliness, lack of social support, and unresolved interpersonal conflicts. In this context, society actually possesses cultural-based social mechanisms that are capable of maintaining the balance of social relationships. One such mechanism is tradition or local wisdom that grows and develops within community life. Local wisdom not only functions as a cultural identity but also plays an important role in building social cohesion and strengthening relationships among individuals (Hidayat, 2021). Therefore, the utilization of local cultural values

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becomes important as an alternative approach to addressing social problems within society.

The *Minangkabau* community is known as one of the societies with a strong customary and cultural system. Values such as togetherness, deliberation, and mutual cooperation serve as the foundation of their social life. One tradition that reflects these values is *Alek Bakajang*, a customary activity that involves the community collectively in a celebration held on boats or *kajang*. This tradition is not only a form of entertainment but also serves as a space for social interaction that brings together various elements of society in a more open and egalitarian atmosphere.

This study is not only based on field observations but also supported by a literature review of various scholarly journals relevant to the themes of local wisdom, social cohesion, and community-based counseling. The researcher examined approximately twelve journal sources obtained from several academic databases, such as Google Scholar, *Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital),* and other accessible scientific platforms. The search process was conducted using keywords such as "local wisdom," "Minangkabau culture," "social cohesion," and "community-based counseling." In addition, this study is supported by direct observations of the implementation of *Alek Bakajang* and information obtained from local community members, providing a more contextual understanding of this cultural practice.

Functionally, *Alek Bakajang* has the potential to serve as a medium for strengthening social ties, rebuilding strained relationships, and creating more effective communication among individuals. Within this process, intense social interactions occur, including the exchange of experiences, as well as the sharing of values and advice that can help individuals cope with various life problems. This indicates that the tradition not only holds cultural value but also carries significant social and psychological functions

1.2 formolution of the problem

Based on the background that has been described, the problem formulation in this study is:

1. What is the form and implementation of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition in the *Minangkabau* community?
2. What are the uniqueness and cultural values contained in the *Alek Bakajang* tradition?
3. What is the psychological impact of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition on individuals in the community?
4. What is the role of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition in strengthening social relationships within the community? 5. How can the *Alek Bakajang* tradition be understood as a community-based counseling model in the *Minangkabau* cultural context?

1.3 Research Purposes

Research Objectives Based on the formulation of the problem, the objectives of this research are:

1. To describe the form and implementation of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition in *Minangkabau* society.
2. To identify the uniqueness and cultural values contained in the *Alek Bakajang* tradition.
3. To analyze the psychological impact of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition on individuals.
4. To explain the role of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition in strengthening social relationships within the community.
5. To examine the *Alek Bakajang* tradition as a community-based counseling model in the context of *Minangkabau* culture.

2. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological study design. This approach was chosen because the research aims to deeply understand the meaning, values, and subjective experiences of the community regarding the *Alek Bakajang* tradition as a community-based counseling model in the Minangkabau cultural context. A phenomenological study allows researchers to explore how individuals and communities make sense of the social and cultural experiences they undergo directly.

2.1 location

The research location was carried out in *Nagari Gunung Malintang*, Pangkalan District, *Lima Puluh Kota* Regency, as a region that actively practices the *Alek Bakajang* tradition. The location was chosen purposively because this tradition is still alive and developing and has broad community involvement.

2.2 Subject

The research subjects were determined using purposive sampling, which is the selection of informants based on certain criteria considered capable of providing relevant and in-depth information. Informants in this study included traditional leaders (niniak mamak), *bundo kanduang*, the *Alek Bakajang* organizing committee, the general public involved in the activities, as well as the younger generation as part of the cultural heirs. The diversity of informants aims to obtain a comprehensive perspective on the social and psychological functions of the tradition.

2.3 Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques are carried out through three main methods. In addition to using observation and interviews, this study also employs literature study techniques as part of data collection. Literature study is conducted by tracing and reviewing various written sources relevant to the *Alek Bakajang* tradition as well as the concept of community-based counseling.(Hidayat, 2021)

The data collection process was carried out through the search for scientific journals, articles, and writings related to *Minangkabau* culture, particularly those discussing the *Alek Bakajang* tradition or similar social practices. The search was conducted through several databases such as Google Scholar, Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital), as well as other academic sources. Keywords used in the search included "*Alek Bakajang,*" "*Minangkabau* culture," "local wisdom," and "community-based counseling".

The collected data was then selected based on its relevance to the research focus. The articles chosen were those that had connections to cultural values, social interactions, and the role of tradition in community life. After that, the researcher conducted a deep reading process to understand the content, identify important concepts, and recognize the relationship between the *Alek Bakajang* tradition and community-based counseling approaches.

Next, the data were analyzed by comparing multiple sources to find similarities and differences in perspectives. From this process, the researcher was able to draw understandings regarding the social functions, cultural values, and the potential of *Alek Bakajang* as a means of social and psychological intervention in society.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on data relevant to the research objectives. Data display was done in the form of a systematic descriptive narrative, while conclusion drawing was conducted

through the process of interpreting patterns emerging from the data. (McLeod,2013)

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses triangulation techniques, both source triangulation and technique triangulation. In addition, member checking is also conducted, which is re-confirming the interview results to the informants so that the data obtained truly corresponds to their experiences. (Sue & Sue 2016) This research was analyzed using the perspective of community-based counseling and culturally responsive counseling, thereby being able to see how the *Alek Bakajang* tradition functions as a medium of social and psychological intervention in *Minangkabau* society.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

The research results were obtained through observation, interviews, and literature study regarding the implementation of the *Alek Bakajang* tradition in *Nagari Gunung Malintang, Lima Puluh Kota* Regency. First, from the results of the observation, it was found that *Alek Bakajang* is an activity that involves various elements of society, such as *niniak mamak, bundo kanduang,* youth, and the general public. This activity is carried out collectively, emphasizing the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation. The interactions that occur during the activity indicate more open and intense communication compared to daily interactions. Second, the interview results show that the community views *Alek Bakajang* as an important moment to strengthen social ties. Some informants stated that this activity serves as a means to repair relationships that had become strained and even as a space to resolve misunderstandings informally in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Third, from the results of the literature study, it was found that local cultural traditions, including *Alek Bakajang,* play a role in maintaining social cohesion and strengthening relationships between individuals in the community. This tradition also contains cultural values such as togetherness, mutual respect, and social concern. In addition, it was found that community involvement *in Alek Bakajang* has a positive psychological impact, such as an increased sense of belonging to the community and the emergence of social support from the surrounding environment. The author's view from the discussion results is that Alek Bakajang is a tradition that not only functions as a cultural activity but also as a medium to strengthen social relationships, provide psychological support, and has the potential to serve as community-based counseling in the *Minangkabau* society.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the research results, *Alek Bakajang* can be understood as more than just a cultural tradition, but also as a social mechanism that has a function in strengthening relationships between individuals. The collective involvement of the community in this activity shows that socially-based cultural interactions are able to strengthen cohesion and social trust within the community. (Putnam, 2000).

In addition, the use of *kajang* as an activity medium creates a unique and more egalitarian interaction space. This condition allows individuals to communicate more openly, thereby strengthening social relationships and facilitating the exchange of experiences. This is in line with the view that culture serves, (Putri D., & Yuliani, S. 2023).

as a system of meaning that shapes patterns of social interaction From a psychological aspect, involvement in *Alek Bakajang* indicates the presence of social support that plays a role in enhancing

individual well-being. Such social support can help individuals cope with emotional stress and strengthen the sense of connectedness with the environment (Wahyuni, S 2021).

From the perspective of guidance and counseling, *Alek Bakajang* has characteristics as a form of community-based counseling. The intervention process that occurs is not individual in nature, but involves the community collectively. The support provided through this social interaction shows that counseling can take place naturally within the context of community life. (Sari, M., & Putra, A. 2022).

In addition, the role of customary leaders in providing advice and guidance demonstrates the existence of informal counseling practices based on culture. This aligns with the concept of multicultural counseling, which emphasizes the importance of values and social structures in the counseling process. (Abdullah, Taufik. 2006)

Furthermore, values such as togetherness, mutual cooperation, and mutual respect in *Alek Bakajang* also function as mechanisms of social control. Through intense social interaction, the community can maintain the behavior of its members to remain in accordance with prevailing norms, thus prolonged conflicts can be minimized. (Durkheim, 1893).

It can be concluded that in the midst of social changes marked by increasing individualism, *Alek Bakajang* becomes a form of local wisdom that is relevant for maintaining the value of togetherness. This tradition also plays an important role in transmitting cultural values to the younger generation, so that cultural identity remains preserved amid the currents of globalization. Thus, Alek Bakajang can be seen as a contextual community-based counseling model, which not only strengthens social relationships but also provides psychological support and preserves the cultural values of the *Minangkabau* community



Gambar 1. *Alek Bakajang*

4. Conclusions

Based on the results and discussion of the study, it can be concluded that the tradition of *alek bakajang* functions not only as a cultural activity but also plays an important role in strengthening social relationships within *minangkabau* society. This tradition serves as an effective space for social interaction in rebuilding social bonds, repairing strained relationships, and fostering more open communication among individuals. From a psychological perspective, *alek bakajang* contributes positively by enhancing individuals' sense of belonging, reducing feelings of social isolation, and generating social support from the surrounding community. This indicates that the tradition functions as a natural medium that supports individuals' emotional well-being through the social interactions it facilitates.

Moreover, the values embedded in *alek bakajang* such as togetherness, mutual cooperation, respect, and social care serve as a foundation for shaping harmonious social behavior. These values also function as mechanisms of social control that help maintain the stability of relationships within the community and minimize prolonged conflicts. From the perspective of guidance and counseling, *alek bakajang* can be understood as a form of community-based counseling, where support and problem-solving processes occur collectively within the social environment. This demonstrates that counseling practices do not always have to be formal but can occur naturally within cultural contexts. Therefore, *alek bakajang* has the potential to be developed as a contextual and culturally based counseling approach, particularly in addressing the challenges of modern society, which tends to be more individualistic. This tradition serves as evidence that local cultural values can offer solutions for strengthening social relationships while also supporting the psychological well-being of the community.

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