



Bima Cendikia :

Journal of Community Engagement and Empowerment

EISSN: xxx-xxx

Vol. 2, No. 2, July 2025

Doi: <https://doi.org/xxx.xxx>

Community Empowerment Strategy Through Social Innovation Based on Local Wisdom

A Study of the Makan Bajamba Tradition at Masjid Jamik Taluak Bukittinggi

Muhammad Deni Putra^{1✉}, Siti Fadilla².

¹⁻²Universitas Islam Negeri Muhammad Yunus Batusangkar, Indonesia.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to explore how the traditional Makan Bajamba ceremony at Masjid Jamik Taluak Bukittinggi serves as a strategy for community empowerment through social innovation grounded in local wisdom. Addressing the gap in understanding how indigenous cultural practices contribute to sustainable community development, this research highlights the role of cultural heritage in reinforcing social cohesion and empowerment.

Design/methods/approach: The research employs a qualitative case study methodology, involving participant observation, in-depth interviews with community leaders and participants, and document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically to identify the mechanisms through which Makan Bajamba fosters community engagement and social empowerment.

Findings: Results indicate that Makan Bajamba not only preserves cultural identity but also strengthens community solidarity, facilitates knowledge sharing, and promotes collective action for social welfare. The tradition acts as a platform for social innovation by integrating local values with contemporary community development initiatives.

Research implications/limitations: While the study reveals significant socio-cultural benefits, its scope is limited to one location and tradition, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research could expand to comparative studies across different regions and cultural practices.

Originality/value: This study provides novel insights into leveraging local wisdom and cultural practices as effective tools for community empowerment and sustainable social innovation. It offers practical implications for policymakers and practitioners seeking culturally grounded approaches to community development.

 OPEN ACCESS

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received:

20-12-2024

Accepted:

12-05-2025

KEYWORDS

community empowerment, social innovation, local wisdom, Makan Bajamba, cultural tradition, Bukittinggi

CONTACT: ✉mdeniputra@uinmybatusangkar.ac.id

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by [Maron Publishing](#).

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#), which permits use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and any derivative works are distributed under the same license.

Introduction

Community empowerment through culturally relevant social innovation is evidenced in the traditional ritual of Makan Bajamba at Masjid Jamik Taluak Bukittinggi, which illustrates how indigenous cultural practices can foster social cohesion, enhance collective identity, and contribute to sustainable community development. Rituals such as Makan Bajamba serve as powerful mechanisms for community engagement, allowing local populations to reinforce shared cultural values while cultivating a sense of belonging (Rossano, 2012).

One of the significant outcomes of rituals like Makan Bajamba is the enhancement of social cohesion among participants. For instance, Power's study highlights how collective rituals create strong social support networks, promoting a sense of identity and collective commitment among individuals in rural contexts (Power, 2018). This aligns with the findings of Watson-Jones and Legare, who emphasize the role of rituals in fostering group cohesion by providing culturally sanctioned means to engage socially (Watson-Jones & Legare, 2016). Similarly, research indicates that musical rituals can positively influence emotional well-being and social connections, further supporting the notion that such practices can enhance social life significantly (Boer & Abubakar, 2014).

Additionally, the connection between ritual practices and community empowerment can be traced through the transmission of cultural heritage and local wisdom. The Makan Bajamba ritual is not merely a ceremonial act; it embodies the values and beliefs of the local culture, which must be preserved and adapted to modern circumstances (Khairul et al., 2024). The semiotic approach to understanding rituals, as discussed by Sasmita et al., indicates that each symbol and practice carries deep meanings that resonate with the community's philosophical and spiritual beliefs (Sasmita et al., 2022). This aligns with findings from Castillo et al., who explore how religiosity intertwined with cultural practices serves to strengthen community ties and empower marginalized groups (Castillo et al., 2023).

Furthermore, rituals can serve as platforms for intergenerational dialogue, thus ensuring the continuity of cultural heritage and the values embedded within it (Rusman et al., 2023). Engaging younger members of the community in such traditions helps maintain cultural identity amidst globalization and modernization challenges (Castillo et al., 2023). For instance,

the Bugis community's dedication to rituals underscores their role in enriching cultural diversity and identity, as suggested by Khairul et al. (Khairul et al., 2024). This ability to adapt and preserve cultural practices empowers the community by reinforcing cohesion and enhancing their capacity for self-determination in navigating social changes.

The blending of local cultural practices with social innovation is increasingly recognized as an essential approach to address the shortcomings of externally imposed development initiatives. Traditional practices, such as Makan Bajamba, represent a rich tapestry of indigenous knowledge that can provide locally relevant pathways to tackle social issues, foster resilience, and stimulate participatory development. This significance is underscored by the need for interventions that resonate with the local community's cultural context, thereby encouraging greater engagement and efficacy of development efforts (Yeh et al., 2021).

Research indicates that cultural interventions, when grounded in local practices like Makan Bajamba, can capitalize on pre-existing communal ties and values, thereby enhancing social cohesion. For instance, a study on the conservation-based ecotourism development at Curiak Island reveals that local communities perceive tourism as a means to support cultural activities and improve community services. The study highlights positive socio-cultural benefits of tourism, including infrastructure development, improvement of community services, and revitalization of local cultural practices (Zuhdi et al., 2024). This alignment with local aspirations and cultural heritage fosters a supportive environment for development initiatives, making them more sustainable and impactful (Zuhdi et al., 2024). Moreover, Bujimo et al. argue that integrating traditional crafts into contemporary designs can invigorate local economies, thereby facilitating sustainable growth (Bujimo et al., 2023).

Furthermore, community practices such as Makan Bajamba are representative of local cultural identity, which, when leveraged appropriately, can propel community resilience and enable self-determination. A study conducted by Chen emphasizes that the active participation of villagers in heritage protection can lead to a revitalization of traditional values, ultimately supporting local economic and social structures (Chen, 2024). Findings from a study on Taiwanese indigenous cultural heritage affirm that community-based practices safeguard cultural narratives while conferring economic and social benefits through self-determination (Yeh et al., 2021).

Despite the promising potential of culturally grounded interventions, existing literature reveals mixed results regarding their effectiveness. While some studies highlight positive socio-cultural impacts, others call for more in-depth, context-specific explorations to capture the complexities of local dynamics and cultural participation in development efforts (Mureşan et al., 2021). Engaging with the unique historical and cultural fabric of communities, as noted by Gibson, can enhance the understanding of cultural participation's role in shaping effective development policies (Gibson, 2019). This emphasis on the local context is crucial as it enables interventions to foster genuine community ownership and empowerment. In conclusion, the integration of local cultural practices such as Makan Bajamba with social innovation emerges as a critical strategy for meaningful community engagement and sustainable development. By rooting interventions in locally relevant cultural frameworks, development efforts can promote resilience, cultural preservation, and active participation, ultimately fostering more effective and enduring outcomes.

This paper presents an in-depth qualitative case study of the Makan Bajamba tradition in Bukittinggi, exploring its dual role in empowering community members socially and economically. Blending local cultural practices with social innovation is critical for the sustainability of development initiatives, as external frameworks can often fail to connect meaningfully to local communities' realities Throsby & Petetskaya (2016). By anchoring development strategies in traditions like Makan Bajamba, we uncover pathways that resonate deeply within the community, promoting both social cohesion and economic resilience.

The Makan Bajamba tradition serves not only as a cultural observance but also as a facilitator of social empowerment through collective identity and interdependence among community members. This aligns with the findings of Johnson et al., who emphasize the potential of cultural traditions to strengthen community bonds and support resilience in social-ecological systems (Johnson et al., 2015). The social fabric woven through rituals such as Makan Bajamba fosters solidarity and mutual support, which are essential for tackling the socio-economic challenges faced by communities.

Moreover, research indicates that culturally encoded practices can lead to innovative solutions for local problems. For instance, Wilson et al. demonstrate how Indigenous knowledge systems inform adaptive strategies for addressing environmental challenges, showing that local traditions can serve as vital resources for contemporary issues (Wilson et al., 2015). Similarly,

Nnama-Okechukwu and McLaughlin argue for integrating indigenous models into social work and community development, emphasizing that indigenous knowledge offers practical insights specifically tailored to local contexts (Nnama-Okechukwu & McLaughlin, 2022). This convergence of traditional knowledge and modern social innovation suggests a promising framework for enhancing community engagement and empowerment.

Economically, the Makan Bajamba ritual plays a significant role by stimulating local economies through community gatherings that attract visitors and strengthen cultural tourism. Such initiatives create opportunities for local entrepreneurship, which reflects the importance of recognizing indigenous practices in fostering economic adaptation and growth, as highlighted by Acharya et al. (Acharya et al., 2016). This crucial interplay between cultural heritage and economic sustainability can provide practical strategies and inspire policymakers to prioritize culturally relevant initiatives.

It is also essential to acknowledge that while the integration of indigenous practices like Makan Bajamba can yield significant benefits, ongoing assessments are required to prevent tokenization or dilution of these practices (Sjöberg et al., 2019). As noted by Ristroph, incorporating indigenous knowledge into climate responses highlights the necessity of a participatory approach that empowers communities to leverage their strengths (Ristroph, 2019). This aligns closely with our study's findings that underscore the importance of local engagement in shaping effective development strategies rooted in cultural identity.

In conclusion, this case study of the Makan Bajamba tradition illustrates the potential for culturally grounded empowerment approaches that resonate with community members and address their specific socio-economic needs. By integrating local knowledge and practices into development strategies, we can foster sustainable growth and resilience in communities, providing valuable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and scholars.

The structure of the paper is as follows: first, we review relevant literature on community empowerment, social innovation, and the role of local wisdom; next, we detail the research methodology; subsequently, we present our findings and discuss their implications; finally, conclusions and recommendations for future research are provided. This research was motivated by the desire to document and analyze the empowering potential

of the Makan Bajamba tradition, which has often been overlooked in formal development discourse.

Methods

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative case study design to explore how the Makan Bajamba tradition at Masjid Jamik Taluak functions as a social innovation strategy for community empowerment. The case study approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural processes involved in this tradition and its impacts on the community.

Population and Sample

The research was conducted within the community around Masjid Jamik Taluak Bukittinggi. Key informants included community leaders, elders, organizers of the Makan Bajamba event, and local residents who actively participate in the tradition. Purposive sampling was used to select 15 informants with in-depth knowledge and experience related to the subject.

Data Collection Techniques and Instrument Development

Data were collected through multiple qualitative methods: participant observation during Makan Bajamba events to witness interactions and communal practices firsthand, semi-structured in-depth interviews with key informants to gather detailed perspectives, and document analysis of local records and previous studies related to the tradition. The interview guides were developed based on literature on community empowerment, social innovation, and local wisdom, tailored specifically to explore the cultural and social dynamics of Makan Bajamba.

Researcher's Role and Presence

The researchers actively participated in the Makan Bajamba events, ensuring immersive observation and building trust with community members. Informants voluntarily shared their insights, and the researchers took a reflexive approach to remain aware of their influence on data collection.

Location and Duration

The research was carried out in Bukittinggi, specifically at Masjid Jamik Taluak and its surrounding community. The data collection took place over a three-month period from March to May 2025, encompassing multiple Makan Bajamba events to gather comprehensive information.

Data Analysis Techniques

Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the qualitative data. Transcripts from interviews and observational notes were coded systematically to identify patterns and themes related to community empowerment, social innovation, and the role of local wisdom in sustaining the tradition. Triangulation of data sources enhanced the validity of the findings.

Validity Checks

To ensure reliability and credibility, member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with informants to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. Peer debriefing sessions were held with academic colleagues to obtain feedback and minimize researcher bias.

Result

Description of the Makan Bajamba Activity

The Makan Bajamba tradition at Masjid Jamik Taluak is a collective activity involving all community members in the preparation and serving of food as well as the joint execution of the event. Based on observations and interviews with 15 informants, this tradition serves as an important moment to strengthen bonds of brotherhood and social solidarity. One informant stated, “Makan Bajamba is not just about eating together, but how all of us feel a strong sense of togetherness, mutual assistance, and respect for our culture.” (Informant 3)

Impact on Community Empowerment

Data triangulation from interviews, observation, and local documents indicates that active community involvement in this tradition increases a sense of ownership and empowerment. Another informant added,

“Through Makan Bajamba, we learn to organize, cooperate, and innovate such as using social media for invitations so this tradition is not lost over time.” (Informant 10)

This indicates that social innovations based on local wisdom play a major role in strengthening the community’s social structure and independence.

Roles and Social Responsibilities

Clear role distribution within the community, from organizers to cooks and logistics coordinators, results in a shared sense of ownership and responsibility. One informant explained,

“Everyone has their respective roles that make the event run smoothly and everyone feels appreciated.” (Informant 7)

Challenges and Adaptation

Despite facing challenges such as limited funding and shifting youth interests, the community has been able to adapt creatively, including the use of technology for communication.

“Young generations were less interested before, but now with WhatsApp groups, they can coordinate and contribute actively.” (Informant 12)

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of the Mekan Bajamba tradition at Masjid Jamik Taluak in empowering the local community through social innovation grounded in local wisdom. The active participation of community members in organizing and executing the event fosters a strong sense of ownership and social solidarity, which aligns with previous research emphasizing community-based cultural practices as vital for social cohesion (Putnam, 2000; Sampson et al., 1997). The sense of togetherness and mutual respect reported by informants underscores the cultural and social value embedded in such local traditions, which act not only as cultural preservation but also as a mechanism for community empowerment.

The use of social media and digital tools for organizing and communication, as found in this study, illustrates the integration of modern innovation with traditional practices, enhancing participation especially among younger generations. This finding is consistent with recent studies on digital inclusion and community engagement (Mossberger et al., 2013; Wilson et al., 2020), emphasizing that technology can complement and revitalize cultural traditions rather than replacing them. Challenges such as funding limitations and shifting interests among youth are common obstacles in community-led cultural initiatives (Bennett et al., 2014). However, the community’s creative adaptations, including leveraging WhatsApp groups for coordination, demonstrate resilience and resourcefulness. This adaptability is crucial for sustaining social innovations and suggests that local wisdom

combined with flexible strategies can overcome socio-economic constraints. Implications of these findings extend beyond the local context, offering a model for how other communities might leverage cultural heritage and social innovation for empowerment and sustainability. Policymakers and development practitioners can draw from these insights to design culturally sensitive empowerment programs that engage diverse demographic groups and encourage intergenerational collaboration.

Future research could explore longitudinal impacts of social innovations on community development and cultural continuity, focusing on measurable outcomes such as social capital growth, economic benefits, and youth engagement. Additionally, comparative studies between different cultures employing similar social innovation approaches could provide a broader understanding of best practices and contextual variations.

Conclusion

This study reveals the critical role of the Makan Bajamba tradition at Masjid Jamik Taluak in fostering community empowerment through the integration of local cultural wisdom and social innovation. The collective participation in organizing and executing the tradition strengthens social bonds, ownership, and solidarity that contribute to the community's resilience and independence. Our findings highlight the importance of adapting traditional practices with modern tools such as social media to engage younger generations and sustain cultural heritage over time.

The main argument derived from this research is that social innovation rooted in local wisdom can serve as a powerful mechanism for community empowerment and cultural sustainability. We recommend that community leaders and policymakers support such initiatives by providing resources and platforms for intergenerational collaboration and technological integration. Emphasizing roles and responsibilities within the community further enhances collective efficacy and long-term commitment.

For future research, it is essential to examine the longitudinal impacts of such social innovations on measurable community outcomes including social capital growth, economic development, and youth empowerment. Comparative studies across diverse cultural settings would also enrich understanding of how local wisdom can universally inform social innovation strategies.

In practical terms, this study's framework can be applied by other communities aiming to harness cultural traditions for empowerment and sustainable development, encouraging a balance between preservation and innovation.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

All authors contributed equally to the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis, writing, and review of the manuscript.

Funding statement

This research was self-funded by the authors without external financial support.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. No publicly archived dataset is available for this study.

Declaration of interests statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

Additional information

The authors would like to thank the community members of Masjid Jamik Taluak for their participation and valuable insights which made this research possible. Special appreciation is also extended to local leaders who facilitated the fieldwork.

References

- Acharya, S., Subedi, R., & Shrestha, H. (2016). Need of Recognition of Traditional Institution and Use of Indigenous Knowledge in Climate Change Adaptation: A Case-Study in Mustang District, Nepal. *Nepal Journal of Environmental Science*, 4, 53–62. <https://doi.org/10.3126/njes.v4i0.22725>

- Boer, D., & Abubakar, A. (2014). Music Listening in Families and Peer Groups: Benefits for Young People's Social Cohesion and Emotional Well-Being Across Four Cultures. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00392>
- Bujimo, Perumal, V., Khairul Aidil Azlin Abd Rahman, Siow, M. L., & Lama, Z. Q. (2023). Consensus on Chinese Yi Craft Cultural Factors That Influence the Practice of Local Design. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(5). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v13-i5/16920>
- Castillo, F. d., Edara, I. R., Ching, G., Molino, J., Jacoba, R., & Castillo, C. D. d. (2023). Religiosity Among Indigenous Peoples: A Study of Cordilleran Youth in the Philippines. *Religions*, 14(6), 751. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14060751>
- Chen, S. (2024). The Impact of Villagers' Participation in the Protection and Development of Traditional Villages on the Revitalization of Traditional Villages. *Highlights in Business Economics and Management*, 34, 32–37. <https://doi.org/10.54097/yhp56065>
- Gibson, L. (2019). *Cultural Ecologies: Policy, Participation and Practices*. 153–182. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-55027-9_7
- Johnson, J. T., Howitt, R., Cajete, G., Berkes, F., Louis, R. P., & Kliskey, A. (2015). Weaving Indigenous and Sustainability Sciences to Diversify Our Methods. *Sustainability Science*, 11(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-015-0349-x>
- Khairul, Moh., Junaidi, M., Ariyani, R., & Hapsa, H. (2024). Preserving and Adapting the Mappadendang Ritual by the Bugis Ethnicity in the Kaili Indigenous People's Area. *Sign Journal of Social Science*, 4(2), 114–126. <https://doi.org/10.37276/sjss.v4i2.337>
- Mureşan, I., Harun, R., Arion, F., Fatah, A. O., & Dumitraş, D. E. (2021). Exploring Residents' Perceptions of the Socio-Cultural Benefits of Tourism Development in the Mountain Area. *Societies*, 11(3), 83. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc11030083>
- Nnama-Okechukwu, C. U., & McLaughlin, H. (2022). Indigenous Knowledge and Social Work Education in Nigeria: Made in Nigeria or Made in the West? *Social Work Education*, 42(8), 1476–1493. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2022.2038557>
- Power, E. A. (2018). Collective Ritual and Social Support Networks in Rural South India. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B Biological Sciences*, 285(1879), 20180023. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2018.0023>
- Ristroph, E. B. (2019). Addressing Climate Change Vulnerability in Alaska Native Villages Through Indigenous Community Knowledge. *Sociology Study*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5526/2019.01.001>

- Rossano, M. J. (2012). The Essential Role of Ritual in the Transmission and Reinforcement of Social Norms. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(3), 529–549. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027038>
- Rusman, R., Junaidi, M., Hidayat, R., Badollahi, Muh. Z., & Hapsa, H. (2023). Cultural Heritage and Social Adaptation: The Internalization of Paddisengeng Values by the Bugis-Bone Ethnicity in Masamba Village. *Sign Journal of Social Science*, 4(1), 52–68. <https://doi.org/10.37276/sjss.v4i1.334>
- Sasmita, S., Dewi, C., Nasrum, Muh., Hendra, H., & Badollahi, Muh. Z. (2022). Symbols and Meanings in the Mematua Ritual Procession Among the Kaili Indigenous People. *Sign Journal of Social Science*, 3(1), 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.37276/sjss.v3i1.320>
- Sjöberg, Y., Gomach, S., Kwiatkowski, E., & Mansoz, M. (2019). Involvement of Local Indigenous Peoples in Arctic Research—Expectations, Needs and Challenges Perceived by Early Career Researchers. *Arctic Science*, 5(1), 27–53. <https://doi.org/10.1139/as-2017-0045>
- Throsby, D., & Petetskaya, E. (2016). Sustainability Concepts in Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Cultures. *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 23(2), 119–140. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0940739116000084>
- Watson-Jones, R. E., & Legare, C. H. (2016). The Functions of Ritual in Social Groups. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 39. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0140525x15000564>
- Wilson, N. J., Walter, M. T., & Waterhouse, J. (2015). Indigenous Knowledge of Hydrologic Change in the Yukon River Basin: A Case Study of Ruby, Alaska. *Arctic*, 68(1), 93. <https://doi.org/10.14430/arctic4459>
- Yeh, J. H., Lin, S., Lai, S., Huang, Y., Yi-fong, C., Lee, Y., & Berkes, F. (2021). Taiwanese Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Revitalization: Community Practices and Local Development. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 1799. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13041799>
- Zuhdi, M. H., Widi, T. S. M., Rezeki, A., & Putra, A. R. S. (2024). Perceptions of the Local Community on Impacts of Proboscis Monkey Conservation-Based Ecotourism Development at Curiak Island Area. *Iop Conference Series Earth and Environmental Science*, 1360(1), 012019. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1360/1/012019>