

The Tradition of Mengambat Boru in the Walimatul 'Urs Procession: A Da'wah Study of Marriage Traditions

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Abstract

This study examines the Mengambat Boru tradition within the Walimatul 'Urs procession in Tanjung Baringin Village from a cultural da'wah perspective. The research aims to explore how the tradition is practiced and interpreted, to identify the da'wah values embedded within it, and to analyze its relevance in the context of contemporary socio-cultural dynamics. This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological orientation, focusing on understanding the lived experiences of community members. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, and were analyzed using an interpretative phenomenological approach. The findings reveal that the Mengambat Boru tradition embodies three interconnected dimensions: emotional-familial, social-collective, and religious-spiritual values. These dimensions demonstrate that the tradition functions not only as a cultural ritual but also as a medium of cultural da'wah, where Islamic teachings are conveyed through symbolic actions, advice, and communal participation. Furthermore, the study identifies a growing tension between cultural preservation and socio-economic pressures, which may influence the transformation of the tradition's meaning and practice. This study contributes to the discourse on cultural da'wah by highlighting the role of local traditions as dynamic spaces for the internalization and expression of Islamic values. It also offers practical insights for maintaining a balance between preserving cultural identity and ensuring alignment with Islamic principles, particularly moderation and simplicity.

Keywords: Cultural da'wah, Lived Islam, Mengambat Boru, Religious moderation, Social cohesion.

Introduction

Tradition represents a fundamental cultural system through which values, norms, and collective identities are transmitted across generations (Sutarto et al., 2021). It is not merely a symbolic or ceremonial practice, but a living social mechanism that embodies moral, social, and spiritual meanings shaping the character of a community (Wahyuningsih, 2021). In many Muslim societies, traditions function as an important medium through which religious values are expressed, negotiated, and internalized in everyday life (Kasmiati, 2021). Consequently, tradition should not be viewed as static or isolated from religion, but rather as a dynamic space where cultural and religious dimensions continuously interact (Ismiati, 2024).

Within the Mandailing community of North Sumatra, one enduring tradition that reflects this interaction is Mengambat Boru, a ritual procession embedded in the Walimatul 'Urs (wedding ceremony) (Lubis, 2020; Arif et al., 2024). This tradition symbolically marks the transition of a bride (boru) from her family of origin into a new household (Harahap et al., 2023). It is performed as an expression of respect, affection, and moral responsibility from the extended family, particularly from the anak naboru, toward the bride (Harahap, 2024). The ritual encompasses values of kinship solidarity,

togetherness, and appreciation for the social and cultural role of women within the family structure.

Anthropologically, Mengambat Boru is closely linked to the Mandailing kinship system known as Dalihan Na Tolu, which structures social relations among kahanggi, anak boru, and mora (Lubis, 2020). This system serves as the foundation of communal life, emphasizing mutual respect, cooperation, and interdependence (Arif et al., 2024). In this context, Mengambat Boru functions not only as a ceremonial act but also as a cultural mechanism that reinforces social cohesion and collective responsibility. However, like many traditional practices, its meaning and function are not immune to change. Socio-economic transformations, modernization, and shifting social expectations have gradually influenced how this tradition is practiced and understood (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024).

In Tanjung Baringin Village, these transformations are particularly evident in the increasing economic pressures associated with the performance of traditional ceremonies. Statistical data indicate that the majority of the population in Padang Lawas Regency belongs to the lower-middle economic class, with relatively modest economic growth (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019). This condition significantly affects the capacity of families to perform elaborate wedding rituals, including Mengambat Boru. As a result, what was once a meaningful cultural expression risks becoming a financial burden and a source of social pressure.

This situation reveals a critical tension between cultural preservation and socio-economic realities. On one hand, the community strives to maintain the tradition as an essential component of cultural identity and social continuity (Arif et al., 2024). On the other hand, the growing emphasis on prestige and social status has contributed to a shift in the meaning of the tradition (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024). In some cases, Mengambat Boru is no longer perceived solely as a symbolic expression of affection and respect, but also as a display of wealth and social standing. This transformation not only affects the economic dimension of the practice but also raises concerns regarding its spiritual and ethical substance.

Within this context, Islamic da'wah plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between tradition and religious values. Rather than advocating the elimination of local customs, contemporary approaches to da'wah emphasize the importance of engaging with culture in a dialogical and transformative manner (Ismiati, 2024). Cultural da'wah offers a framework for integrating Islamic teachings with local traditions by promoting values such as moderation (*wasatiyyah*), balance, and simplicity. Through the principles of *bil hikmah* (wisdom) and *mau'izhah hasanah* (good counsel), da'wah can be delivered in a way that is culturally sensitive and socially relevant.

However, despite the growing recognition of cultural da'wah as an important approach, existing studies on Mengambat Boru remain limited in their analytical scope. Previous research has largely focused on normative evaluations of the tradition from the perspective of Islamic law (Hanum, 2022; Kartini & Azwar, 2024; Zainuddin et al., 2024) or on its role in preserving cultural identity (Arif et al., 2024). While these studies provide valuable insights, they tend to remain descriptive and do not sufficiently explore how the tradition functions as a lived medium of da'wah in contemporary contexts. Moreover, there is limited attention to the ways in which the values of

moderation and simplicity are negotiated within the tradition, particularly in relation to socio-economic challenges and changing social expectations.

This gap highlights the need for a more critical and theoretically informed analysis of Mengambat Boru as a form of cultural da'wah. Specifically, there is a need to examine how Islamic values are embedded, expressed, and potentially transformed within the practice of the tradition. Additionally, it is important to explore how the tension between cultural preservation and the risk of excess (*israf*) is addressed within the community. The Qur'anic teaching in Surah Al-Isra' (17:26–27), which emphasizes the prohibition of wastefulness and the importance of balance, provides a relevant normative foundation for this analysis (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). However, rather than applying this teaching in a purely prescriptive manner, this study seeks to understand how such values are interpreted and enacted in a specific cultural context.

In this regard, Mengambat Boru can be conceptualized as a form of lived Islam, where religious values are not only articulated through formal doctrines but also embodied in social practices, rituals, and interactions (Kasmiati, 2021). The tradition contains elements of advice, prayer, and moral guidance, which function as informal yet significant forms of da'wah. At the same time, its evolving practices raise important questions about how these values are maintained, negotiated, or even compromised in response to contemporary challenges.

Based on these considerations, this study seeks to examine the Mengambat Boru tradition in Tanjung Baringin Village by exploring how it is practiced and interpreted within the local socio-cultural context. Furthermore, the study aims to identify and analyze the da'wah values embedded in the tradition, particularly those related to the principles of moderation and simplicity as emphasized in Islamic teachings. In addition, this research endeavors to formulate a cultural da'wah approach that can ensure the preservation of this tradition remains aligned with Islamic values, thereby fostering a harmonious integration between cultural practices and religious principles.

By addressing these objectives, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it seeks to enrich the discourse on cultural da'wah by offering a more nuanced understanding of how local traditions function as dynamic sites of religious expression and negotiation. Practically, it provides insights for communities and policymakers in managing traditional practices in ways that are both culturally meaningful and religiously grounded. Ultimately, this research positions Mengambat Boru not merely as a cultural artifact, but as a living practice that reflects the ongoing interaction between tradition and Islam in the everyday lives of the community.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological orientation to explore and interpret the meaning of the Mengambat Boru tradition within the Walimatul 'Urs procession from a da'wah perspective in Tanjung Baringin Village (Sutarto et al., 2021). The phenomenological approach is used to understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of community members regarding the tradition, particularly how emotional, social, and religious meanings are constructed and expressed in practice (Kasmiati, 2021). The research was conducted over a period of two months, from May to June 2025, in Tanjung Baringin Village, Padang Lawas

Regency. This location was selected due to the strong preservation of the Mengambat Boru tradition and its relevance to the focus of this study (Arif et al., 2024).

Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants who possess direct knowledge and experience of the tradition, including traditional leaders, religious leaders, the village head, and members of Naposo Nauli Bulung. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants were selected based on their involvement and understanding of the Mengambat Boru tradition (Harahap et al., 2023). The interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility for participants to express their experiences and interpretations in depth, and the findings are presented using verbatim quotations to preserve the authenticity of participants' perspectives.

Participant observation was carried out by directly attending the Mengambat Boru procession. The researcher observed the sequence of ritual activities, the roles of participants, and the socio-cultural as well as religious interactions that occurred during the event. This approach enabled the researcher to capture both observable practices and the contextual meanings embedded within the ritual (Lubis, 2020). In addition, document analysis was conducted to complement field data, including written sources related to local customs, Islamic teachings, and previous studies, thereby strengthening the contextual understanding of the findings (Kartini & Azwar, 2024; Zainuddin et al., 2024).

The data were analyzed using an interpretative phenomenological approach, focusing on identifying patterns of meaning that emerge from participants' lived experiences and narratives (Sutarto et al., 2021). Rather than applying a rigid or technical coding system, the analysis was conducted through a systematic process of data organization, pattern identification, categorization, and interpretative reflection. The researcher began by organizing and repeatedly reviewing all data sources, including interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. From this process, significant statements and recurring patterns related to the meaning and practice of the Mengambat Boru tradition were identified. These patterns were then grouped into broader interpretative categories, such as emotional-familial meaning, social-collective values, and religious-spiritual dimensions, which align with the themes emerging in the findings.

Furthermore, these categories were interpreted in relation to broader theoretical perspectives, particularly cultural da'wah and lived Islamic practices, allowing the analysis to move beyond description toward deeper conceptual understanding. The overall process of data analysis applied in this study is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Data Analysis Process

Stage	Analytical Activity	Description	Output
1. Data Organization	Data familiarization	Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were organized and reviewed repeatedly.	Organized dataset

Stage	Analytical Activity	Description	Output
2. Meaning Identification	Selection of key statements	Significant statements related to the tradition were identified.	Meaningful data units
3. Pattern Recognition	Identifying recurring meanings	Patterns across participants' narratives were examined.	Emerging patterns
4. Categorization	Grouping into themes	Patterns were grouped into categories: emotional, social, and religious meanings.	Interpretative categories
5. Interpretation	Conceptual analysis	Categories were interpreted using cultural da'wah and lived Islam perspectives.	Conceptual findings

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were applied throughout the research process. Credibility was achieved through triangulation of data sources, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, allowing cross-verification of information. Dependability was maintained by ensuring consistency in the procedures of data collection and analysis, as well as by documenting the research process systematically. Confirmability was established by presenting findings based on participants' direct statements, particularly through the use of verbatim quotations, thereby minimizing researcher bias and ensuring that interpretations remain grounded in empirical data. The strategies used to ensure trustworthiness are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Trustworthiness Criteria

Criteria	Strategy Applied	Description
Credibility	Data triangulation	Multiple data sources (interviews, observation, documents) were used for validation.
Dependability	Process consistency	The research process was conducted systematically and consistently documented.
Confirmability	Verbatim evidence	Findings were supported by participants' direct quotations.

The researcher acknowledges their role as the primary instrument in this qualitative study. Reflexivity was applied by maintaining awareness of potential biases and ensuring that interpretations remain grounded in the data obtained from participants. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a credible and meaningful understanding of the *Mengambat Boru* tradition as a form of cultural da'wah embedded in the lived experiences of the community.

Results and Discussion

The Meaning and Context of the Mengambat Boru Tradition

The Mengambat Boru tradition represents a significant cultural practice within the community of Tanjung Baringin Village, functioning not merely as a ceremonial event but as a meaningful social and symbolic process embedded in the lived experiences of the community (Arif et al., 2024; Lubis, 2020). At its core, this tradition marks a transitional moment in the life cycle of a woman, particularly the symbolic farewell between the bride and her family before she enters a new household (Harahap et al., 2023). However, beyond its surface function as a wedding ritual, Mengambat Boru reflects a deeper structure of meaning that integrates emotional, social, and religious dimensions within a unified cultural framework (Sutarto et al., 2021).

From the perspective of lived cultural practice, the term Mengambat Boru is understood by the local community as a representation of final affection and moral responsibility (Harahap, 2024). This meaning is strongly reflected in the narratives of community members. A traditional leader explicitly stated:

“Mengambat Boru is not just an event, but a final expression of affection, a feeling of sadness at letting go, but also a prayer for the child’s happiness in their new home.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement indicates that the tradition is not merely ritualistic, but functions as an emotional and spiritual medium through which families articulate complex feelings of separation, care, and hope. The expression of “final affection” signifies that the ritual becomes a culturally structured moment where emotional bonds are not severed but symbolically transformed. Thus, Mengambat Boru can be interpreted as a process of emotional negotiation, where personal sentiments are expressed within socially accepted and culturally meaningful forms (Kasmiasi, 2021). Analytically, the meanings embedded in the Mengambat Boru tradition can be categorized into three interrelated dimensions: emotional-familial, social-collective, and religious-spiritual. These dimensions are interconnected and collectively shape the overall significance of the tradition.

First, in the emotional and familial dimension, the tradition serves as a space for expressing mixed feelings of sadness, pride, and acceptance. These emotions are not expressed individually but are socially mediated through ritual interaction. This is reflected in the statement of one participant:

“We feel sad but also proud. Sad because the child we are caring for is leaving with her husband, but proud because this is a good and honorable path.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This narrative illustrates the coexistence of emotional tension and moral acceptance. The sadness reflects the emotional bond within the family, while the sense of pride indicates the recognition of marriage as a socially and religiously valued transition. From an analytical perspective, this suggests that Mengambat Boru functions as a cultural mechanism for emotional regulation, allowing individuals to process separation within a collective and meaningful framework (Sutarto et al., 2021).

Second, in the social and collective dimension, the tradition reflects the strong presence of communal values such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation). The active involvement of community members demonstrates that the ritual is not confined to the family but is a shared social responsibility (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024). A local youth described this participation as follows:

“We young people are obligated to help out, from carrying things, arranging chairs, to maintaining the atmosphere to ensure the event runs smoothly. This isn't an order, but it's become our custom in the village.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement reveals that participation in the tradition is driven by internalized social norms rather than formal obligations. The phrase “it's become our custom” indicates the deep-rooted nature of collective responsibility within the community. From a sociological perspective, this highlights the role of Mengambat Boru as a mechanism of social integration, reinforcing solidarity, cooperation, and shared identity among community members (Arif et al., 2024).

Third, in the religious and spiritual dimension, the tradition embodies elements of Islamic da'wah through advice, prayers, and moral teachings delivered during the ritual. These elements are not conveyed through formal preaching but through culturally embedded practices that resonate with the community (Ismiati, 2024). A traditional leader explained:

“We usually give final advice, prayers for God's blessings on the household, because everything we do is also part of our worship.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement reflects the integration of religious values into cultural practices, where everyday actions are imbued with spiritual significance. The notion that “everything we do is also part of our worship” indicates that the tradition serves as a form of lived Islam, in which religious teachings are internalized and practiced through social interaction (Kasmiati, 2021). In this sense, Mengambat Boru can be conceptualized as a form of cultural da'wah, where Islamic values are communicated through symbolic actions, relational dynamics, and communal participation (Ismiati, 2024).

Beyond these three dimensions, the tradition also functions as a medium of intergenerational learning. Children and adolescents who observe or participate in the ritual are exposed to values such as respect for elders, responsibility within the family, and adherence to cultural norms (Nisa et al., 2023). This learning process occurs informally but effectively, demonstrating that Mengambat Boru operates as a social institution for transmitting moral and cultural values.

At the same time, the continued practice of Mengambat Boru reflects the community's effort to preserve its cultural identity amidst ongoing social changes (Arif et al., 2024). Despite the influence of modernization, younger generations remain actively involved in the tradition, suggesting that it continues to hold relevance within contemporary social life. However, this persistence should be understood as a dynamic process rather than static preservation. The meanings and practices associated with the tradition are continuously negotiated in response to changing social, economic, and cultural conditions (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024).

From a critical analytical perspective, this also opens space for examining how the tradition may be influenced by external pressures, such as social expectations or economic considerations. While the tradition embodies values of affection, solidarity, and spirituality, it is important to recognize that these values may be reinterpreted over time. Therefore, understanding Mengambat Boru requires moving beyond descriptive accounts toward a deeper exploration of how meaning is constructed, maintained, and transformed within the community (Zainuddin et al., 2024).

The Mengambat Boru tradition represents a multidimensional cultural practice that integrates emotional, social, and religious meanings. It functions not only as a ritual of transition but also as a medium of cultural da'wah, social cohesion, and moral

education. Through the integration of lived experiences, symbolic expressions, and communal participation, this tradition illustrates how local culture and Islamic values interact dynamically, shaping the social and spiritual life of the community in Tanjung Baringin Village.

The Mengambat Boru Ritual Process and Elements

The Mengambat Boru tradition in Tanjung Baringin Village is characterized by a structured sequence of ritual stages that are rich in social, cultural, and religious meanings (Lubis, 2020; Arif et al., 2024). Rather than functioning merely as a ceremonial activity, this tradition reflects a complex interaction between customary norms, communal participation, and Islamic values embedded within the lived experiences of the community (Sutarto et al., 2021). Based on field observations and in-depth interviews, the ritual process of Mengambat Boru can be understood as a symbolic system that integrates social hierarchy, emotional expression, and moral communication.

In general, the procession takes place after the main wedding ceremony at the bride's residence. At this stage, members of the extended family, anak namboru, and the wider community gather in the bride's yard to witness the symbolic farewell. The bride and groom prepare to depart for the groom's house, and the atmosphere is often marked by a strong emotional tone, reflecting the transition from one social role to another (Harahap et al., 2023). This moment is not merely procedural but represents a culturally constructed space where separation, responsibility, and continuity of kinship relations are negotiated (Kasmiati, 2021).

The meaning and structure of this ritual are further clarified through the testimony of a traditional leader, who explained:

"Mangolat boru actually means the farewell ceremony between the bride and the child of the namboru..." (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement reveals that the ritual is governed by a specific customary structure that reflects social roles and responsibilities (Harahap, 2024). The involvement of anak namboru and village youth in carrying symbolic items indicates that the tradition is not only about farewell but also about reaffirming social hierarchy and collective responsibility. From an analytical perspective, this demonstrates that Mengambat Boru functions as a mechanism for reproducing social order within the community (Arif et al., 2024).

The ritual process itself can be analytically divided into several key stages, each of which contains distinct meanings that contribute to the overall significance of the tradition.

The first stage is event preparation, where the physical and social setting of the ritual is arranged. Tables, chairs, and refreshments such as soft drinks and young coconuts are prepared in front of the bride's house. The bride and groom are then positioned facing the anak namboru, symbolizing a dialogical encounter between the family and the departing bride. This stage reflects not only logistical preparation but also the construction of a social space where interaction and communication occur in a structured manner (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024).

The second stage involves the delivery of advice and guidance, which represents the core moral and spiritual dimension of the ritual. During this moment, anak namboru provide advice, prayers, and moral encouragement to the bride and groom, emphasizing the importance of building a harmonious and compassionate household

(Ismiati, 2024). The emotional intensity of this stage is reflected in the words of a traditional leader:

“At that time, we told the bride and groom... may God always bless your marriage.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement illustrates that the ritual serves as a medium for transmitting moral values and religious teachings in a culturally embedded manner. The advice given is not merely symbolic but functions as a form of lived *da'wah*, where Islamic principles are communicated through relational and emotional interaction rather than formal preaching (Kasmiati, 2021).

The third stage consists of the recitation of *pantun* and the giving of *mangolat boru* money, which symbolize appreciation, gratitude, and social reciprocity. The use of *pantun* reflects the aesthetic and cultural dimension of the tradition, while the giving of money signifies recognition of the family's role in raising and caring for the bride (Kartini & Azwar, 2024). This stage reinforces the idea that the tradition operates within a system of symbolic exchange, where material and non-material values are intertwined. Taken together, these stages demonstrate that the *Mengambat Boru* ritual is composed of three interrelated symbolic dimensions. First, it functions as a social symbol, reflecting kinship relations and communal solidarity. Second, it operates as a religious symbol, conveying values of prayer, moral guidance, and spiritual responsibility. Third, it serves as a cultural symbol, preserving local identity and customary practices (Zainuddin et al., 2024).

These dimensions are not separate but are integrated into a unified system that gives the tradition its meaning and relevance within the community. The ritual highlights the significant role of women within the local social system. The bride, as the central figure in the ceremony, represents not only an individual undergoing transition but also a symbol of family honor and continuity (Hanum, 2022). The involvement of *anak naboru* in delivering advice reflects the transmission of gendered moral values, including loyalty, responsibility, and commitment within marriage (Hasibuan, 2023). In this sense, the tradition contributes to shaping the moral identity of women within the framework of both culture and religion.

Mengambat Boru functions as an informal educational space for the younger generation. Children and adolescents who participate in or observe the ritual learn about social roles, family responsibilities, and cultural norms (Nisa et al., 2023). This process of learning occurs through direct experience and observation, making the tradition an effective medium for the internalization of values. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with the concept of lived Islam, where religious teachings are embedded in everyday practices and social interactions (Kasmiati, 2021).

At the same time, the persistence of this tradition reflects the community's commitment to maintaining cultural continuity in the face of social change (Arif et al., 2024). The active participation of community members, particularly the youth, indicates that the tradition remains relevant and meaningful. However, this continuity should be understood as dynamic rather than static, as the meanings and practices associated with the ritual continue to evolve in response to changing social and economic conditions (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024).

The *Mengambat Boru* ritual process represents a complex cultural system that integrates social structure, religious values, and symbolic meaning. It is not merely a sequence of ceremonial actions but a multidimensional practice that reinforces kinship,

transmits moral values, and sustains cultural identity. Through its structured stages and collective participation, the tradition serves as an effective medium for cultural da'wah, illustrating how Islamic teachings can be embedded within and expressed through local cultural practices (Ismiati, 2024).

Preaching and Social Values in the Mengambat Boru Tradition

The Mengambat Boru tradition in Tanjung Baringin Village cannot be understood solely as a cultural ritual; rather, it represents a multidimensional practice that embodies significant da'wah and social values within the lived experiences of the community (Arif et al., 2024; Lubis, 2020). In this context, da'wah is not limited to formal religious preaching but is manifested through symbolic actions, verbal expressions, and social interactions embedded in the ritual process. Thus, the tradition functions as a form of cultural da'wah, where Islamic teachings are conveyed in a manner that is both contextual and culturally resonant (Ismiati, 2024).

From an analytical perspective, the da'wah values within the Mengambat Boru tradition can be understood through two primary dimensions: moral-spiritual values and social-communal values. These dimensions are interconnected and collectively reflect how Islamic principles are internalized and practiced within the local cultural framework.

1. Moral and Spiritual (Da'wah) Values

In the moral and spiritual dimension, the tradition serves as a medium for transmitting ethical teachings related to marriage and family life. During the Mangolat Boru ceremony, the advice delivered by anak namboru to the bride and groom represents a form of dakwah bil hikmah, where moral guidance is conveyed with wisdom and emotional sensitivity (Harahap et al., 2023; Harahap, 2024).

This is explicitly reflected in the statement of a traditional figure:

“At that time, we told the bride and groom, ‘Hopefully, this is the best for you, and may God always bless your marriage.’” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement demonstrates that the advice given is not merely formal, but carries a strong spiritual orientation, emphasizing divine blessing (barakah) as the foundation of marriage. Analytically, this indicates that the ritual operates as a non-formal da'wah space, where Islamic teachings are transmitted through culturally embedded interactions rather than structured sermons (Ismiati, 2024).

Furthermore, another traditional leader emphasized:

“Everything we do is also part of our worship.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This expression reflects the integration of religious consciousness into cultural practice, indicating that the community does not separate ritual from spirituality. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with findings that religious values in local traditions are often embodied in everyday social practices (Kasmiati, 2021).

In addition, the emphasis on prayer within the ritual highlights the importance of gratitude and dependence on God. The act of praying for the couple's future reflects the vertical dimension of da'wah, reinforcing the belief that marriage is not only a social institution but also a spiritual commitment guided by divine will (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019).

2. Social and Communal Values

Beyond its spiritual dimension, the Mengambat Boru tradition also reflects strong social values, particularly in fostering solidarity and social cohesion. The active involvement of community members in preparing and carrying out the ritual

demonstrates the continued relevance of gotong royong (mutual cooperation) (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024).

This is illustrated by the statement of a local youth:

“We young people are obligated to help out... this isn’t an order, but it has become our custom in the village.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement indicates that participation is driven not by coercion but by internalized social norms. Analytically, this reflects the function of tradition as a form of social cohesion and collective identity within the community (Sutarto et al., 2021). The value of gotong royong also aligns with broader discussions on communal practices in Islamic traditions, where cooperation in goodness becomes a foundational social principle (Zainuddin et al., 2024).

Another important social value reflected in the tradition is respect and compassion within kinship relations. The interaction between anak namboru and the bride represents a relationship based on care, responsibility, and emotional attachment (Harahap et al., 2023). This is evident in the expression:

“We feel sad but also proud... because this is a good and honorable path.” (Interview, September 15, 2025)

This statement illustrates the coexistence of emotional attachment and moral acceptance. The sadness reflects the strength of familial bonds, while the sense of pride indicates recognition of marriage as a socially and religiously meaningful transition. From an analytical perspective, this suggests that the tradition functions as a mechanism for maintaining emotional cohesion and social harmony within extended family networks (Sutarto et al., 2021).

3. Mengambat Boru as a Medium of Cultural Da’wah

From the perspective of social da’wah, Mengambat Boru can be understood as a communicative space where Islamic values are transmitted through cultural practices (Ismiati, 2024). Traditional leaders and elders act as informal da’i, while community members become mad’u through participatory engagement. However, unlike formal religious settings, da’wah in this context is conveyed through experience, symbolism, and interaction. This makes it more accessible and meaningful, particularly for community members who may not engage with formal religious discourse.

The tradition demonstrates that Islam and local culture are not inherently contradictory. Instead, they can be mutually reinforcing, as seen in the integration of values such as compassion, responsibility, solidarity, and spirituality within the ritual (Kartini & Azwar, 2024). It is also important to acknowledge that these values are continuously negotiated in response to changing social conditions. Economic pressures and shifting social expectations may influence how the tradition is practiced and understood (Reza & Khairuddin, 2024). Therefore, a critical understanding of Mengambat Boru requires not only recognizing its positive contributions but also examining the dynamics that shape its transformation.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Mengambat Boru tradition in Tanjung Baringin Village is not merely a ceremonial cultural practice, but a multidimensional social phenomenon that integrates emotional, social, and religious meanings within the lived experiences of the community. The findings reveal that the tradition embodies three interrelated dimensions: emotional-familial, social-collective, and religious-spiritual

values, which together form a holistic cultural system. From an emotional perspective, Mengambat Boru serves as a structured medium for expressing complex feelings of separation, affection, and acceptance, enabling families to negotiate transitional moments in a culturally meaningful way. Socially, the tradition reinforces communal solidarity through gotong royong and collective participation, functioning as a mechanism of social cohesion and cultural continuity. Religiously, the tradition reflects a form of lived Islam, where values of prayer, moral guidance, and spiritual responsibility are embedded in ritual practices and social interactions. This study highlights that Mengambat Boru operates as a form of cultural da'wah, where Islamic teachings are transmitted not through formal preaching but through symbolic actions, advice, and communal engagement. This indicates that local traditions can serve as effective mediums for contextualizing religious values in everyday life. However, the study also identifies an ongoing tension between cultural preservation and socio-economic pressures, which may influence the transformation of the tradition's meaning and practice. Mengambat Boru represents a dynamic space where culture and religion interact, negotiate, and reinforce one another. This study contributes to the discourse on cultural da'wah by demonstrating that tradition can function as a living medium of Islamic values, while also emphasizing the need for a balanced approach to ensure that cultural practices remain aligned with principles of moderation and avoid excessive practices (israf).

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