

The Strategy of the Kajang Ammatoa Traditional Community in Maintaining the *Pasang ri Kajang* in the Globalization Era

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Abstract

Globalization has intensified information flows, modernization, and social interactions, creating both opportunities and challenges for the preservation of local customary values. Within this context, the Kajang Ammatoa indigenous community in Tana Towa Village, Bulukumba Regency, Indonesia, continues to uphold *Pasang ri Kajang* as a normative guide governing human relationships with others, nature, and the Creator. This study aimed to analyze the socio-cultural impacts of globalization on the community and to examine the strategies employed to preserve *Pasang ri Kajang* values amid ongoing social change. The research adopted a qualitative case study approach, with data collected through field observations, in-depth interviews with customary leaders and knowledgeable community members, and document analysis. The findings indicate that globalization has encouraged gradual social adaptation without directly eroding the community's core values. The principal preservation strategies include strengthening the authority of customary institutions, maintaining a simple way of life through *Kamase-masea*, and transmitting values through everyday social practices. The study also found that the community selectively adapts modern elements while remaining anchored to its foundational norms. Interpreted through Anthony Giddens' structuration theory, *Pasang ri Kajang* functions as a normative structure that is

continuously reproduced and negotiated by social agents through reflexive practice. The study concludes that cultural continuity within the Kajang Ammatoa community is dynamic rather than static, sustained through reflective adaptation that enables *Pasang ri Kajang* to remain relevant amid globalization. These findings contribute to the understanding of indigenous cultural resilience and demonstrate how customary communities preserve core values while negotiating contemporary social transformations.

Keywords: Indigenous Community; *Pasang ri Kajang*; Globalization; Cultural Resilience; Customary Preservation Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Culture is a fundamental aspect of human life that continues to develop along with changing times. Humans not only create culture, but are also shaped by culture through thought patterns, values, and ways of life. Indonesia's cultural diversity has established culture as an important part of the nation and state. Recognition of the existence of culture and indigenous communities is affirmed in Article 18B paragraph (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that the state recognizes and respects customary law communities and their traditional rights as long as they are still alive and in accordance with the development of society, including those that existed before independence (Nurcholis, 2014).

Recognition of indigenous communities is achieved through regional policies that ensure the sustainability of their social and cultural life. In this context, the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community is regulated through Bulukumba Regency Regional Regulation Number 9 of 2015, which establishes the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community as a subject of customary law with the authority to regulate and carry out social and cultural life, as well as the management of their customary territory based on the customary values and provisions that exist within the community. This regulation not only provides legal legitimacy but also strengthens *Pasang ri Kajang's* position as a socio-cultural structure that continues to be practiced amid social change (Bulukumba Regency Regional Regulation Number 9 of 2015).

However, the existence of a legal framework does not exempt indigenous communities from the dynamics of social change. Globalization is a social process that brings changes in interaction patterns, value systems, and community practices, including those of

indigenous communities. This situation presents new dynamics that require indigenous communities to negotiate cultural traditions amidst the currents of change (Nur, 2020). In this regard, globalization not only presents challenges but also opens up space for adaptation without abandoning the cultural values that constitute the community's identity (Hutamy et al., 2023).

Each community has its own unique strategy for dealing with change. Some groups fully embrace modernization, while certain indigenous communities choose to be selective to remain in line with local values and customs that have been passed down through generations. These differences reflect how each community responds to globalization, both through adaptation and efforts to maintain cultural identity (Azkia, 2019). In this context, the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community is one community that has been able to maintain its existence through a unique strategy, making *Pasang ri Kajang* a fundamental principle of its social and cultural life (Elfira et al., 2023)

The *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous people, also known as *To Kajang*, are a community that still steadfastly upholds the ancestral teachings embodied in the *Pasang* teachings. *Pasang ri Kajang* is an oral tradition passed down through generations, an unwritten message believed to lose its meaning and essence if written down. The community uses *Pasang* as a life-guiding principle that governs social and cultural relationships, as well as the relationships between humans and nature and the Creator.

One form of local wisdom unique to *Pasang's* teachings is reflected in the principle of life called *Tallasak Kamase-masea* (simple living), which teaches people to live and serves as the basis for determining the limits of acceptance of elements from outside the traditional community (Badewi, 2018). The value of simplicity in *Pasang's* teachings is reflected in various practices of the *Kajang Ammatoa* community, both in regulating social behavior and in the community's relationship with its surroundings. This principle emphasizes equality, honesty, and balance in life and guides the community in determining the limits of acceptance of influences from outside the traditional community (Nur, 2020). In the context of social change and globalization, values serve as a cultural mechanism that allows communities to maintain their traditional identity without completely closing themselves off to change (Sharon & Paranoan, 2020).

Although often perceived as a backward society, the *Kajang Ammatoa* people interpret simplicity as a philosophy of life that upholds the values of local wisdom. Rejection of a

luxury-oriented lifestyle is understood as a form of respect for ancestral teachings, while adherence to *Pasang* is believed to maintain balance and blessings in life (Wahyuni, 2012). The simple life of the *Kajang Ammatoa* people unfolds amid a modern society that tends to develop towards a consumerist culture. This simple lifestyle demonstrates the difference in value orientation between the *Kajang* indigenous people and the modern society around them. For the *Kajang* people, simplicity is not just a lifestyle choice but a manifestation of adherence to the customs and norms that govern all aspects of life. Happiness is not solely measured by material possessions, but rather by inner peace, harmony in life, and a sense of sufficiency born from the practice of simplicity itself (Wahyuni, 2012). These values then serve as the foundation for determining how society responds to the social changes brought about by globalization.

Based on these values, research by Abdullah et al. (2020) states that the younger generation of *Kajang Ammatoa* are now permitted to pursue formal education outside their customary areas. Although education was previously viewed as potentially disruptive to *Pasang* values and therefore not fully accepted, this view has adjusted over time and with ongoing social change. Education is now understood as a means to expand knowledge while adhering to the teachings of *Pasang ri Kajang*, reflecting a process of community adaptation that does not abandon traditional identity. Beyond education, the *Kajang Ammatoa* community has also begun to open up to accessing healthcare facilities. While previously dependent on traditional medicine, they are now willing to be referred to hospitals or community health centers outside their customary areas if their health conditions cannot be treated locally. This selective adaptation pattern is also evident in the limited use of technology that does not violate customary principles (Alvira et al., 2024). These findings align with research by M. Abdullah et al. (2014), which shows that the *Kajang* community is not completely closed off to modernization but adapts its acceptance based on customary agreements.

Several previous studies have examined the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community with various foci, including cultural resilience, the relationship between custom and religion, and responses to modernization. These studies generally demonstrate that the indigenous community can maintain cultural values amid ongoing social change. These findings also demonstrate that the *Kajang* community is not completely closed to change, but rather selectively accepts certain elements in accordance with prevailing customary agreements. It means that the relationship between custom and modernization is not always contradictory; rather, it occurs through adjustments that take into account the community's values.

However, most of these studies still position selectivity as a response to modernization, without explaining how it operates as a social process in everyday life. In this case, selectivity is more often understood as the result of societal responses rather than as a social mechanism continuously implemented, negotiated, and reproduced through social practices. Departing from this gap, this study positions selectivity not merely as a response, but as a social strategy that is reflective and implemented in the daily practices of society. The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to explain selectivity as a social mechanism that allows indigenous communities not only to maintain values, but also to actively reproduce, interpret, and negotiate *Pasang ri Kajang* in the context of globalization.

Using Anthony Giddens' structuration theory, this study aims to understand the reciprocal relationship between inherited customary structures and community actions in responding to social change. This study not only describes how communities maintain customary values but also explains how this process occurs through social practices continuously reproduced in everyday life.

METHODS

To obtain data relevant to the research objectives, this study employed a qualitative case study approach. The qualitative method was chosen to enable researchers to deeply understand the meanings, experiences, and social practices of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community in maintaining the values of *Pasang ri Kajang* amid the dynamics of globalization. The case study approach was used because this research focuses on one specific social unit: the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community in Tana Towa Village, Bulukumba Regency, which maintains a unique traditional value system. According to Creswell (2013), a case study is a research strategy used to investigate in depth a program, event, activity, or group within a specific time frame and context, using various comprehensive data collection techniques.

The qualitative method used in this study is based on the view that social reality is complex, dynamic, and cannot be understood solely quantitatively. In the context of this study, this approach allows researchers to explore in depth how the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community interprets, responds to, and practices the values of *Pasang ri Kajang* in their daily lives. Furthermore, in qualitative research, the researcher plays a key role in data collection and analysis. It aligns with Sugiyono's (2012) view that qualitative research positions the researcher as the primary instrument, directly involved in understanding the

context, interpreting data, and constructing meaning from the phenomena being studied. Therefore, this approach is considered most appropriate for analyzing the social practices of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community in maintaining *Pasang ri Kajang* in the era of globalization.

The research location is Tana Towa Village, *Kajang* District, Bulukumba Regency. The location was chosen based on several considerations. First, Tana Towa Village is known as one of the traditional communities that still maintain ancestral values amid the tide of modernization. The unique social and cultural systems of the village are based on the teachings of *Pasang ri Kajang*, making it an interesting study, particularly in understanding how local wisdom is maintained amidst changing times. This situation provides space for researchers to observe more deeply how the *Kajang* indigenous community maintains and preserves *Pasang ri Kajang* in their daily lives. Although globalization and modernization are evident in many aspects of life, traditional values remain the main guiding principles in community life. This situation makes Tana Towa Village a relevant research location. Furthermore, the presence of *Ammatoa* as a respected traditional leader also strengthens the rationale for choosing the research location, because through his role, it can be traced how traditional leadership contributes to maintaining customs passed down from generation to generation.

RESULTS

The *Kajang Ammatoa* Indigenous Community and the *Pasang ri Kajang* Value System

The *Kajang Ammatoa* Indigenous Community, also known as *To Kajang*, is one of the indigenous communities in Indonesia located in Tana Towa Village, *Kajang* District, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. As an indigenous community that consistently maintains its customs, the *Kajang Ammatoa* community demonstrates a selective attitude towards outside influences that may erode traditional values. This attitude is manifested through adherence to the teachings of *Pasang ri Kajang*. These teachings have long been passed down from generation to generation by the community and serve as a guideline for life, regulating behavior, social relations, and the community's perspective on life and the surrounding environment (Disnawati, 2013).

The social structure of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community is built on a collective, layered customary leadership system. *Ammatoa* are elected for life through certain rituals, and are considered as "Fathers" who are elders and are believed to be intermediaries between humans and God (*Turi'e A'ra'na*). *Ammatoa* leadership is positioned as the highest leader with customary and spiritual legitimacy, serving as a reference center for customary values and norms sourced from the teachings of *Pasang ri Kajang*, and as a decision-maker in the social life of the community. *Ammatoa* leadership is supported by a set of customs, such as Anrong and Limayya Customs, which help manage social life, enforce customary norms, and resolve customary violations within a community. This leadership pattern shows that the customary social structure is implemented through mutual agreement, thereby maintaining the sustainability of customary values amidst ever-evolving social dynamics (Alvira et al., 2024).

Pasang ri Kajang is an oral tradition consisting of messages, teachings, and sacred customary rules passed down through generations and occupying a fundamental position in the lives of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous people. These teachings are understood by the community not merely as ancestral messages, but as sacred mandates containing moral, social, and spiritual values that bind all members of the community. The values contained in *Pasang* serve as a guideline for life that regulates how people think, behave, and act in social life, maintain relationships with others, and build harmonious relationships with nature. As a value system, *Pasang ri Kajang* does not exist in the abstract; rather, it manifests in customs, lifestyles, and how people interpret changes around them. The rules contained therein serve as the primary reference in determining the boundaries between behaviors considered right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate, and permissible and prohibited in the lives of indigenous people. These values reflect simplicity, adherence to tradition, and balance with the environment (Amirullah et al., 2025).

Compliance with *Pasang* is understood not only as a social obligation but also as a moral and spiritual responsibility related to the overall balance of life. In addition to functioning as a value system, *Pasang ri Kajang* also serves as a system of norms and customary law. The rules derived from *Pasang* have a strong binding force and are accompanied by customary sanctions for those who violate them. Thus, *Pasang* serves as a normative framework that maintains social order, strengthens community solidarity, and ensures the sustainability of the customary way of life (Hafid, 2013). The continuity of *Pasang ri Kajang* is maintained through social practices continuously reproduced by the community in their daily

lives, particularly through the role of *Ammatoa* and several customary institutions in interpreting, upholding, and passing on *Pasang* values to the next generation. In this sense, *Pasang* can be understood as a living system of values and norms, guiding community actions while enabling them to adapt to social dynamics without losing their established customary identity and social structure.

The Practice of *Pasang ri Kajang* in the Daily Life of the *Kajang Ammatoa* Indigenous Community

The social structure of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community reflects a system of values and customary orders passed down from generation to generation, while also serving as a framework that guides various practices in the community's social life. *Pasang ri Kajang*, as the main guideline for life, serves to direct the community toward a simple life, social relations between communities, and how the community interacts with the natural environment around them. The *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community lives amidst the dynamics of ongoing social change. Therefore, this study will show that the *Pasang* teachings remain the main reference for regulating the community's social life, through compliance with customary rules and the application of the principle of simple living known as (*Tallasa' kamase-masea*). *Pasang* is not only understood normatively but is also realized in practice and carried out consistently by the indigenous community.

Based on interviews and field observations, *Pasang ri Kajang* is not positioned by the community as a separate rule from everyday life, but rather is present in every consideration before taking action. The community first assesses whether an action aligns with *Pasang*, so that *Pasang* serves as a reference in daily life rather than merely a known teaching. Although not written down, *Pasang* persists because it is passed down through ongoing social interaction habits. Thus, the community not only understands *Pasang* but also incorporates it into their way of acting. Values such as honesty, simplicity, and responsibility then emerge, forming boundaries about what is considered appropriate and inappropriate. Social behavior is not governed solely by individual choices, but rather by a framework of long-standing shared values—the habit of following *Pasang* since childhood makes customary rules a reflex in everyday life.

The principle of *Tallasak Kamase-masea* (simple living) is not only understood as a moral teaching but also practiced as a rule in daily life. People are not free to express

themselves as they please; rather, they must adhere to the boundaries set by *Pasang*. It is evident in the uniformity of community behavior, such as wearing black-and-white clothing, not wearing shoes, having uniformly shaped houses, and limiting the use of modern goods. These actions are not merely symbols of tradition, but serve to prevent differences in social status among community members.

Thus, simplicity is not only a value highly regarded but also a social mechanism that regulates relationships between individuals. Through these rules, society places itself on an equal footing, so that no one is viewed as superior or inferior. This principle also reflects the belief that all humans have equal standing before *Tu Rie' A'ra'na* (Almighty God).

Within Anthony Giddens' structuration framework, *Pasang ri Kajang* serves as a social structure that serves as a reference for society before acting. *Pasang* does not exist as a written rule, but rather as a boundary for actions used in everyday life. Society consciously assesses the suitability of an action for *Pasang*, so that adherence to custom is not coercion but the result of an internalized understanding. This structure is evident through repeated practices, such as a simple lifestyle (*Tallasak kamase-masea*), uniformity of dress, house design, and restrictions on the use of modern goods. In facing changing times, *Pasang* both limits and enables actions, so that everything is selected in accordance with customary values.

DISCUSSION

The Context of Globalization in the Life of the *Kajang Ammatoa* Indigenous Community

Globalization is a social process that brings changes to various aspects of people's lives, including indigenous communities. The development of information technology, increasing social mobility, and the intensity of interaction with the outside world mean that indigenous communities are not completely isolated from the broader dynamics of social change (Ardiansyah et al., 2026). In this context, the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community is also caught up in the currents of change taking place around them.

However, the presence of globalization in the lives of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous people cannot be understood in a single context. Traditional values derived from the teachings of *Pasang ri Kajang* remain an important reference in regulating community life, particularly in shaping perspectives and attitudes toward social change. Globalization is more often positioned as a social context, while how these influences are interpreted and

responded to depends on the community's own understanding (Resen & Sushanti, 2022).

According to informants, the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community recognizes that the impact of globalization cannot be completely avoided. The most visible change has occurred in education. While previously children were not allowed to attend school outside their customary areas, they are now permitted to pursue formal education, even to university level. This change is not interpreted as a violation of tradition, but as a need to increase knowledge. However, this acceptance is not free. Every new activity must comply with *Pasang* rules. Children attending school are still required to wear black-and-white clothing, are allowed to wear shoes only outside their customary areas, and must remove them upon re-entering the customary area. Modern activities are carried out without losing their traditional identity. In addition to education, the community is also beginning to utilize health services and technology, but within certain limits. It means the community is not rejecting modernization, but rather limiting its use to avoid changing the way of life established by *Pasang*.

Previously, the use of mobile phones within customary areas was prohibited due to the potential conflict with *Pasang ri Kajang* teachings. However, since around 2020, as children's learning activities have been conducted from home and communication with family outside the area has become increasingly necessary, mobile phone use has been permitted. However, their use remains limited to specific needs, such as communicating with family or supporting learning. Mobile phones are not used continuously, and the area's lack of electricity and network connectivity naturally limits their use. The same applies to motorized vehicles.

The mechanism for selecting against external influences is not determined individually, but rather through the authority of the *Ammatoa* as customary leaders. School permits, dress codes, and even limits on the use of modern goods are established as shared guidelines to ensure that change does not shift the community's fundamental values. Furthermore, the teaching of *Pasang ri Kajang* through local content every Thursday demonstrates that formal education does not replace custom, but rather coexists with it. Schools provide general knowledge, while custom guides behavior.

These findings indicate that society is not closed to change, but rather engages in a process of adaptation. Each new influence is first assessed for its compatibility with customary rules. If it is deemed not to conflict, it is accepted with certain conditions; if it

does, it is rejected. This process ensures that customs are not lost even as society interacts with the outside world and modernization continues, while remaining within mutually determined boundaries.

The *Kajang Ammatoa* Indigenous Community's Perception of the Dynamics of Globalization

Social change can be seen not only in everyday practices but also in how society views and evaluates those changes. Every dynamic present in social life will shape certain attitudes, understandings, and assessments that develop within society. In the context of the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community, the dynamics of globalization have become a social reality that is felt in their lives. The presence of various changes in education, health, technology, and broader developments has given rise to diverse responses and perspectives among the community. These perceptions are formed through experience, social interactions, and long-standing traditional values passed down through generations.

The *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous people view globalization as inevitable, but this does not mean they accept it without limits. Every external influence is first assessed for its suitability to *Pasang ri Kajang* before becoming part of their daily lives. Thus, the community's attitude is neither completely rejecting nor accepting, but rather choosing and limiting. Some forms of modernization are permitted because they are considered to support basic needs, such as education, health care, communications, and simple agricultural tools. The prohibition on the use of electricity, television, washing machines, and motorized vehicles within the area, as well as on road paving, clearly demarcates a boundary between needs and lifestyle changes.

The principle of *Kamase-masea* (simple living) serves as the basis for determining these boundaries. The community strives to avoid the emergence of luxury, status differences, or excessive dependence on technology. Therefore, daily life is carried out in harmony with nature, such as the use of torches for lighting, traditional stilt houses, and restrictions on the use of modern goods. Dress codes, prohibitions against forest destruction, and the obligation to behave politely are also part of efforts to maintain a balance in life according to custom. *Ammatoa's* role as a traditional leader is evident in establishing boundaries between areas that strictly uphold customary rules and those that are more open to change (Finau, 2017). He does not reject change outright, but regulates its scope to prevent

disruption of the customary order.

The changes brought about by globalization are also felt by the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community, especially among the younger generation. Parents recognize that modern developments bring new things, leading to the introduction of some modern necessities into everyday life. However, these uses are not simply abandoned; they are always considered for their suitability to the *Kajang* customs. The community's primary concern lies not in the changes themselves, but in how the younger generation responds to them while maintaining the principle of simplicity.

Simplicity is not only understood in terms of clothing or use of goods, but is also reflected in lifestyle, speech, and relationships with nature. Therefore, young people are taught the *Pasang* teachings from an early age as a guideline for dealing with various external influences. In this way, change is still possible, but the direction of community behavior remains determined by traditional values. In addition to internalizing these values from an early age, the community also maintains the continuity of customs through binding rules (Mustafaevich & Sirazhudinovna, 2016). Every external influence is first assessed for its conformity with *Pasang ri Kajang* before being accepted. Influences that align with traditional values are considered, while those that contradict them are not permitted to enter the area. These rules are not only prohibitions but are also complemented by a monitoring mechanism that applies traditional sanctions.

Minor violations are usually resolved with a reprimand or warning from traditional leaders. However, if the violation concerns core rules, such as destroying forests or violating basic customary provisions, customary fines in the form of money or livestock can be imposed, or the violator may be forced to move outside the customary area (Kaimowitz, 2012). These sanctions are not intended solely as punishment, but rather as a reminder to the community to adhere to the mutually agreed-upon boundaries. This situation demonstrates that *Pasang*'s sustainability depends not only on community beliefs but also on the presence of social controls that operate in daily life. Traditional values are taught within families, reinforced in rules, and maintained through sanctions. In this way, the community can continue to interact with change without losing its direction.

Globalization does not necessarily erase customs; rather, it is addressed through a process of collective filtering and oversight. Communities accept what is deemed necessary, limit what could change lifestyles, and enforce rules against those who violate them. It is

through this practice that *Pasang ri Kajang* continues to be maintained in community life, and any external changes remain controlled by traditional values.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the sustainability of *Pasang ri Kajang* in the *Kajang Ammatoa* indigenous community is achieved through its continued use in daily life practices amidst the dynamics of global change. *Pasang* is not only understood as a value-teaching, but also serves as a primary reference for assessing and interpreting external changes. Modernization is not absolutely rejected, but rather positioned as part of the social environment that needs to be adapted to traditional values. Elements such as education, health, communication, and basic needs are acceptable as long as they do not conflict with the principle of *Tallasa' kamase-masea* (simple living). In contrast, practices that have the potential to change lifestyles or disrupt the balance of nature are generally limited. In this context, globalization does not determine the direction of community life; rather, it is understood as a situation within the framework of *Pasang* values. These findings indicate that in the structure of *the Kajang Ammatoa* community, *Pasang* occupies a position as the primary director of social action. At the same time, globalization serves as an external context interpreted through traditional values. Thus, the sustainability of *Pasang Ri Kajang* is not determined by the strength or weakness of globalization's influence, but rather by the consistent use of *Pasang* as a guideline for life in community social practices.

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