Negotiating Tradition: The Role of the Uma in the Kinship Structure of the Mentawai People in Pasakiat Taileleu

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Abstract
This study aims to analyze the role and persistence of the uma within the kinship system of the Taileleu community in Mentawai, to examine the community's responses to the uma as a cultural element in everyday life, and to identify the efforts made by the younger generation to preserve the uma as a cultural heritage. This research employs a qualitative methodology. A total of 20 informants were selected through purposive sampling. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation. Findings indicate that the uma holds a central role in the kinship structure of the Taileleu community, evidenced through its spiritual function—each side of the uma is believed to be inhabited by spirits, namely: (1) Orat, (2) Bakkat Katcaila, (3) Ngong, (4) Abu, (5) Baibajat, (6) Salipak, and (7) Tuddukat. In terms of its social function, the uma serves as: (1) a gathering place for planning traditional ceremonies, (2) a residence for certain family members, particularly rimata (elders), and (3) a venue for traditional events. It also functions as a storage space for essential food supplies such as taro, bananas, sago, salted pig meat from hunting, and preserved food from ceremonial events. The community's responses reveal that: (1) the uma remains necessary for daily life, (2) its preservation is deemed vital, and (3) government support is needed to ensure its sustainability. Regarding youth involvement, efforts include encouraging younger generations to participate in the restoration of deteriorating uma, fostering a sense of cultural responsibility and continuity.

I. Introduction

Traditional houses basically symbolize the way of life, culture and economy in the area. Traditional houses in Indonesia, especially traditional houses called uma in taileleu, need to be maintained and preserved because they have a historical perspective, heritage and progress of society in a civilization and can be used as a symbol of Indonesian culture. Uma in taileleu is a gathering place in one tribe that is the reason for having the uma, because those who have uma are indeed natives of taileleu while migrants do not have uma (Irwandi & Saleleubaja, 2021).

At the normative level, the protection of the results of folk culture is regulated in the provisions of Article 38 paragraph (1) of Law Number 28 of 2014 concerning Copyright which states "Copyright on traditional cultural expressions is held by the State." In addition, non IPR legal rules that protect traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions (PTEBT) are also found in the Law on Cultural Heritage, Customary Law and the Culture Bill (Rudito, 2013).

In the General Indonesian Dictionary, existence means existence. While in the Indonesian English Dictionary, "Existence" (1). Existence. (2). Life, incarnate and come into existence. When it comes to law, existence is included in the hierarchy of National Legislation (Atsani et al., 2021).

The traditional house of the taileleu community resembles a house with an elongated tent roof built on poles. This is because the roof is made of thatch which extends down until it almost reaches the floor of the house. According to the regulation of the regent of the Mentawai islands number 12 of 2019, uma is a customary law community unit in the Mentawai islands regency (Final Report of Survey and Mapping of Integrated Natural Resources of Siberut Island, 1995).

According to the results of an interview by petcak sabalai's grandfather (sikerei) in the establishment of a traditional house (uma) as follows:

"*lepakna lek uma nedda bara akek punen gurut uma, guruk ita kabagania niatet tatatarek akek laitak, tutarek sebu, tutarek aggep, tutarek damaggep/teppek sibaliu sirimen uma*.

After the traditional house is built, there is a punen uma (traditional house party) where fish from the river must be prepared as food for the protector of the traditional house.

The owner of the uma sarubei is the sarubei tribe itself and who lives in it is sikerei as well as the uma sekebbukat who looks after the uma and has 1 son who is married but currently lives alone grandfather again because his son already has his own house.

In accordance with the results of an interview from teteu sikerei named silibet kerei sarubei about what the uma *is* used for as follows.

"*uma nedda makek village hall kudduat parurukat, uma neknek parurukat anai takua event arat laggaita taparuruk kap ka uma, puliaijat sigoijokatnia, pagurei nia, alat sirimanuania, elek liat abak, liat sapounia, lajot simagre, kaini ka uma niatet katukolobatna itugagalai uma. Ponia kalulut kukuddu kai ka uma neknek kalulut uma neknek sibailiu lalep mai kontan sabbat sutek akek sangamberit tribe members, bitca bulek itujago, sabbat uma neknek ai puriok karura two ngaribu epat* "

The traditional house is like a village hall for gatherings, as well as a traditional house for gatherings if there is a plan for a traditional party, a big party or a small party such as a pangurei party, a wedding party, a new canoe party, a new house party, a sick person's party is carried out in a traditional house, that is what it means to make an uma. Thus also why can live in the traditional house has become his own home and the holder of the power over the rituals performed in the uma for all tribe members and that is so that the uma can be maintained not left lonely or empty. And this traditional house was built in 2004.

Table 1: Number of UMAs in Taileleu

No.	Uma's name
1	Uma Salamao
2	Uma Salimu
3	Uma Samuntei
4	Uma Sabetu Laigak
5	Uma Salakkokoai
6	Uma Satepu
7	Uma Samongaddat
8	Uma Sagoisok Uma
9	Uma Cyrilotic
10	Uma Salolik
11	Uma Sakobou
12	Uma Siriabbangan
13	Uma Salabbekeu
14	Uma Sabajak
15	Uma

	Samaggeak
16	Uma Sajijilat
17	Uma Sakekle
18	Uma Sabattilat
19	Uma Sapoula
20	Uma Samuntei
21	Uma Siriottoi
23	Uma Satepu
22	Uma Samongaddat
23	Uma Sarubei
24	Uma Sakoikoi
25	Uma Samungilailai
26	Uma Samalei
27	Uma Sabebeget
28	Uma Satoreuru
29	Uma Sagulu
30	Uma Sabolak
31	Uma Sabalai
32	Uma Salimu 2
33	Uma salolik 2
34	Uma Sapoula 2
35	Uma Saleilei
36	Uma saleilei 2
37	Uma sagari 2
38	Uma Sababak
39	Uma Sarereakek
40	Uma Saroro
41	Uma Sagugurat
42	Uma Sakukuret
43	Uma samaloisa
44	Uma Samemek
45	Uma Sirimonga
46	Uma sapolaga
47	Uma siritoitet
48	Uma Saremurat
49	Uma Saboklo
50	Uma Saleleusik

Source: Pasakiat Taileleu Village

From the available data, there are 50 uma in Pasakiat Taileleu Village. These umas

have a very important role for the local community. Apart from serving as a place to live, uma also serves as a gathering location and performs traditional ceremonies.

Table 2. List of Punen / Taileleu Traditional Ceremony

No.	Rite Name	The context of customs	Ethnicities that carry out	Frequency of implementation
1	Punen panunggru	Mourning period celebration	Mentawai	Often
2	Panunggru	Mourning period	Mentawai	Often
3	Mentawai death ritual	Mourning period	Mentawai	Often
4	Pabetei	Treatment process	Mentawai	Often
5	Punen/ thanksgiving	pregnancy/birth	Mentawai	Often
6	Kirekat	Kinship relationship	Mentawai	Often
7	Punen uma	Traditional ceremony	Mentawai	Often
8	Establishment of Uma	Traditional ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
9	Murau sinoibok	Birth ceremony	Mentawai	Often
10	Lia nemnem kabei	Baby welcoming ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
11	Lia eneget	Kasegegkat ceremony	Mentawai	Often
12	Lia pameruk	Evil spirit free ceremony	Mentawai	Often
13	Nanak simagre	Spirit summoning ceremony for the thief	Mentawai	Often

14	Lia pengureijat/putalimogat	Traditional ceremony	Mentawai	Often
15	Punen pututukatmata	Traditional ceremony	Mentawai	Often
16	Punen paobatbody	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
17	Punen masisabamone (panunggl u)	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
18	Punen kalu	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
19	Punen mone	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
20	Punen kerei	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
21	Punen laggai	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
22	Lia eruk simeruk	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
23	Lia labak	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
24	Tuptup liatoga	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
25	Lia abak	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
26	Liapusaguat	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
27	Lia pasaksaksaina	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
28	Traditional ceremony	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
29	Liatinungglu	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
3	Lia UMA	Traditional	Mentaw	Often

0		Ceremony	ai	
31	Lia sapou	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Often
32	Lia Eeruk situtuitui	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
33	Lia Panasai	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
34	Lia powder	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
35	Lia tuddukat	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
36	Lia gajeumak	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
37	Lia kerei	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
38	Lia ngong	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
39	Lia but	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
40	Lia simakobu	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
41	Pabetei	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
42	Lia Siripok	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
43	Panaki	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
44	Lia Eeruk Sikatai	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
45	Lia Paaban	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
46	Lia Pasigiri Abak	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
47	Lia Silimen	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
48	Lia Putalimogat Ka Uman Abak	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
4	Lia	Traditional	Mentaw	Rare

9	Pasinou	Ceremony	ai	
50	Lia Paumat Sikerei	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare
51	Lia Pangurei (child birth, illness): Taileleu	Traditional Ceremony	Mentawai	Rare

Source: Pasakiat Taileleu Village

Based on the data above, Pasakiat Taileleu village concluded that every Pasakiat Taileleu tribe performs or carries out these traditional ceremonies.

The taileleu community has a Patrilineal kinship system, which is oriented towards the descendants of the father, and is centered on Uma and has a complex meaning, namely as a settlement pattern, as a traditional house and also as a Mentawai kinship system (pusarainaan). Uma (traditional house) which means a place to be the center of indigenous community life that takes into account and unites, because communication between Uma (traditional house), fellow *clans* still exists because Uma (traditional house) is the main house.

The kinship system of the taileleu community is still very strong in tribalism in the sense that it is not allowed to marry in one blood or there is still a family relationship and social system, cooperation in building Uma is done in mutual cooperation, eating together, if there is a sick family it is treated tribally or handled by the tribe, and the challenges that exist in the taileleu community, namely pigs and chickens cannot be eaten alone either personally or family (must be in a tribe).

Ideally, the traditional house of the taileleu community is large and sturdy, maintained and accounted for tribally. The reality that exists in the traditional houses of the taileleu community until now is still functioning properly as it should be where the traditional house in the sarubei tribe which was established in 1994 was inhabited by 9 families at that time, then at this time it became 17 families and only the head of the sarubei tribe lived in the Uma, while in the sakoikoi tribe which was established in 1983 there were 15 families and only the head of the tribe (rimata Uma) lived in the Uma and was inherited by the father's lineage.

Based on the problems and initial observations that researchers made, because Pasakiat Taileleu Village as a village is rich in diverse cultures, especially the

Southwest Siberut area, namely Pasakiat Taileleu Village, which is very potential or a model for other regions, both from Mentawai Regency itself and from other regions, especially in applying culture. Therefore, research on the existence of uma in the Mentawai kinship system in Pasakiat Taileleu village is important to do.

2. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with an analytical method. Qualitative analysis is used to analyze various data that has been obtained, which is then developed into a hypothesis (Sarosa, 2018). Furthermore, the hypothesis is formulated based on the data, and repeated data searches are carried out until it is finally found that the hypothesis is accepted or rejected (triangulation process). To obtain data information that is relevant to the researcher's problem, the informants are sikerei, sikebbukat uma and local people involved in managing uma and rituals. Selection of research informants from among sikerei (shaman or spiritual leader), sikebbukat uma (leader or person in charge of uma), and local people involved in the management of uma and rituals in Pasakiat Taileleu Village. The data analysis technique is carried out with 3 steps, the first is data reduction, followed by data presentation, and finally conclusion drawing to draw conclusions about the implementation of the teaching independence platform.

3. Results and Discussion

Results

In everyday life, the term Uma is often used interchangeably and confused with the word suku. Uma is the social organization of the Mentawai people. Uma is the center of life for the Mentawai tribe. Traditionally Uma is a relatively fluid and egalitarian (equal standing) social unit descended from the male lineage (patrilineal). Each member of the group is of equal descent from the paternal line. Moreover, Uma is also the basis of the most relevant social relations or relationships for the establishment of claims to land, resources and ownership (Schefold, 2018).

In Mentawai, an Uma is usually inhabited by 5 to 7 families of the same descent. One of the members living in a house (Uma) is the Sikebbukat Uma or a Sikerei. Sikerei (Sikebbukat Uma) is what the Mentawai tribe considers as elders. Inside the Uma, the Mentawai tribe lives, holds meetings and carries out various traditional events, such as weddings. Uma is also a place to heal family members if they are sick (Sani, 2008).

Tracing the lineage of an Uma usually begins with tracing the genealogy of Uma distribution or migration from generation to generation. Reimar Schefold states that the first inhabited area was located in Simatalu, west of Siberut. In every myth, the process of moving ancestors from the place of initial settlement, preceded by looking

for new land, which has no owner, they make signs of "found" territory (sinese). It was also based on disputes (Zaiyardam et al., 2024).

The simplicity of Mentawai life can be seen in the way they dress. In general, Mentawai clothing is still traditional. Mentawai men still wear Kabit, which is a lower body cover made only of bark. While the upper body is left naked without wearing a piece of cloth (Rifalrik & Sandra, 2023).

Sikerei, the elders in Mentawai, still wear Kabit. As for the women, to cover their lower body, they string banana leaves to form a skirt. While for the upper body, they knit thatch leaves to form a shirt. Even if there are Mentawai tribes who wear sarongs or complete clothes, the number is only a few people, but currently in several places in the Mentawai Islands they are already wearing clothes made of cloth.

The Mentawai tribe lives bound by customary rules. One of the customary rules that they always carry out is Arat Sabulungan. Arat means custom, while Sabulungan means the way or system of worship carried out by the Mentawai people who mostly use leaves. Based on Mentawai ancestral teachings, leaves are believed to be the abode of forest gods, mountain gods, sea gods, and water gods (Ervina et al., 2025).

The Mentawai also believe that leaves are the link between the Creator and humans. So strong is the Mentawai tribe's belief in the power of leaves that it is unacceptable for descendants of the Mentawai tribe to damage the forest. They are forbidden to cut down the forest carelessly. For cooking, they are only allowed to take tree branches that have fallen to the ground. If they violate this rule, they will receive customary sanctions. In fact, they believe that if they damage the forest, calamities can come to the lives of the Mentawai people.

The forest is the main place for the Mentawai tribe to live. They build Uma or houses in the forest. In the forest, they also look for game to eat. Monkeys, wild boars, and bats are regular targets for the Mentawai tribe. When compared to other types of animals, the Mentawai tribe considers monkeys as the most valuable game. When a villager manages to catch a monkey, they call other family members and relatives to join them in enjoying the monkey. Sharing the catch equally and having to spend it without a remainder is an obligation for the Mentawai tribe (Erwin, 2015b).

They believe that if any game is not finished right away, disaster will befall the whole family. The type of animal that should never be hunted is dogs. They consider it a violation of custom to kill and eat dogs. For them, dogs are pets that should only be kept and not eaten.

Since long ago, the Mentawai tribe has always practiced living in harmony with nature. Destroying nature and hunting wildly is believed to bring disaster to the lives of the Mentawai tribe. To fulfill their needs, they do not only depend on hunting. They fulfill their food needs by raising pigs and chickens. Not only that, every time they cut down a sago tree to be processed into food, the Mentawai tribe replaces it

by planting a new sago tree.

Uma in Taileleu has been established since 1950 until now people still use it mainly for traditional ceremonies, the purpose is to maintain a relationship with the spirits of the ancestors. So uma is an important element in the life cycle of the Mentawai people (Delfi, 2005).



Figure 1. Uma Taileleu (Sarubei Tribe)

Researcher Documentation, 2024

Uma is the center of traditional ceremonies and various traditional religious ceremonies, a place to connect or communicate with ancestors. This is a peculiarity for other customs, if other indigenous peoples never make uma as a place of ritual, always separating where the ritual place and where the place of deliberation is that is the specialty of the Mentawai uma in Pasakiat Taileleu which is the center of everything. Where all traditional parties are held in the uma, both large party traditional ceremonies, small thanksgiving, deliberations and the holding of a wedding until the pangurei party is held in the uma. Mentawai people believe that uma is the place where the spirits of ancestors dwell. Inside the uma there are special places such as orat, bakkat katcaila, Ngong, Abu, Baibajat, salipak and tuddukat, Orat (Stairs) (Delfi, 2013).

The concept of spirits in the staircase in Uma Mentawai is an important aspect of traditional Mentawai beliefs. In the view of the Taileleu people, it is believed that the crocodile spirit dwells in the staircase, which has a special spiritual meaning as a friend or guardian of Sikerei. Orat in Uma has a meaning as a connecting path between the human world and the universe. It is on these stairs that the crocodile symbol is often depicted or placed as a spiritual entity.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers on teteu sikerei named engeu laibok salimu located in the sabalai tribe at the time of the party stated that down in the orat it has three functions:

1. *Sipasijago uma*
2. *Tando rot samba pulatcanan*
3. *Sipalulu samba sipaalei sikerei kabagat pasienung akek kereinia* (Hermawati S,

2003).



Figure 2. Sikerei teteu Silibet kerei of the sarubei tribe

Based on the picture above is a picture of one of the powerful sikerei in Pasakiat Taileleu, especially in the Sarubei tribe, who can explain all the spirits on each side of the uma. The relationship between Sikerei and crocodiles is mutually beneficial. Sikerei honor the crocodile through special rituals, and in return, the crocodile spirit provides protection and spiritual strength to the Sikerei.

The depiction of crocodiles on the stairs of Uma also serves as a reminder to the Mentawai people that they coexist with nature and its guardian spirits. This reflects the philosophy of balance between humans, nature, and the spirit world that is at the core of traditional Mentawai beliefs (Hernawati, 2005).



Figure 6. Orat

b. Bakkat Katcaila

Bakkat Katcaila is an important sacred element in the structure of a Mentawai Uma (traditional house). Literally, "bakkat" means root or foundation, while "katcaila" refers to the concept of holiness or sacredness. So, Bakkat Katcaila can be interpreted as the "root of sacredness" or the "sacred foundation" in Uma Mentawai. Bakkat Katcaila is usually located in the central part of the Uma, often in the form of a main pillar or special area that is considered the spiritual center of the house. Its central position symbolizes its role as a link between the human world and the spirit world (Schefold, 2018).

In Mentawai cosmology, Bakkat Katcaila is believed to be:

- A place where the spirits of family ancestors reside
- Uma spiritual balance center
- Focal point for important rituals
- Symbol of continuity and continuity of lineage

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers on teteu sikerei named engeu laibok salimu kabakkat katcaila anai dua katukolobat nia iate:

1. *Kudduat Simagere Sapunuteteu* (ancestral spirit): ketcat sapunuteteu sikuddu ka Bakkat Katcaila. Sipasijago samba reddenen punuteteu.
2. *Kudduat Simagere ketcat sipanoga* (blessing spirit): ketcat siakek simaeruk kabagat uma (Erwin, 2015a).

Mentawai people believe that harmonious relationships with the spirits in Bakkat Katcaila must be maintained through special rituals led by Sikerei or rimata uma. These rituals include offerings, traditional songs and dances, as well as periodic spiritual communication. The existence of Bakkat Katcaila in Uma reflects the Mentawai people's philosophy of life that emphasizes the balance between the physical and spiritual worlds, as well as deep respect for ancestors and nature spirits (Delfi, 2015).



Picture 7. Bakkat Katcaila

c. Ngong

Ngong is the term for gong. Ngong is a sacred object in the uma and is only used or sounded during lia or traditional ceremonies in the uma and when there is game. The sound of the ngong is one of the signs that there is a lia in an uma, each sound of the ngong is hit 3 times at the first sound in the sound 3 times signifies the traditional ceremony begins, the second sound is sounded 3 times indicating the time to eat begins, the third sound is sounded 3 times is the closing sound of the traditional ceremony signifying that the spirit of the deceased has left the uma. The sound of

the ngong when there are game results is sounded 3 times, indicating that one family has otcai (can share) three bamboos and if the ngong sound is long for 5 strokes, it means that one family gets 5 bamboos.

Based on an interview with sikerei teteu petca sabalai on November 27 at uma sabalai 2024 as follows:

Ngong nene itubobok ke anai puliatjat, anai iba sibara kaleleu or ka koat tananau akek nia katukolobat nia bulek raagai nia anai ibadda ka uma, itunanau akek simemet piga abara ibadda, bui siboboi itulamau akek, niatet nedda katukolobatnia.



Figure 8. Ngong

d. Ash (Kitchen)

It is a common kitchen that is usually used during punen. Abu uma is used for women to cook. Abu (kitchen) uma has a spirit, namely the spirit of simageret iba, simageret iba is all game in the forest or at sea cooked in that kitchen so that all family members cannot defend the firewood next to it, cannot be angry, cannot also cook food that is panted by sikerei or rimata uma. And that is very much believed by the Mentawai people.

Puabuat nene kudduat paneukat ibadda sikerei, pasiolou akek kateubak momoi lewedda, ke lepak punen niatet kudduat iba tinibbok, sagai sabbat gette ikuddu kabebet abu oninia kolokkok.



Figure 9. Abu Uma

e. Baibajat (a place to hang the head or skull of hunted animals)

Baibajat is a sacred place to hang the head or skull of the hunted with the aim that the spirit of the hunted can make it easier for indigenous people to hunt in the future or at the appointed time after the traditional feast at uma.

Kudduat pasitoak akek utet iba sibara kaleleu, katkolobatnia tutoak akek bule kemei sia bitca mu era malabbei ibara



Figure 10. Baibajat (Hanging place for hunted skulls)

f. salipak

Salipak is a sacred chest or container made of wood, rectangular in shape with typical Mentawai carvings, which serves as a storage place for objects and ritual equipment used by Sikerei in healing practices and traditional ceremonies.

"Kudduat galajetda sikerei kagania *jejeineng, ngalou, lailai, giri-girik, luat, tudda, lekkau, sailimut, singemet, tairoksik, laka and sorot. Oto salipak neknek takmomoi ragabetnia sabagei siripokat keikeijetda sikerei*, *simateu igabetnia iate sikerei elek sinanalep sikerei*." (interview with Sikerei, 2024).



Salipak (chest) sikerei

g. Located at

Tuddukat is one of the objects in the uma that has sacred value, therefore it should not be used carelessly. Tuddukat can only be sounded at the time of death or hunting. People who can sound tuddukat must be people who understand and understand the methods so that they do not misunderstand the message or news

they want to convey. In accordance with the results of an interview with sikerei teteu engeu laobok salimu on November 27, 2024.

Tuddukat nene tamomoi tunau akek siboboi, siagai na lek ibokbok nia, kek anai simamatei, anai iba niapei nau akek



Figure 12. Tuddukat

Uma is not only a place to live, but also reflects the social, spiritual and traditional structure of the Mentawai community which is the center of the local Mentawai community's life, because uma is where all traditional feasts are held. Uma has an important role in daily life, both in physical and cultural aspects uma is a place where various ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, and other religious rituals are often held in uma. This reflects the importance of the uma as a spiritual and cultural center (Corenese, 1986).

Uma is very necessary to preserve because it has important cultural, historical and social values for indigenous people. Uma, as a traditional house, is not only a place to live or gather, but also a symbol of the Mentawai tribe's cultural identity that reflects local wisdom and ancestral heritage (Abidin, 1997).

For several reasons, the first is because uma is part of a cultural heritage that reflects the customs, beliefs and lifestyle of the local community, by preserving it, the younger generation can continue to recognize and maintain the culture of their ancestors. then the second is because uma is a tribal identity and identity that symbolizes the identity of a tribe. If the uma becomes extinct, then part of the tribe's identity and history will also be erased. Therefore, its preservation is very important so that the existence of tribes and customs is preserved (Delfi, 2005).

Uma needs the attention of the local government in its preservation so that it is maintained and stands firmly for future generations to use. However, also providing financial and legal support, can help in the maintenance and renovation of old or damaged uma by providing financial assistance in order to increase public awareness about the importance of maintaining and preserving uma.

The younger generation has an important role in maintaining and repairing

damaged uma. The involvement of the younger generation in making repairs shows concern for cultural heritage and awareness of the importance of maintaining tribal identity. By involving the younger generation in the process of preserving Mentawai culture, especially *uma*, it is hoped that they can maintain and pass on the tradition to the next generation. This effort is important to ensure the preservation of Mentawai culture in facing the challenges of globalization and changing times.

Preserving uma is a shared responsibility, especially for the younger generation, and one effective way to instill awareness of the importance of uma preservation is to make it part of Mentawai cultural materials in schools. Thus, students can understand the historical value, social function and how to maintain the sustainability of traditional houses.

Discussion

Kinship designations and calls within the nuclear family, father (Mae), mother (ina), child (toga). Relatives of father and mother, grandfather (teteu bajak), grandmother (teteu kalabai), brother-in-law (saulu), sister (eira). However, the status and history or genealogy of the original lineage will never be lost and forgotten. This is because family lineage is very important in determining rights.

Kinship designations and calls within the nuclear family, father (Mae), mother (ina), child (toga). Relatives of father and mother, grandfather (teteu bajak), grandmother (teteu kalabai), brother-in-law (saulu), sister (eira). However, the status and history or genealogy of the original lineage will never be lost and forgotten. Because lineage or family tree is very important in determining the rights of an uma member in the system of inheritance of joint property in the uma. Only men of the same paternal lineage can inherit property in the uma.

The concept of kinship in the Maentawai community follows the patrilineal system, which is a kinship system that regulates the flow of descent based on male lineage. Patrinieal is a community custom that regulates the flow of descent from the father. Kinship relationships in the Mentawai community kinship system, especially in Taileleu, are known as saraina or musaraina. Individuals who are members of one uma group or one tribe.

The concept of leadership in uma is different from the concept of leadership that is generally recognized by ordinary people. Mentawai society is an egalitarian society that does not recognize caste or class in its social structure. Every individual has the same position and status, Mentawai society does not recognize the relationship between the master or king and the servant. Everyone has the same social status as fellow members of the uma. Therefore, every individual also has the same rights and responsibilities, especially in the processes of deliberation or decision-making in the uma (Tarida Hernawati, 2003).

However, as a social group that requires order, there is also the concept of leadership in uma. Leadership in uma is generally demonstrated and practiced in

the activities of implementing traditional ceremonies. The elders in the uma will carry out their duties and responsibilities to lead the implementation of traditional ceremonies, starting from the planning and implementation process until the entire series or stages of the ceremony are completed (Zakia, 1996).

The roles, duties and responsibilities of leaders in the uma will also be demonstrated and practiced in the process of deliberation for joint decision-making related to the livelihood of all uma members. These deliberations are used to plan the construction of a new uma, the clearing of land, hunting, the making of canoes, proposing and carrying out marriage ceremonies, and so on. Deliberation is also used to resolve conflicts or disputes both among fellow uma members and between uma members and other people (Hernawati, 2005).

The deliberations that take place in the uma are led by the sikebbukat uma or rimata by upholding the principle of deliberation for consensus. Mentawai society is a society that adheres to a democratic system that guarantees the freedom of everyone to express their opinions. In the process of deliberation, everyone has the right to express opinions and there may be differences of opinion between fellow uma members. It is at this time that the role of the leader is needed to direct the thoughts of uma members so as to produce a joint decision. The wisdom and discretion of a leader is needed in order to act fairly and impartially so that all uma members feel valued despite having different opinions. A leader with his insight, knowledge and wisdom will try to make the deliberations reach consensus. If one or more uma members disagree with the majority decision and feel disrespected, they may choose to leave the uma membership (Sani, 2008).

Therefore, a leader in the uma is usually someone who has extensive knowledge and insight into the rules of customs and traditions to be able to lead traditional ceremonies. He or she must also be charismatic with traits, attitudes and behaviors that can serve as role models for all members of the uma. The fair and wise nature of a leader is also very much needed to be able to maintain unity in the uma. Leaders in uma are elected by consensus by all uma members usually until the end of their lives. Leadership in uma is not leadership that is inherited, but leadership that is mandated by all uma members so that he is directly responsible to all uma members (Rudito, 2013).

Some uma leaders, A sikebbukat uma has a great responsibility and sacrifice for the safety of all uma members. He must be willing and able to abstain (mukeikei), especially during every traditional ceremony. The sikebbukat uma must abstain for a longer period of time than the uma members, starting from the preparation process, implementation until after the implementation of the traditional ceremony, the goal is for the smooth implementation of the traditional ceremony and the safety of all uma members and the sikebbukat uma itself.

Sipangunan is a person who assists or represents the sikebbukat uma in carrying out work that cannot be done by the sikebbukat uma due to a period of abstinence.

The role of the sikebbukat uma is more self-focused, more focused on directing things that are mandatory and to be done by all members of the uma. Sikebbukat uma will mostly observe the activities of tribe members while carrying out their main duties in the procession of traditional ceremonies or in deliberations. It is the sipangunan who will represent the sikebbukat uma in doing technical work such as objects and dishes for offerings in traditional rituals. They will also prepare special food for the sikebbukat uma during the ceremony.

In joint activities such as clearing land for cultivation, building a new uma, hunting making canoes etc, the sipangunan is in charge of representing the sikebbukat uma in assisting uma members in their work. He will carry out the directions given by the sikebbukat uma. The sikebbukat uma will perform a process of abstinence to get the help of good spirits and avoid the influence of evil spirits. So that the work can run smoothly and all members of the uma receive safety during the work of the traditional ceremony (Hernawati, 2005).

Sipatalaga is a person who has the role, duties and responsibilities as a mediator or mediator in a case. In a case or problem, a settlement process is needed so that the problem does not drag on. The two litigants are usually unable and unwilling to deal directly with resolving the case between them. this is done to avoid greater conflict due to emotions that may not be controlled. That is why the role of a patalaga is needed to become a mediator or mediator between the two litigants. Sipatalaga in a case settlement is usually chosen by one of the litigants. They will choose people who are considered to have the ability and experience in helping to resolve cases (Delfi, 2013).

As an arbiter, the paralaga must be someone who has insight and knowledge of customary law. He must also be able to be neutral and must not take sides in order to produce a fair decision for both parties in accordance with applicable customary rules. Whether or not the result of a case settlement is good depends on the ability of a sipatalaga. The wisdom and patience of a patalaga is needed in order to solve a problem without causing new problems. Because a decision that is felt to be unfair by one of the parties will actually cause even bigger problems in the future. The more often a sipatalaga succeeds in helping to resolve a case well, the more fragrant his name and the name of his uma or tribe in the community. he and his uma will be highly respected and respected by other tribes.

Sikerei are spiritual figures in the uma, who have the knowledge and ability to mediate between the real and supernatural worlds. Sikerei can communicate with ancestral spirits and other spirits in the universe. In Mentawai belief, life in the real world and the supernatural often intersect or touch. The spirits of living people and the spirits of people who have died at certain times may come into contact. Meanwhile, in the real world, all objects and living beings are believed to have spirits (ketcat) and souls (simagre), so that humans in every activity must be able to live in harmony with all the inhabitants of the universe. One way to live a harmonious life

with the universe can be reflected in the traditional ceremonies performed. The traditional ceremonies carried out are related to life activities, including those related to the life cycle of uma members, social relations and livelihoods.

Each traditional ceremony is led by a sikerei who acts as an intermediary conveying the wishes and hopes of all uma members to the spirits or inhabitants of the supernatural realm. Conversely, the sikerei also mediates the message or wishes of the spirits inhabiting the supernatural realm to the uma members. Thus the desires between humans and the spirits inhabiting the supernatural realm can be dialogued to achieve a harmonious relationship between the two. Desires that are not in line or contradict each other are believed to bring disaster to indigenous peoples, in the form of disease, accidents and death (Zaiyardam et al., 2024).

Sikerei are believed to have magical powers that are sacred. This magical and sacred power is very important in the role of a sikerei as a medicine man. Sikerei have knowledge of medicinal plants and have the ability to concoct various types of diseases. The sikerei's ability to communicate with spirits further strengthens his ability as a medicine man. Sikerei can dialogue and interact with spirits, both evil spirits (ketcat sikataik) and good spirits (ketcat simeruk). To the good spirits, the sikerei will ask for help and protection for the health of the sick person. As for the evil spirits, the sikerei will ask them to stay away from the sick person.

The daily life of sikerei reflects the sacredness that surrounds them, one of which is from the keikei (abstinence) from consuming eels (ilek), squirrels (jagat), and several other types of food for the rest of their lives. Other taboos must also be observed, especially during traditional ceremonies. Other sacredness is also reflected in their clothing when they are carrying out their duties as ceremonial leaders and as medical experts (Kleden, 2017).

Uma as the center of kinship life in the Mentawai community functions as a place for deliberation in planning traditional parties. Several families who still have blood relations live in the same uma, the spatial structure in the uma is divided according to kinship relations, where each part of the house has a function that corresponds to the position and status in the family. This division of space reflects the social hierarchy and one's position in the kinship, such as the room of the head of the family or the elders of the Uma who are more respected.

Planning in a traditional feast is the process of preparing steps to organize and carry out a traditional feast so that it runs smoothly and in accordance with tradition. Traditional feasts in traditional communities have a deep meaning, both as a form of respect for ancestors, an expression of gratitude, and as a means of strengthening social ties. Before the party is held in uma, planning must be done in the form of mapping the needs in carrying out the ceremony or party to determine the readiness to carry out the party. This can be done by preparing various resources for party needs such as preparing unggu or pig pens, bamboo, firewood, traditional food ingredients in the form of gettek or taro, leaves as decorative flowers and ritual

tools. In planning, it is also necessary to determine the time and responsibilities of each family member involved in the traditional party, because through careful planning, the traditional party can run well (Ihromi, 2001).

A traditional house serves not only as a place to live, but also as an important social space in the lives of indigenous people. One of the main roles of a traditional house is as a gathering place to plan traditional feasts or ceremonies. These traditional feasts often involve the whole community, and their planning and execution require the involvement of many parties. Therefore, the traditional house becomes a very strategic place to plan these big events.

In many indigenous communities, the traditional house is the place where important decisions regarding traditional events are made. Indigenous communities often have social structures that involve important roles for traditional leaders, elders and other community members in the decision-making process. They gather in the traditional house to discuss and plan various aspects of the traditional feast, such as the date, the type of ceremony, and who will be involved.

Traditional houses have spacious and open spaces, allowing many people to gather and discuss. In the context of planning a traditional feast, the traditional house becomes a place of deliberation where different parties can express their opinions, share ideas, and plan the event in a way that is in line with existing traditions and cultural values. This deliberation process is not just about logistics, but also about how the event reflects the cultural, religious and social values held by the community (Hermawati S, 2003).

Planning a traditional feast in a traditional house is also a way to preserve cultural traditions that have existed for generations. The traditional house becomes a space that connects the younger generation with previous generations, where knowledge of traditional ceremonies and rituals is passed down. A traditional feast is not only a celebration, but also a means to remember and honor ancestors and maintain cultural continuity. Traditional feasts often involve the whole community, sometimes even between communities or tribes. The traditional house serves as a place of coordination between the various groups in the community to ensure that the traditional event can be carried out properly. In this process, elders and traditional leaders act as facilitators who direct the course of planning and ensure that all cultural and social elements are respected (Corenese, 1986).

In addition to ritual and ceremony planning, planning a traditional feast in a traditional house also involves physical and material preparations. For example, a traditional house can be the place to decide who is responsible for providing the food, decorations, traditional clothing, as well as various other supplies. In some cultures, the traditional house is also used to prepare the place and equipment that will be used at the event, such as a place for prayer ceremonies or a place to hold traditional art performances. Traditional feasts also usually involve gotong royong or cooperation between community members. The traditional house becomes the

place to plan these activities, where every member of the family or community has a role in preparing for the feast. This reflects the value of togetherness and solidarity that is so important in indigenous communities (Profil Kabupaten Kepulauan Mentawai, 2004).

The process of planning a traditional feast in a traditional house is not just about logistics, but also about strengthening relationships between family and community members. The traditional house as a gathering place creates a space that strengthens social relationships, mutual understanding and solidarity in the face of the big event. The traditional feast, which is planned with the involvement of many parties, becomes a moment to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood.

The traditional house, with its distinctive design and function, plays an important role as a gathering place for planning traditional feasts. As a center of deliberation, a space for preserving traditions, and a means of coordination between community members, the traditional house is a very significant place in maintaining cultural continuity and strengthening social relations within the community. As such, the traditional house is not just a place to live, but also a very vital place in the planning and execution of meaningful traditional feasts.

In many Indonesian cultures, elders or rimata are respected and valued as sources of wisdom and knowledge. Adat houses are often designed to ensure they have a comfortable and respected place to live. Their presence in a traditional house signifies their important role in the family or community. Therefore, traditional houses often have a special room reserved for the elders, as a symbol of respect and maintaining tradition. Rimata or elders have a very important role in the social and cultural life of indigenous communities. They are people who have life experience and are often relied upon to provide advice, guidance and organize traditional ceremonies. Their presence in the traditional house makes it more than just a home, but also a center of wisdom and culture. Elders are often leaders in traditional ceremonies and family traditions. Elders in traditional houses often have a higher or more specialized place, symbolizing their place in the family hierarchy. In many cases, the traditional house is also the place where the extended family gathers, and elders play an important role in maintaining harmonious relationships between family members (Delfi, 2012).

The presence of elders in traditional houses is also a means of transmitting cultural values, folklore and traditions to younger generations. Elders are often the guardians of the culture, stories and ancestral knowledge passed on to the next generation. Thus, traditional houses inhabited by elders become centers for the preservation of local wisdom and traditions that are important for the cultural continuity of a community.

Overall, the traditional house as a residence for elders or rimata has a very important meaning in the social and cultural structure of the indigenous community. Apart from being a place to live, the traditional house serves as a symbol of respect,

preservation of traditions, and a center of wisdom in daily life.

Uma is also the center of kinship life in the Mentawai community, functioning as a residence for one extended family or clan. Several families who still have blood relations live in the same uma, the spatial structure in the uma is divided according to kinship relationships, where each part of the house has a function that is in accordance with the position and status in the family. This division of space reflects the social hierarchy and one's position in the kinship, such as the room of the head of the family or the elder of the Uma who is more respected.

Kinship theory in this case sees the uma as a symbol of a very close-knit social organization where physical space also indicates blood relations and social responsibilities between family members. This closeness strengthens family ties and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each member in maintaining survival.

'Uma also functions as a symbol of the social structure that underlies the life of the Taileleu community, in the kinship of the taileleu community this clan has rules and systems that regulate the distribution of rights and obligations between members, such as in terms of inheritance, marriage and distribution of natural resources. In general, the patrilineal kinship system (lineage through the male side) is dominant in Mentawai society in general, where inheritance and social titles are passed down through the male line. Therefore, uma symbolizes one's role and position in the clan. Uniquely, uma are built without the use of nails, but are fixed using sturdy wood and a cross-connection system. *The* uma roof is made of old and dry sago leaves and then embroidered with the Mentawainya term "*kokkok".* The foundation is buried two meters below ground level. The construction lasted one month in mutual cooperation, so strong is the brotherhood in the Mentawai tribe (Kurniawan, 2019).

Traditional houses have an important role in the culture and traditions of the Mentawai people, especially as a means of holding traditional parties. Because uma is a cultural identity, a place for events, rituals and traditions and the preservation of Mentawai culture. Traditional houses are an integral part of the culture and traditions of Indonesian society. In addition to being a place to live, traditional houses are also often used as a means to carry out various traditional ceremonies or parties. A traditional feast is an activity that involves the community to celebrate or commemorate an important event, whether it is related to religion, birth, marriage, or other ceremonies. The traditional house is a very important place because it contains cultural, social and spiritual values that are strongly held by the local community (Malik et al., 2023).

Traditional houses are often used to carry out certain traditional ceremonies, such as weddings, circumcisions, births, or even traditional new year celebrations. In some cultures, traditional houses symbolize the survival and traditions of families and communities. The traditional house not only serves as a place to live, but also as a place to continue and preserve traditions that have existed for generations. Traditional feasts held in traditional houses reflect the cultural richness of a tribe or

community. Traditional feasts held in traditional houses are also usually accompanied by traditional arts and crafts performances, such as dances, traditional music, or handicraft making. This is one way to maintain and introduce cultural arts to the younger generation (Erwin et al., 2024).

Overall, traditional houses as traditional party facilities play an important role in maintaining cultural heritage, strengthening social relations, and serving as a space to preserve the traditions and beliefs of the local community.

4. Conclusion

The existence of uma in the kinship of the taileleu community, can be categorized in three points 1. Spiritual function, 2. Social function, 3. Economic function. Taileleu people's response to the existence of uma in Mentawai culture for daily life. Taileleu people's response to the existence of uma in Mentawai culture for daily life shows that uma has a very vital role in their social life, culture, and tradition. Taileleu people view uma as an inseparable element of their identity, with various important functions that are not only limited to housing, but also as a family unification center, a space for cultural and kinship education, a means of performing traditional rituals, and a marker of social status. The involvement of the younger generation in preserving uma in Mentawai culture shows that the younger generation has a very important role in maintaining and strengthening the sustainability of their cultural traditions, especially related to the preservation of uma.

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