

SOCIAL VALUES AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE MALAMANG TRADITION OF THE MINANGKABAU PEOPLE

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how the malamang tradition in Minangkabau society continues to preserve its social values despite undergoing cultural shifts in response to contemporary social changes. The study is motivated by the impacts of modernization, changing lifestyles, and cultural commodification, which risk transforming malamang from a collective tradition rich in social and religious values into a merely ceremonial or economically oriented activity. The originality of this research lies in its integration of social value and cultural transformation perspectives, positioning malamang as a living tradition that is capable of adapting to changing circumstances without losing its social functions or its role as a marker of Minangkabau cultural identity. This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive-analytical method, incorporating literature review, field observations, and in-depth interviews with traditional leaders and practitioners of the tradition. The findings indicate that although changes have occurred in the methods of implementation, the media employed, and the contexts in which the tradition is performed, malamang continues to function as a medium for strengthening mutual cooperation, reinforcing social solidarity, maintaining social ties, and transmitting cultural values across generations. This study contributes to the advancement of local cultural studies and provides a conceptual foundation for community-based strategies to preserve traditional practices amid ongoing social change.

INTRODUCTION

The malamang tradition is a form of cultural heritage among the Minangkabau people, manifested through the communal preparation of lemang, typically carried out in the lead – up to important occasions such as Ramadan, Eid al – Fitr, and the Prophet's Birthday. More than a cooking activity, this tradition strengthens social values such as cooperation, togetherness, solidarity, and social bonds among community members, while also reflecting the harmony between custom and religion in Minangkabau society. (Yusutria, 2020). As a key element of local cultural identity, malamang plays a significant role in strengthening social bonds within the community while also passing down cultural values to future generations.



Developments in contemporary society present new challenges to this tradition's continuity. Modernization, changing lifestyles, urbanization, and the commodification of culture have influenced how communities interpret and practice the malamang tradition. A practice originally carried out collectively in the spirit of togetherness is now shifting toward more ceremonial and even economically oriented activities. (Refisrul, 2018). This shift indicates that malamang is a dynamic cultural practice; therefore, research is needed not only to uncover the values embedded within it but also to explain the ongoing process of cultural transformation and its impact on the community's social life.

Several previous studies have shown that the malamang tradition embodies values such as mutual cooperation, solidarity, cultural education, and a sense of community deeply rooted in Minangkabau society. Other studies have also highlighted challenges in preserving this tradition, particularly due to declining involvement among the younger generation and shifts in the community's social structure. (Firmansyah & Sudiani, 2025). Nevertheless, most existing studies remain descriptive and tend to examine social values and cultural transformation as separate entities. Furthermore, sociocultural theories are generally used only as conceptual frameworks, without being fully used to analyze the empirical dynamics within the practice of the malamang tradition.

Based on these issues, this study offers a more integrated approach by combining Clifford Geertz's perspective on culture as a symbolic system, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus and social reproduction, and Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration. These three perspectives form an analytical framework for understanding "malaman" as a living tradition that continues to undergo production, reproduction, and shifts in meaning alongside social change. Through this approach, the study seeks not only to describe the social values embedded in the "malaman" tradition but also to uncover the ongoing processes of cultural transformation and their impact on social cohesion and the cultural identity of the Minangkabau people. This study's novelty lies in its analysis, which integrates social values, cultural transformation, and social – structure dynamics within the urban Minangkabau community, specifically in Kuranji Subdistrict, Sungai Sapih Village, Padang City—a location not extensively studied in previous research.

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive – analytical methods. Data collection was conducted through literature review, direct field observations, and in – depth interviews with traditional leaders, traditional practitioners, and community members involved in the Malamang ceremony. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed thematically through reduction, categorization, and interpretation to produce a comprehensive understanding of the social values and cultural transformations within this tradition.

Based on the above, this study seeks to answer three key questions: (1) how are social values manifested in the practice of the malamang tradition among the Minangkabau people; (2) how does the process of cultural transformation unfold in the practice of the malamang tradition amid the dynamics of contemporary social life; and (3) what are the impacts of this transformation on social cohesion and the community's cultural identity. Referring to these research questions, this study aims to identify the social values embedded in the Malamang tradition, analyze the ongoing process of cultural transformation, and elaborate on its sociological implications for the lives of the Minangkabau community. This study hopes its results will contribute to local cultural studies while also serving as a reference for developing community – based tradition – preservation strategies that can adapt to social change.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Practice of the Malamang Tradition as a Form of Collective Social Interaction

The malamang tradition in the city of Padang, particularly in Kuranji Subdistrict, Sungai Sapih Village, can be understood as a *living tradition*—a cultural practice that is not static but constantly negotiated within an ever-changing social context. From Clifford Geertz's perspective, tradition is viewed as a symbolic system that gives meaning to social actions. Thus, Malamang is not merely an activity of cooking but can also be interpreted as a "social text" containing various layers of meaning, such as togetherness, power relations, and the collective identity of the Minangkabau people (Helmaiza & Rivauzi, 2022).

Empirically, the findings indicate collective involvement at every stage of implementing the malamang tradition. However, this phenomenon cannot be understood merely as a form of mutual aid; rather, it can be analyzed through Pierre Bourdieu's framework as a manifestation of *habitus*. Community participation in the malamang tradition does not occur by chance; it results from the internalization of values long embedded in the social structure. Thus, mutual aid in malamang can be understood as an action that has become second nature (taken for granted), not merely a choice made consciously by individuals. Sociologically, this suggests that the malamang tradition functions as a mechanism for reproducing collective values and maintaining the continuity of social solidarity without always requiring formal control (Firmansyah & Sudiani, 2025).

However, when analyzed through Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration, this reproductive process is not entirely stable. The social structure within the malamang tradition—such as the division of roles based on gender and age—can persist only as long as social agents continue to practice it. When younger generations begin to disengage, these structures can change or transform. This indicates that tradition is not a static entity but rather the result of a dynamic relationship between structure and individual action. Thus, the decline in youth participation can be understood not only as a social phenomenon but also as an indicator of a shift in the process of cultural structure reproduction. (Firmansyah & Sudiani, 2025).

The symbolic interactionist approach, developed by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer, provides a framework for understanding how meaning is produced through interaction within the Malamang tradition. Informal conversations, the division of labor, and the sense of togetherness during the cooking process can be viewed not only as technical activities but also as symbolic processes through which individuals negotiate their identities and social positions. In this context, the meaning of togetherness is not fixed or absolute but is formed through continuous and repeated interactions. This explains that the continuity of the malamang tradition does not lie in its static form but in the ongoing process of renewing meaning through the social practices within it (Yusutria, 2020b).

When linked to Robert D. Putnam's concept of *social capital*, the Malamang tradition can be understood as a space for the production of social *trust*, norms of *reciprocity*, and *social networks*. However, the analysis reveals that the social capital formed is predominantly of the *bonding* type—strengthening internal bonds within the community—rather than *bridging*, which connects broader and more diverse groups. Critically, this suggests that while the malamang tradition is effective in maintaining social cohesion at the internal level, it may simultaneously

lack adaptability in the context of an increasingly pluralistic and widely interconnected society (Waryono & Syarif, 2021). Within this framework, the malamang tradition can be understood as a symbol of social integration that reflects the value of solidarity and strengthens community cohesion in Minangkabau society.

A dialogue among theories reveals that no single approach can fully explain the malamang phenomenon. Clifford Geertz's perspective emphasizes the dimension of symbolic meaning but offers little explanation of how social structures are reproduced in practice. Meanwhile, Pierre Bourdieu explains social reproduction through the concept of habitus, but tends to view practices as relatively stable. On the other hand, Anthony Giddens offers a more dynamic understanding by emphasizing the role of agents in the process of social change. By integrating these three perspectives, it becomes clear that the malamang tradition is a symbolic practice reproduced through habitus, yet at the same time remains open to transformation through the community's reflective actions. (Yusutria, 2020c).

Furthermore, the decline in participation among the younger generation can be understood as a form of cultural negotiation. This situation does not merely signify a decline in tradition but indicates a shift in value orientation from traditional collectivism toward modern individualism. Research findings also show that the younger generation has not entirely abandoned the malamang tradition but remains engaged through more flexible forms of participation. This indicates a transformation in meaning—from what was previously understood as a social obligation to a cultural choice. Thus, the continuity of the tradition is no longer determined solely by social pressure but by the extent to which it retains meaningful relevance for the new generation. (Mardatillah, 2020). At the practical level, the "malamang" tradition contributes to strengthening social structures at the local level. Collective participation in its implementation fosters trust among community members, strengthens social cohesion, and facilitates coordination in various other community social activities.

Compared to previous studies, such as that conducted by Miladiah, this research highlights a significant shift: from a descriptive approach that views "malamang" solely as a practice of mutual aid toward an analytical approach that positions it as both an arena for the reproduction and transformation of social structures. Thus, the primary contribution of this study lies in affirming that the malamang tradition not only serves to preserve traditional values but also functions as a space for the community to actively negotiate identity, social relations, and the meaning of togetherness within the context of modernity (Miladiah et al., 2025).

Overall, the malamang practice can be understood as a complex social phenomenon—namely, as a symbolic system as described by Clifford Geertz, as the result of the internalization of structures through Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and as an arena for both the reproduction and transformation of social structures according to Anthony Giddens. Through the symbolic interactions within it, this practice also generates social capital that strengthens community cohesion, even as it faces the challenge of adapting to contemporary social dynamics. Thus, this analysis demonstrates that the strength of tradition lies not merely in its ability to withstand change, but in its capacity to transform without losing its fundamental meaning. (Mardatillah, 2020).

2. Social and Religious Values Embodied in the Malamang Tradition

The practice of the malamang tradition in the city of Padang, particularly in the Sungai Sapih neighborhood, Kuranji subdistrict, involves the full participation of residents in every stage—from preparing the ingredients, cooking the lamang, to distributing the food to the surrounding community. This involvement reflects that the Malamang tradition is not merely a culinary practice inherited from ancestors but also serves as a forum for social interaction that strengthens bonds among residents. Based on findings from interviews and direct field observations, the local community views participation in this tradition as both an expression of social solidarity and an effort to preserve the cultural heritage passed down through generations.

These findings reveal that the spirit of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) evident in the malamang tradition does not arise spontaneously but develops through an ongoing social process embedded in Minangkabau society. When examined through Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework, this phenomenon can be explained by the concept of *habitus*—that is, a set of social dispositions ingrained in individuals through shared experiences and continually renewed through practices repeated over time. This concept of *habitus* helps explain why residents remain actively engaged in the Malamang tradition even in the absence of any formal obligations binding them. In other words, mutual aid within the malamang tradition serves as a means of transmitting social values that operate indirectly and are integrated into the daily lives of the community.

This finding reflects a different perspective from the research by Susanti and Lestari, which tends to view mutual aid solely as a normative value within the community's culture. In contrast to that view, this study found that mutual cooperation in the Malamang tradition has transformed into a social system that plays a role in maintaining the integrity and cohesion of the community through collective customs passed down from one generation to the next. This means that the social solidarity fostered within the malamang tradition does not arise solely from the individual consciousness of each person but is also shaped by a cultural structure that indirectly guides and forms the behavioral patterns of society as a whole (Susanti & Lestari, 2020).

The social cohesion fostered through the malamang tradition can also be analyzed using the conceptual framework of social capital developed by Robert D. Putnam. Based on data collected in the field, this tradition has proven capable of fostering strong social bonds among residents within the local community. The social capital formed by this tradition leans more toward bonding social capital—that is, the strengthening of internal relationships among group members who share social and cultural closeness. The high sense of solidarity within the community is reflected in residents' active participation, regardless of their individual social status or economic interests.

Nevertheless, this study reveals that the Malamang tradition has not yet been fully capable of generating bridging social capital that can open up and expand social networks beyond existing group boundaries. This contrasts with the findings of Yusutria's research, which asserts that collective cultural traditions have the potential to serve as a bridge for expanding social relationships within the broader community. In the context of the "malamang" tradition in Sungai Sapih, the strengthening of solidarity occurs predominantly within the internal community rather than through building relationships with parties outside the group. This suggests that the primary function of the "malamang" tradition remains focused on maintaining and reinforcing solidarity within the local community itself (Yusutria, 2020c).

The participation of the younger generation in the "malamang" tradition reflects a shift in patterns of social engagement. Several informants noted that the level of participation among the younger generation has begun to decline, in line with the growing influence of modernization, changes in lifestyle, and the demanding schedules of their educational and work commitments. Nevertheless, the younger generation has not entirely abandoned this tradition. They are still present and take part in various stages of the activities, particularly during specific moments considered to hold significant social and religious meaning.

This phenomenon can be understood through the theory of structuration proposed by Anthony Giddens, which emphasizes the dynamic and mutually influential relationship between social agents and social structures. In this context, the younger generation no longer merely passively accepts traditions as a cultural obligation but engages in a process of selection based on the extent to which these traditions remain relevant to the demands of modern life they face on a daily basis. These findings suggest that changes in the patterns of youth participation are not merely a sign of the fading of traditional culture, but rather part of a social transformation process that is naturally unfolding within society (Saputri & Ashari, 2019).

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In addition to embodying social values, the malamang tradition also exhibits a strong religious dimension. This is reflected in the communal prayer held before the activity begins, as well as the distribution of lamang to nearby residents once the cooking process is complete. Such practices illustrate a harmonious fusion of Minangkabau customs and Islamic teachings in the daily lives of the community. Thus, the malamang tradition is not merely viewed as an ordinary cultural activity but is also interpreted as an expression of gratitude to God and a means to strengthen social bonds among residents.

Through the lens of Clifford Geertz's thought, cultural practices containing religious symbols can be understood as a system of meaning that bridges religious values with the social reality of the community. Based on research findings, the religious symbols present in the malamang tradition do not merely serve a spiritual function but also have a tangible impact on social life. The distribution of lamang to community members is a form of social redistribution that helps strengthen solidarity and narrow social disparities within the community. Thus, the religious values embedded in the malamang tradition extend beyond mere symbolism; they carry concrete implications that are directly felt in the daily social dynamics of the community (Sari, 2025).

This finding enriches and expands upon the research findings of Rizal and Walida, which previously focused more on the spiritual aspects of Minangkabau cultural traditions. This study reveals that religion in the malamang tradition plays not only a spiritual role but also functions as a form of social legitimization that supports and strengthens the community's collective practices. Religious values provide a moral foundation for residents to continue upholding traditions that have

been passed down for generations, while social values serve as a tangible means for applying religious teachings in daily life. (Rizal & Walida, 2020).

The integration of social and religious values in the Malamang tradition demonstrates that the two are closely intertwined and form an inseparable unity of cultural practices. Social values are reinforced through the foundation of religious teachings, while religious values are brought to life and realized through various social actions carried out by the community. It is this dynamic that explains why the Malamang tradition has been able to endure amidst the relentless tide of ongoing modernization. The continuity of this tradition is not merely driven by a desire to preserve an ancient cultural heritage, but also by its ability to adapt to social change without losing its core essence as a vessel that binds social and religious solidarity in community life (Helmaiza & Rivauzi, 2022).

The findings of this study reveal that the malamang tradition can be examined as an arena for the transmission of social values through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, a vehicle for the formation of solidarity through Putnam's framework of social capital, and a space for cultural transformation through the relationship between agents and structures, as outlined by Giddens. Thus, the malamang tradition does not merely serve as a cultural heritage passed down through generations but also functions as a social mechanism that continues to be reinterpreted in line with the development and changing dynamics of society in the contemporary era. (Saputri & Ashari, 2019)

The findings of this study are also consistent with various previous studies on the collective culture of the Minangkabau people, which position the tradition of communal cooking as a means of strengthening social and religious identity. Yusutria's research reveals that collective cultural practices in Minangkabau society serve as a medium for fostering social communication while simultaneously strengthening communal bonds among residents. In the context of the malamang tradition in Padang, this function is clearly evident through the community's active involvement in various shared activities that not only strengthen social cohesion but also serve as a tangible effort to preserve local cultural identity amid the ever – evolving tide of social change. (Yusutria, 2020d).

3. Social and Cultural Transformation in Contemporary Malamang Practices

The malamang tradition in Padang has undergone a number of changes that reflect social and cultural transformations in the lives of today's Minangkabau people. Based on observations and interviews conducted with community leaders and tradition practitioners in Sungai Sapih Village, Kuranji Subdistrict, these changes are evident in various aspects—ranging from the patterns of tradition organization, the level of community involvement, the use of technology, to shifts in the meaning and social function of Malamang within community life. The research findings indicate that the ongoing transformation does not occur in just one aspect but simultaneously encompasses the dimensions of social structure, cultural symbols, and the social functions of the tradition. This confirms that the Malamang tradition is not in decline but is adapting to the demands and developments of modern society. (Mau, 2025).

The first noticeable change is in the social structure governing the practice of the malamang tradition. In the past, malamang activities were organized collectively, involving a large number of community members. The entire process—from preparing ingredients, gathering bamboo, cooking lamang, to distributing food to the community—was carried out collectively as a tangible expression of social solidarity. However, research findings reveal that the practice of this tradition today tends to take place within a narrower scope, involving only

the nuclear family or specific groups within the community. Research informants stated that this change is influenced by increasing social mobility, demanding work schedules, and a shift toward an increasingly individualistic lifestyle among urban residents.

These findings demonstrate that modernization has had a tangible impact on patterns of social relations within society. Within the framework of modernization theory, the changes that have occurred reflect a shift from collective solidarity toward social relations that are more functional and individualistic in nature. The malamang tradition, which previously served as a space for social interaction on a broad scale, now primarily functions as a means to strengthen relationships within the family unit. These findings align with the research results of Arifin et al., which explain that changes in the social structure of urban communities have led to a narrowing of the space for collective interaction within local cultural traditions. Nevertheless, this study found that although the scope of community participation has narrowed, the value of togetherness remains preserved and maintained within the family and smaller communities (Arifin et al., 2021).

Structural transformation is also evident in the growing use of modern technology in the practice of cooking lamang. Based on direct field observations, some residents have begun switching to gas stoves and various modern appliances to speed up the cooking process. This shift is driven by the perception that these methods are more practical and efficient than relying entirely on traditional fire pits. Nevertheless, the community continues to preserve the use of bamboo and basic traditional cooking techniques as an integral part of the malamang cultural identity. This indicates that the cultural transformation taking place is occurring selectively, through a process of adaptation that balances traditional elements with modern ones.

This phenomenon demonstrates that the community does not simply abandon long-inherited traditions but rather makes gradual adjustments in line with changing social conditions and technological advancements. This finding supports the results of Yusutria's research, which states that the sustainability of Minangkabau culture depends heavily on the community's ability to preserve core cultural elements while openly embracing modern elements deemed appropriate and relevant. Thus, the changes occurring in the practice of malamang should not be interpreted as the disappearance of traditional culture, but rather as a form of cultural adaptation in response to the demands and realities of an ever-evolving modern life (Yusutria, 2020c).

In addition to changes in social structure, this study also found a transformation in the symbolic dimension of the malamang tradition. In the past, this tradition was rich in strong religious and ritual significance, particularly regarding communal prayer, expressions of gratitude, and a spirit of community among residents during specific occasions. However, interview findings reveal that some of these ritual elements are now beginning to undergo simplification. The younger generation tends to view the malamang tradition more as a symbol of cultural identity and a venue for social activities, rather than as a cultural ritual imbued with deep philosophical meaning.

This shift in meaning is increasingly evident in how the malamang tradition is represented in digital media and various cultural festivals. The malamang tradition is now frequently featured on various social media platforms as part of efforts to promote local culture and distinctive Minangkabau cuisine. The photos, videos, and visual documentation circulating in the digital space emphasize the aesthetic value and uniqueness of the lamang cooking process more than they do

the religious and philosophical values actually embedded within it. This phenomenon suggests that the media plays a significant role in shaping the public's perspective on their own cultural traditions.

Through the lens of the theory of the mediatization of culture, the media not only serves as a channel for the dissemination of culture but also helps shape new representations of the culture it presents. The findings of this study show that the malamang tradition is undergoing a process of reinterpretation as a result of the influence of digital media and the growing need for cultural representation in the public sphere. These findings align with the research results of Sukmana et al., which reveal that local culture in the digital age tends to undergo symbolic simplification to make it more accessible and acceptable to a broader audience. Nevertheless, this study found that elements of cultural identity have been successfully preserved, so the Malamang tradition is still viewed and recognized as an integral part of the Minangkabau people's identity. (Sukmana et al., 2025)

Further changes are evident in the social functions of the malamang tradition within daily community life. Based on the study's findings, the malamang tradition no longer serves solely as a means of strengthening social solidarity and transmitting cultural values; rather, it has evolved to encompass new functions such as entertainment, cultural promotion, and community economic activities. This tradition is increasingly featured in various cultural festivals and regional tourism activities as one of the distinctive cultural attractions of the Minangkabau. Local governments, together with the local community, utilize the malamang tradition as a vehicle to introduce the richness of local culture to a wider audience. (Subakdi, 2025).

This shift in function indicates a process of cultural commodification—a condition in which culture transforms into a component of economic activities and the tourism industry. The malamang tradition, which was previously more deeply rooted in ritual and social aspects, now also holds its own economic value, manifested through the organization of cultural festivals, culinary promotions, and various cultural tourism activities. This finding aligns with the research results of Mujamil et al., who explain that local culture in contemporary society undergoes a functional expansion, evolving from its original social orientation toward economic and representational functions. Nevertheless, this study indicates that the emergence of these economic functions does not automatically erase the social values inherent in this tradition, as the community continues to uphold and maintain communal practices in every implementation of the tradition (Mujamil et al., 2023).

The involvement of the younger generation on social media also reflects a shift in cultural functions within the digital space. Young people utilize the malamang tradition as a means to express their cultural identity through visual documentation, short videos, and various other creative content. The tradition is no longer passed down solely through direct intergenerational interaction but has also expanded into the digital space, enabling this culture to be known and accessed by a much broader audience. This finding differs from the perspective put forward by Firmansyah and Sudiani, who view modernization as a threat to the survival of traditional culture. Conversely, this study finds that digital media can serve as a potential new space to support both the preservation and transformation of local culture (Firmansyah & Sudiani, 2025).

The following is a paraphrase of the text:

In the context of social relations within the community, this shift in function is also evident in interaction patterns that are now increasingly mediated by digital

technology. The dissemination of information regarding the schedule of traditional events, the coordination of activities, and the documentation of culture are now largely carried out through various communication apps and social media platforms. Nevertheless, the community continues to maintain and preserve in-person gatherings during every "malaming" event as an effort to maintain close social bonds and strengthen family unity. This situation demonstrates that technological advancements do not entirely displace or replace traditional forms of social interaction but rather serve as a complementary element that supports community life in the modern era. (Damajanti, 2022).

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the transformation of the "malamang" practice in Padang City occurs through three main pathways: changes in social structure, a reinterpretation of cultural symbols, and an expansion of the social and cultural functions of the tradition itself. These changes demonstrate that the "malamang" tradition is not heading toward extinction but is instead adapting to the ever-evolving dynamics of contemporary society. These findings underscore that the sustainability of local culture is largely determined by a community's ability to preserve its core cultural values while simultaneously renewing the tradition's forms and functions to meet the demands of the times. Thus, the Malamang tradition remains firmly rooted as part of the Minangkabau people's cultural identity through a dynamic and continuous process of social and cultural transformation.

4. Identity Negotiation, Cultural Commodification, and the Challenges of Sustaining the Malamang Tradition

The changes currently occurring in Malamang practices in Padang are not merely shifts in how the tradition is carried out, but reflect a far more complex process involving cultural identity struggles, the commercialization of the tradition, and issues regarding its sustainability. To understand this process more deeply, we can examine three aspects of cultural change—structural, symbolic, and social—functional changes—all of which occur simultaneously in reshaping the face of the Malamang tradition in the modern era. (Razi, n.d.).

In terms of structural change, the most noticeable transformation is evident in the shifting venues and patterns of Malamang tradition observance. Whereas this tradition was once deeply rooted in the household and village community, it has now expanded into public spaces such as cultural festivals and tourism events. This shift signifies a restructuring of the social framework within Malamang practices; what was once centered on the internal community now involves a wider range of stakeholders, including local governments and creative communities. On the other hand, changes in the lifestyles of urban residents—such as time constraints and a tendency to choose practical products like ready-to-eat lamang—have further reinforced shifts in production patterns and participation. Thus, the process of commercialization not only affects the meaning of the tradition but also fundamentally alters the structure of its implementation (Arfani, n.d.).

In terms of symbolic change, the commercialization of culture has become a major factor shifting the meaning of the malamang tradition. A tradition previously understood as a ritual with social and religious significance is now presented as a symbol of Minangkabau cultural identity, packaged for consumption by a broad audience. In the context of festivals and tourism, ritual elements are simplified and adapted to make them more accessible to audiences from diverse backgrounds. This process reflects a reinterpretation, in which cultural symbols do not simply disappear but undergo new interpretations. Nevertheless, this

simplification also raises concerns about the erosion of the philosophical content and religious values embedded within it, especially as younger generations increasingly view malamang merely as a cultural performance rather than as a social practice rich in profound values and meaning..(Hermayani et al., 2025).

In terms of changes in social function, the practice of malamang has undergone a significant expansion of its role. Whereas this tradition previously served as a social cohesive force and a means of transmitting values within the community, malamang now also functions as a form of entertainment, a tool for tourism promotion, and a commodity within the cultural industry. The transformation into a festival is the most tangible manifestation of this shift in function. Furthermore, the involvement of the younger generation as creators of digital content and drivers of cultural promotion demonstrates that malamang now also serves as a platform for the expression of identity and creativity. Thus, the social function of "malamang" is no longer singular but has evolved into a multidimensional one—encompassing social, cultural, representational, and economic dimensions (Rahmaniar et al., 2020).

In this context, the negotiation of cultural identity can be understood as the community's effort to maintain a balance between preserving traditional values and the need to adapt to the demands of the times. Communities do not simply abandon old practices but instead employ a dual strategy: on the one hand, they maintain malamang within domestic and religious spheres to preserve the authenticity of tradition, while on the other hand, they present it in public spaces as a representation of cultural identity. This strategy demonstrates that the transformation taking place is not a sign of the loss of identity, but rather a process of contextual reformation of identity in accordance with evolving dynamics (Ginting et al., n.d.).

Nevertheless, these dynamics also pose unique challenges to the continuity of traditions. Excessive commercialization risks shifting the tradition's focus from cultural values to purely economic interests, while changes in people's lifestyles can weaken the collective practices that have long served as the primary foundation for cultural transmission. The involvement of the younger generation opens new opportunities for preservation efforts; however, its selectivity suggests that the continuity of the Malamang tradition cannot yet be fully guaranteed. (Miladiah et al., 2025).

Overall, malamang in the contemporary era reflects the ambivalent dynamics of cultural transformation: on the one hand, it provides space for adaptation and innovation; on the other, it risks narrowing meaning and weakening the tradition's depth. Therefore, genuinely effective preservation strategies must simultaneously strengthen three dimensions: maintaining the continuity of community participation, preserving the depth of symbolic meaning, and balancing the social and economic functions of the tradition itself. In this way, it is hoped that "malamang" will not merely survive as a static cultural relic, but will remain vibrant and relevant as a meaningful social practice in the lives of the Minangkabau people. (Susanti & Lestari, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study reveals how the Minangkabau community's malamang tradition has managed to preserve its social values while undergoing transformation amid the various social changes occurring today. The analysis shows that malamang continues to play a vital role in strengthening social solidarity, fostering cooperation, and passing down cultural values from one generation to the next,

even as its implementation has involved technical adjustments and adaptations to modern life. Social values such as togetherness, shared responsibility, and respect for customs and traditions remain preserved through the active involvement of all community members. These findings affirm that "malamang" is a concrete example of a living, adaptive tradition that not only endures as a cultural practice but also continues to evolve in response to cultural modernization and commercialization. As a key recommendation, this study encourages community – based preservation efforts that combine the maintenance of social values with innovation in implementation, so malamang can remain a living cultural heritage, a source of social learning, and a shaper of collective identity relevant for future generations.

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