
LOLODA MARRIAGE CUSTOM VALUES IN NORTH HALMAHERA COMMUNITY

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Abstract

The implementation of the Loloda wedding tradition is full of values. Still, it seems not yet well understood by the Loloda ethnic community in North Halmahera, especially the younger generation, so its existence is in danger. This condition has led to this traditional wedding practice no longer being practiced in its entirety. Various factors influence this, including economic limitations. Based on this, this study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of the Loloda wedding tradition, (2) analyze the cultural values contained in the implementation of the Loloda wedding tradition, and (3) identify supporting and inhibiting factors for the preservation of Loloda cultural values in the implementation of the wedding tradition. The study used a qualitative, ethnographic approach. The research subjects were Village Heads, traditional leaders, religious leaders, academics, youth leaders, community leaders, and community members. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that (1) the local community still maintains the implementation of the Loloda marriage tradition. The stages of the marriage tradition are still carried out today. Efforts to maintain this tradition continue despite the challenges of modernization. (2) Local cultural values in the implementation of marriage traditions include the values of deliberation, unity, cooperation, religiosity, togetherness, kinship, appreciation, exogamy, and moral values. (3) The preservation of cultural values in the Loloda marriage tradition is influenced by supporting factors, namely, the existence of family support. These communities still maintain customs, the application of customary law, the togetherness of the prospective bride and groom, and the completeness of the traditional equipment used in the traditional procession. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include the lack of family approval, economic factors, and globalization.

Kata Kunci:

Nilai Budaya; Adat
Perkawinan; Etnis Loloda

Abstrak

Pelaksanaan adat perkawinan Loloda sarat akan nilai-nilai di dalamnya, namun tampaknya belum dipahami secara baik oleh masyarakat etnis Loloda di Halmahera Utara, khususnya para generasi muda sehingga dikhawatirkan eksistensinya. Kondisi tersebut mengakibatkan tradisi perkawinan adat ini tidak lagi dipraktikkan secara utuh. Berbagai faktor yang memengaruhinya diantaranya adalah keterbatasan ekonomi. Berdasarkan hal itu, maka

penelitian ini bertujuan: (1) mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan adat perkawinan Loloda, (2) menganalisis nilai-nilai budaya yang terdapat dalam pelaksanaan adat perkawinan Loloda, serta (3) mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambat pelestarian nilai-nilai budaya Loloda dalam pelaksanaan adat perkawinan. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi. Subyek penelitian adalah Kepala Desa, tokoh adat, tokoh agama, akademisi, tokoh pemuda, tokoh masyarakat, serta anggota masyarakat. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) Pelaksanaan adat perkawinan Loloda masih dipertahankan oleh masyarakat setempat. Tahapan-tahapan adat perkawinan tersebut hingga kini masih dilaksanakan. Upaya mempertahankan tradisi ini terus dilakukan walaupun terdapat tantangan modernisasi. (2) Nilai-nilai budaya lokal dalam pelaksanaan adat perkawinan meliputi nilai musyawarah, persatuan, gotong royong, religiusitas, kebersamaan, kekeluargaan, penghargaan, eksogami, dan nilai moral. (3) Pelestarian nilai-nilai budaya dalam adat perkawinan Loloda dipengaruhi oleh faktor pendukung, yakni adanya dukungan keluarga, masyarakat yang masih mempertahankan adat, berlakunya hukum adat, dan kebersamaan calon mempelai serta kelengkapan perlengkapan adat yang digunakan dalam prosesi adat. Sedangkan faktor penghambat, yaitu antara lain tidak adanya persetujuan keluarga, faktor ekonomi, dan globalisasi.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known for its vast cultural diversity, a distinctive feature and a strong source of national identity. The culture passed down from generation to generation embodies noble values that shape Indonesians into individuals with character, strong moral principles, and a high regard for social ethics. Taylor, in Horton & Hunt (1996), explains that culture encompasses all elements of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and various other abilities and habits acquired by a person as a member of society. In the context of national life, cultural diversity is not only a historical legacy, but also a unifying force for the nation, in line with the values of Pancasila and the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Akhmad, 2020; Nadhifah et al., 2025; Riyadi et al., 2024).

Culture plays a crucial role in a national identity and character. Therefore, its preservation is a shared responsibility of both the government and the people. National identity serves as a foundation for uniting diverse differences and for national resilience, particularly in the cultural sphere (Cahyaningrum & Marselina, 2024; Fahri et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025). Cultural resilience is a symbol of a nation's integrity, which must be protected from the negative impacts of globalization. The currents of modernization and

globalization pose serious challenges to the sustainability of local cultures, including the potential for shifting values and a decline in younger generations' interest in regional traditions.

One cultural element rich in local wisdom is marriage customs. From a customary law perspective, marriage is understood not only as a legal bond between a man and a woman, but also as a social relationship uniting two extended families. The traditional wedding ceremony involves participation from various elements of society, such as family, relatives, and traditional leaders, who help maintain the values of togetherness, cooperation, and respect between families (Kurnia, 2025; Siregar, 2025; Wutun et al., 2025).

The Loloda community, particularly in Tobo-Tobo Village, Loloda Islands District, North Halmahera Regency, still maintains traditional wedding traditions passed down through generations. The Loloda traditional wedding ceremony has social and religious significance. It involves several stages, including entering the prayer (*wolahi*), delivering shopping, *mabereie badaka* (ascending the powder), *Rorio* night, the marriage ceremony, a thanksgiving ceremony, *Saro-Saro*, *Jou madiodo* (washing the feet), and traditional *ronggeng* (singing). Each stage embodies local cultural values reflected in the procedures.

Based on initial observations, researchers found that the Loloda community still practices traditional marriage. However, the community, especially the younger generation, still has limited understanding of the values inherent in this custom. As a result, some people no longer preserve the traditional procession in its entirety. The younger generation, as the successors of tradition, tends to choose simpler weddings, such as marrying directly at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) or having the wedding procession handled entirely by KUA officials without performing traditional rituals.

METHOD

This research is a qualitative study with an ethnographic approach. This ethnographic approach is used to describe and explain the culture of a community group, namely the Loloda ethnic group of North Halmahera. This study uses an ethnographic approach to describe, analyze, and explore local cultural values in the implementation of Loloda community wedding customs.

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. These techniques were used to directly observe community activities, interaction patterns, and the process of implementing Loloda wedding customs. Interviews were conducted to gather information from research subjects, including village heads, traditional leaders, religious leaders, academics, youth leaders, community leaders, and members of the Loloda

community. Documentation such as letters, photographs, reports, diaries, artifacts, and videos was also crucial for exploring the values of Loloda ethnic wedding customs.

After all the data were collected, the researcher conducted an analysis using the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2008). Data reduction is accomplished by summarizing and selecting important information, then searching for patterns and key themes to make the data more focused and easier to understand. Data presentation follows the reduction process as narrative descriptions or charts, allowing researchers to see the relationships among the data more clearly. The final stage is to conclude and verify them. Initial conclusions are tentative and will be revised if additional data is found to strengthen or refine them during the next data collection phase.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Loloda wedding tradition is central to the lives of the Loloda people and has been passed down from generation to generation. The wedding ceremony is not merely the union of two individuals within a household, but also a means of uniting two extended families, or even two villages with close social and kinship ties. Broadly speaking, the Loloda wedding tradition is imbued with cultural elements, social norms, and moral teachings passed down from their ancestors. For the Loloda people, marriage is not merely a relationship between a man and a woman, but a social agreement between two families that establishes a new kinship. Marriage serves to maintain social harmony, strengthen ties between clans, and ensure the continuity of the lineage that will carry on ancestral cultural values. In line with the views

Koentjaraningrat (2009): A wedding ceremony is a cultural practice that reflects a society's value system and social structure. Each stage of the traditional procession is carried out with meaning, respect, and a spirit of togetherness.

Implementation of Loloda Wedding Traditions

Based on research in Tobo-Tobo Village, researchers obtained an overview of the stages of the Loloda traditional wedding ceremony through interviews and field observations. The ceremony begins with several stages, including introductions. The initial stage before the official proposal is the introduction process, which involves the groom visiting the bride's family home with a friend. This introduction serves as an official notification to the bride's family and also as a formal assurance of the seriousness of the relationship between the two prospective bride and groom.

Second, *Masuk Minta (Wolahi)*: the next stage is the “*masuk minta*” process, namely the proposal tradition. Before entering the *masuk minta (wolahi)* stage, the man's family

sends a sharia judge or religious figure as an intermediary to convey their intention directly to the woman's family that the man's family will come to propose to their daughter. After this good intention is conveyed through the intermediary, the man's family then sends a family member to invite (*bagogoro/bapangel*) relatives, neighbors, and the local community to attend the proposal procession the next day. When the messenger arrives at the homes that will be invited, the message is delivered in the Loloda language, "*isidigoto manga salam ange oka jo suwutu, jo lahi*", which means that tomorrow the man's family will come to masuk mintan (*wolahi*). The woman's family also calls several close relatives to help prepare dishes, such as cakes and other food, to welcome the arriving group.

After the invitation process is complete, the entrance request (*wolahi*) ceremony takes place. In the Loloda tradition, the groom's family arrives en masse at the bride's house to formally propose to their daughter. During this ceremony, the groom's family brings betel nuts (*tupa*) wrapped in white cloth and presents them to the bride. If the bride refuses to eat the betel nuts, the proposal is rejected. However, if they eat one or two betel nuts, the proposal is accepted. These betel nuts symbolize the seriousness and commitment of both families, both the groom and the bride, to the marriage process. Afterward, both families sit together to discuss the wedding costs, dowry, and expenses (including the white cloth), and to set a wedding date, by mutual agreement.

Third Shopping Gifts: This stage involves giving a portion of the "loss" or customary costs from the groom's family to the bride's family before the wedding day. This gift is a form of respect and responsibility in continuing to the marriage stage. Fourth, Naik Badaka (*Mabereie Badaka*). The naik badaka ceremony begins with a prayer or small tahlilan led by a religious figure and attended by parents from both parties. This tradition aims to ask for a smooth marriage. During this stage, the bride and groom undergo three days of seclusion in their respective homes. During the seclusion, they are scrubbed with traditional powder before undergoing a self-purification process on the eve of *Rorio* (the night of bakubantu).

The fifth *banikah*, or Ijab Qabul (Ijab Qabul), is the core stage of the Loloda traditional wedding process. At this stage, the responsibility of the bride is symbolically handed over from the bride's parents to the groom's family. Before the Banikah, several traditional ceremonies must be performed. First, the groom is escorted to the bride's house by a group of mothers, fathers, and children who carry items such as the rugi (wedding expenses), white cloth, and the dowry. During the group's journey to the bride's house, each step is accompanied by traditional tide-tide music as a sign of welcome and to accompany the procession.

Figure 1. Ijab Qabul



Sources: Research (2025)

After entering the house, both families, along with witnesses from both parties and religious leaders, sit together in the room where the marriage contract will be held. Preparations are complete, and then the Banikah (Ijab Qabul) is carried out with an Islamic wedding ceremony, beginning with the recitation of verses from the Quran. This Ijab Qabul legally binds the two partners as husband and wife and ends with a prayer for the safety of the bride and groom. After the Banikah, the groom must pass through the second *fatingara* or second door *pele* before being able to meet the bride. This tradition is performed in front of the bride's room and symbolizes the groom's struggle to win his bride, accompanied by a reward or payment from the groom's side. After passing through the *fatingara*, the groom enters the bride's room, and then faces the head-pinching tradition or *butugogoma*. This tradition is carried out by the bride's older brother or grandmother, who presses the bride's head and demands a sum of money that the groom must pay. After the *butugogoma* is completed, the groom places his hand on the bride's crown, signifying that the two are legally husband and wife. This stage is then continued with the giving of a dowry from the groom to the bride, as part of the completion of the Banikah procession in the Loloda wedding tradition.

Sixth Thanksgiving Ceremony: After the entire wedding ceremony is complete, a thanksgiving ceremony, or *tahlilan*, is held to pray for the bride and groom's continued health and harmony until death do them part. After the *tahlilan* prayer, the ceremony continues with the foot-washing (*jou madiodo*) and *Saro-Saro* (saw-saro) traditions, which are always eagerly awaited by the community. The explanation is as follows:

1. Washing Feet (*Jou Madiodo*)

The foot-washing procedure will be guided by a traditional figure who has been assigned to oversee the event before it begins. Starting with greetings of welcome, then continued with foot washing guided by traditional leaders.

Figure 2. Implementation of Foot Washing (*Jou madiodo*)



Sources: Research (2025)

The footwashing tradition carries philosophical meanings, including cleansing or purification, respect, and a symbol of parental love. The footwashing tradition, known as *jou madiodo*, begins with a traditional leader's call, "*Ma mojoka ma jou wo tido kasih*" (the bride's feet are washed). This tradition is carried out symbolically by stepping the bride's feet into the *kuraru doku* (a kind of palm leaf), signifying that she has entered the husband's family's territory. Next, *mamalata* leaves or *sidingin* leaves are rubbed on the bride's feet, symbolizing that her feet will remain cool and prevent conflict with in-laws or other family members. Long hair is then rubbed on the bride's feet as a symbol of hope for a long and harmonious marriage. This tradition is usually performed after a Thanksgiving ceremony.

2. *Saro-Saro*

Saro-Saro. It has the meaning of a prayer conveyed through gestures or without words. This tradition symbolizes the gift of food and conveys the family elders' hopes and prayers for the bride and groom. Thus, *Saro-Saro* is a prayer ritual steeped in philosophical meaning and is an important part of the traditions and life of the Loloda people.

Figure 3. Implementation of *Saro-Saro*



Sources: Research (2025)

Saro is a traditional dish or offering served in a series of wedding customs. This tradition is intended for both the bride and groom, and is generally carried out at the bride's house. The implementation of *Saro-Saro* is guided by a traditional leader and attended by all family members and the local community. In the process, as depicted in the picture, the traditional leader begins the ritual by saying a few words in the Loloda language, which reads: "*ma mojoka wosi saro osi, joo*", which means that the bride will receive *saro* first. Next, the traditional leader gives the first mouthful of yellow rice to the bride and groom. This mouthful has a symbolic meaning: the bride and groom are not allowed to eat the food offered by the traditional leader right away. The yellow rice is brought close to the bride and groom's mouths, ending with the greeting "*Joo*", then followed by the guests as part of the tradition. The traditional food consists of;

- a. Yellow rice and wajik: signifies the sweet/bitter struggle of a relationship that reaches the peak of a relationship or reaches the stage of marriage.
- b. Ketupat in various shapes, such as: chicken, pineapple, turtle (*ori-ori*): in the future, the husband and wife will be blessed with many children.

Seventh Traditional Wedding Party (*Ronggeng Adat*): The traditional *ronggeng* is depicted through a procession in which the bride and groom are adorned. The bride wears a yellow *kebaya* decorated with white beads, complete with a crown and batik shawl, while the groom wears a robe of the same color. The bride and groom stand facing each other in the middle of a crowd of mothers and fathers who are dancing the *baronggeng tide-tide*, while holding a sum of money that will later be given to the bride, which in the Loloda tradition is

called batombo or kasi tombo. During the process, the bride and groom follow the rhythm of the music, slowly moving their hands in time with the song.

Eighth Antar Mohoka (escorting the bride). In the Loloda wedding tradition, the antar mohoka procession is an important stage that follows the completion of the entire wedding ceremony. At this stage, the bride is at her best, wearing a kebaya and accompanied by two family representatives. This procession marks the moment when the bride's extended family, along with their entire entourage, escorts the bride to the groom's home.

Figure 4. Antar *Mohoka* (escorting the bride)



Sources: Research (2025)

The members of the wedding entourage, both men and women, bring various household items known in the Loloda tradition as *siduru*. These items symbolize the bride's readiness to enter a new life and represent the bride's family's respect for the groom's family. Household items (*siduru*) in the Loloda wedding tradition include various traditional objects such as *sosiru*, *aya-aya*, pandan mats (*buro-buro*), plates, cupboards, and traditional dishes such as *halua* wrapped in *woka* leaves, *waji*, *ketupat*, and *prosocigi*, measuring one to two meters long and containing rice. The name *prosocigi* is given because its shape resembles a mosque dome and is made from young *boboro* leaves. All of these household items must be brought when the family escorts the bride (*mohoka*) to the groom's family home. The presence of these items symbolizes respect for the groom's family and reflects the family's spirit of cooperation. When the bride arrives at the groom's house, she will be greeted with a warm welcome, followed by a foot-washing ritual (*jou madiodo*) prepared by the groom's family.

Local Cultural Values in the Implementation of Loloda Marriage Traditions

The research results show that the cultural values of the Loloda traditional wedding ceremony align with those of Indonesian society as a whole. These values include cooperation, religiosity, togetherness, kinship, deliberation, respect, unity, exogamy, and moral values.

First, the value of cooperation is evident in the community's involvement in preparing the entire event. On Rorion night, for example, the community volunteers to help cook, set up the venue, make ketupat (rice cakes), and prepare traditional equipment. Koentjaraningrat (2002) stated that cooperation is carried out because humans are inherently incapable of living alone and must maintain harmonious relationships within their communities. Second, Religious Values: Religiosity is evident in every procession, from the prayers during the rhinoceros-riding tradition to the tahlilan (thanksgiving prayer) after the wedding ceremony. The community believes that marriage is a sacred event that requires God's blessing and protection.

Third: The Value of Togetherness is reflected in the community's collective participation at every stage. Marriage is seen as a bond between two extended families, so all family members have a moral responsibility to be actively involved. Fourth Family Values: All stages of the tradition demonstrate the strength of family ties. According to Susanti & Rosaliza (2020), family values are a belief system that supports unity in the social environment. Fifth, the value of deliberation is clearly visible at the wolahi stage, when the two families discuss the dowry, costs, and even the wedding date. Discussions are conducted without coercion, reflecting the Loloda community's democratic values and culture of dialogue.

Sixth, The Value of Respect: This value is evident in the foot-washing tradition, which demonstrates the bride's respect for her husband's family and her readiness to become part of the new family. The Seventh Value of Unity: Unity is evident in the community's cooperation throughout the traditional process. All levels of society are involved, regardless of social status or age, as explained by Wijaya et al. (2024). That unity arises from a sense of togetherness and solidarity. The Eighth Value of Exogamy and Morals: Exogamy is evident in the strictness of tracing lineage to avoid blood relations. Moral values are reflected in the bride and groom's politeness, responsibility, and respect for customs and religion.

Overall, the cultural values in the Loloda wedding tradition serve as social guidelines that maintain community harmony. These values strengthen the community's cultural identity, solidarity, and moral orientation. This demonstrates that the Loloda wedding

tradition is not merely a relic of the past but a value system that remains alive and relevant to society today, aligning with Koentjaraningrat's (2009) view of cultural values as guidelines for community life.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Preservation of Local Cultural Values in the Implementation of Loloda Marriage Traditions

Based on research findings in Tobo-Tobo Village, Loloda Kepulauan District, researchers gathered information on factors that support and hinder the preservation of local cultural values in the implementation of Loloda wedding customs. This information was obtained through interviews with key informants and direct observations during the research. The collected data were then analyzed in line with the research focus to identify the factors influencing its sustainability.

a. Supporting Factors for the Preservation of Local Cultural Values

Research shows that several factors play an important role in maintaining the sustainability of the Loloda marriage tradition.

1) Family Support

One of the main factors strengthening the preservation of customs is strong family support for traditional wedding ceremonies. Families hold a central position as inheritors of tradition and ensure that all traditional ceremonies are carried out. Family involvement is evident from the preparation stage through the wedding ceremony. This support extends beyond financial assistance to a moral commitment to preserving cultural heritage. As long as families uphold traditional values, future generations will be more likely to emulate and carry on these traditions.

2) Communities that still maintain customs

In addition to families, the Tobo-Tobo Village community also plays a significant role in preserving the Loloda wedding tradition. Collective awareness and the community's willingness to preserve local wisdom are crucial foundations for maintaining it.

sustainability of cultural values. This condition reflects the fact that customs are still alive in social practices and are valued as part of community identity.

3) Applicability of Customary Law

Customary law in the Loloda community maintains a strong social standing and is respected by its residents. The presence of traditional leaders, as guardians of cultural norms, ensures that customary rules are adhered to at every marriage ceremony. Customary law's function as a social control ensures that customary practices do not deviate from the

provisions passed down from ancestors. As long as customary law remains upheld, cultural values can be preserved.

4) Togetherness of the Bride and Groom

The readiness and unity of the bride and groom are also crucial factors in maintaining the continuity of traditional practices. This unity encompasses the willingness of both the bride and the groom to understand the meaning of each stage of the custom, respect the traditions, and share a commitment to carrying out the wedding according to customary law. This shared vision facilitates the successful implementation of the traditional ceremony.

5) Completeness of Traditional Equipment

The availability of traditional equipment—such as traditional clothing, ceremonial foot-washing tools (*jou madiodo*), traditional *Saro-Saro* dishes, and other attributes—also contributes to the preservation of traditions. Traditional equipment is not only part of the ritual but also represents a symbol of the cultural identity of the Loloda community. Having complete equipment also encourages the community to continue practicing the tradition in accordance with applicable regulations.

b. Factors Inhibiting the Preservation of Local Cultural Values

Apart from supporting factors, the research results also show several obstacles that can hinder the implementation of the Loloda marriage customs.

1) Lack of Family Approval

The first obstacle is the family's failure to reach a consensus on holding a traditional wedding. Some families are reluctant to hold the traditional ceremony, believing it is complicated, time-consuming, and expensive. Consequently, many choose to have a simple wedding at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) without going through the full traditional procedures. Internal family disagreements are a significant factor weakening efforts to preserve tradition.

2) Economic Factors

The costs of organizing a Loloda traditional wedding are quite substantial, particularly in terms of losses and customary expenses. This economic burden often makes it impossible for families to fulfill all customary requirements, leading them to opt for more economical, modern weddings. Although traditional leaders have attempted to mitigate costs by lowering the standard for losses and establishing more flexible customary rules, economic issues remain a major obstacle. Some communities still adhere to customary values deemed mandatory, leading to unavoidable financial pressures.

3) The Influence of Globalization

The influence of globalization is another factor causing a shift in traditional values, especially among the younger generation. Modern lifestyles introduced through social media and foreign cultures have encouraged a preference for more practical and trend-oriented wedding concepts. As a result, several traditional rituals have been simplified or even abandoned, such as the use of traditional attire in favor of modern clothing, the reduction of traditional *ronggeng* rituals, and a decline in interest in learning local traditions. The dominance of modern culture has further marginalized traditional values. As Srijanti points out in Sajidiman (2014), globalization is the process by which the influence of one region enters another in the context of world relations, thereby triggering changes in people's mindsets.

CONCLUSION

The research results show that the Loloda wedding tradition in Tobo-Tobo Village is still practiced and preserved by the community today. All stages of the tradition, from introductions, entering the prayer (*wolahi*), carrying out shopping, riding the rhinoceros (*badaka*), accepting the marriage vows (*ijab qabul*), to the thanksgiving ceremony, traditional *ronggeng* (traditional *ronggeng*), and the inter-mohoka ceremony, are still practiced sequentially. Efforts to preserve the tradition remain intact despite the challenges posed by changing times.

The local cultural values embodied in these customs include deliberation, unity, cooperation, religiosity, togetherness, kinship, respect, exogamy, and morality. These values serve as social guidelines that strengthen the community's cultural identity.

The preservation of cultural values is influenced by supporting factors such as family support, community commitment to maintaining traditions, the existence of customary law, the togetherness of the bride and groom, and the completeness of traditional equipment. On the other hand,

Obstacles include a lack of family approval, economic constraints, and the impact of globalization on the younger generation's mindsets. These challenges have the potential to undermine public interest in fully observing wedding customs.

It is hoped that further researchers can develop more in-depth and comprehensive studies related to local cultural values in the implementation of marriage customs, by examining the symbolic meaning, ritual processes, and the role of traditional actors, so that this study will complement the understanding of the social, cultural, and educational functions of marriage customs in community life.

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