



KAMPUNG MAHMUD, A PORTRAIT OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

Identity, lifestyle, and overall societal structure are often influenced by socio-cultural transformations. Kampung Mahmud has undergone socio-cultural transformation marked by the influx of technology and the onset of globalization, leading to social, cultural, and local lifestyle changes. The aim of this research is to depict the social and cultural changes in Kampung Mahmud and the impact of technology introduction on the local community. This study employs a qualitative approach involving interviews and documentation. The research aims to determine the questions to be investigated, and how socio-cultural transformations occur in Kampung Mahmud, including the role of traditional elders in managing these changes. The findings indicate that the community of Kampung Mahmud has experienced socio-cultural and technological transformations influenced by technology, politics, and cultural interactions. The village elders lack authority to prohibit or prevent these changes; instead, it is the responsibility of the villagers to adhere to or reject the rules established by their ancestors. These results contribute to the literature on socio-cultural transformation in traditional societies and provide recommendations for stakeholders to incorporate them into school curricula.

Keywords: *Kampung Mahmud, Transformation, Social-Culture, Technology*

INTRODUCTION

Mahmud traditional village is located on the outskirts of Bandung city, in RW 04 of Mekarrahayu Village, Marga Asih Subdistrict, South Bandung Regency. It is approximately 6 kilometers from the capital of Bandung Regency, Soreang. Kiayi Haji Nuron (Nuron, 2024), an elder of Kampung Mahmud and the 11th descendant of Eyang Dalem Abdul Manaf, states that the people of Kampung Mahmud are very loyal to the traditions passed down by their ancestors. In daily life, Kampung Mahmud adheres to many religious rules and principles. Kampung Mahmud is currently influenced by the wave of modernization, which affects the social and cultural life of the community. According to Koentjaraningrat, modernization means living in accordance with the times and how the world is currently organized (Murdiyatomoko, 2007). Kampung Mahmud has changed. Today, Mahmud Village faces many challenges (Danasetya, et al., 2023).

Modern life has become an integral part of this village. Consequently, the progress of the times has become one of the biggest challenges

for the people of Kampung Mahmud. Technological change is one of the biggest socio-cultural changes happening in Kampung Mahmud. Some of the technological changes include, initially, the people of Kampung Mahmud were not allowed to use radios, but now, thanks to technological advancements from outside Kampung Mahmud, the community can use radios. The people have even started using mobile phones.

Today, the people of Kampung Mahmud can be said to be more open and more actively interacting with people from other villages. The culture brought by people from other villages is not immediately rejected by the people of Kampung Mahmud. This indicates a shift from a traditional society to a modern society, although the traditional teachings of their ancestors are still upheld in this village. This change is what is referred to as the transitional phase of the Kampung Mahmud community from a traditional society to a modern society. The people of Kampung Mahmud themselves cannot reject or blame the development of technology because they need technology in

their daily lives; however, in terms of its use, the people of Kampung Mahmud are better able to discern which technology is permissible and which is not.

The introduction of technology to Kampung Mahmud signifies the community's transition toward a more advanced life. Technology enhances productivity. Communication devices and television are clear examples of technological advancements that have entered the community's life as tools to support daily information needs. Due to technological advancements and changing geographical conditions, things that were previously deemed inappropriate are now being reinterpreted. At this stage, Kampung Mahmud has entered a new window of understanding the outside world; its social order has physically changed as a result of external cultural influences, but substantially, its cultural values remain intact even as the community's life continues to evolve (Hermawan, 2019)

At this point, Kampung Mahmud can be considered to have opened a new window to the outside world, something that was previously forbidden in this village. Additionally, these changes are clearly due to technological advancements. For example, there has been a shift in building materials that were considered irrelevant and hard to find, replaced by materials deemed more advanced. This also happened in Kampung Mahmud. As a result of the clash with modernity, the culture of the Kampung Mahmud community has evolved into a modern society. However, from another perspective, the cultural structure of Kampung Mahmud remains unchanged; cultural and traditional values continue to develop in line with the times, and the social structure physically persists.

Kampung Mahmud is one of the traditional villages that passes down values to the younger generation. Therefore, it is important to preserve and protect its existence so that the younger generation can understand these values in the context of cultural heritage.

METHOD

To obtain accurate and representative data in this research, the author conducted interviews with traditional elders and residents of Kampung Mahmud. Observations were made to gather information that was not revealed

through interviews. Here, the researcher directly observed various traditions present in the Kampung Mahmud community. As previously mentioned, other data collection methods were also used, particularly in the preliminary study, by employing the literature review method, which involves obtaining secondary data from written sources.

Document analysis has long been used as a source of data in qualitative research because it is very useful, as the data collected can answer the researcher's questions. The collected data was analyzed, reduced, and presented in the form of narrative text to provide a general overview of the collected data, as well as specific parts of it, followed by clarification. The final step is to draw conclusions or verify findings to seek meaning or provide explanations of the collected data by identifying important aspects or making in-depth conclusions about the data by searching for data relevant to this research, which can be used for comparison.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Socio-cultural transformation in Kampung Mahmud

Kampung Mahmud is located in Bandung Regency, and is not far from the outskirts of Bandung city, making it a fringe area. Kampung Mahmud also has specific land-use regulations due to its status as a traditional settlement. This allows for the construction of supporting facilities, enabling the development of buildings that support the main functions and activities of the area for public purposes, necessary roads, rural settlements, and tourism and agrotourism (Widiana, 2018).

According to theory, people living in peripheral areas are vulnerable to the influence of various transformations and lifestyles (Nurrohman & Sahid, 2015) Around 200 households live in Kampung Mahmud, which covers an area of four hectares, and all residents are Muslims, with most of them working as farmers. However, residents also earn income from household crafts, such as furniture makers who sell their products throughout West Java.

Changes in values, norms, beliefs, behaviors, and the social structure of a society or cultural group are known as "socio-cultural changes." These changes can occur over time and include shifts in patterns of interaction,

social relationships, institutions, and cultural practices. Socio-cultural changes can be caused by various factors, including, but not limited to, technological developments, migration, demographic changes, economic developments, political changes, and environmental factors. The social order will change, and community life will be compared (Hati, 2021) (Anugerah, 2023).

The transformation of social structures, values, norms, customs, and cultural practices that occurs within a society over time is known as socio-cultural transformation. Socio-cultural change is a common phenomenon reflecting the alteration of social structures and cultural patterns within a society and happens over time, in line with the inherent nature of humans who always seek change. Hirsman argues that change is driven by human boredom (Abdullah, 2011). Social and cultural changes have one thing in common: they are related to changes or improvements in how a society meets its needs (Soekanto, 2011)

National values derived from the values of Pancasila and deeply rooted in Indonesian culture serve as a filter for the younger generation in light of technological and informational developments and the increasingly strong influence of foreign cultures. These values serve as the foundation of the state, the national ideology, and the nation's identity (Budijarto, 2018).

Many factors can influence this transformation. These include interactions with other cultures, technology, economy, and politics (Adi, 2020). Kampung Mahmud is gradually experiencing changes or violations that should have been prohibited by its own residents. The traditions and culture of the Kampung Mahmud community are very strong. This prohibition, which has existed since the 16th century, how has it remained in the community and not faded with time?

Not many traditions have changed significantly, but there is no doubt that as time passes, there is evidence that some traditions have disappeared among those that exist. In the late 1980s, Kiayi Haji Nuron, an elder of Kampung Mahmud, attempted to modify these traditions. He tried to do so for several reasons considered outdated, one of which was to build a mosque permanently using brick material. The

following photo shows the brick building and the use of glass in Kampung Mahmud.



Source: Researcher's Document, 2024
Figure 1. A building made of brick and glass in Kampung Mahmud

Additionally, there are radios and televisions, and the rural electrification program has begun to operate. Furthermore, the habit of bathing and fetching water from the Citarum River started to be replaced by the presence of wells in several homes, although not all houses might have had them at that time. The following photo shows that Kampung Mahmud has begun using technology to avoid using Citarum River water for daily bathing and washing.



Source: Researcher's Document, 2024

Figure 2. The people of Kampung Mahmud have been using water tanks to store clean water reserves from wells with the help of a water pump

Since firewood has become scarce in the gardens, gas stoves are more practical than *hawu* or cooking stoves made from cement melds that use wood as fuel.



Source: Researcher's Document, 2024

Figure 3. The people of Kampung Mahmud no longer use traditional stoves (*hawu*) and have switched to gas for cooking and other purposes

According to Kiayi Haji Nuron, due to its function, the rules of Kampung Mahmud will continue to evolve and change. He believes that the rules in place are highly relevant. Kampung Mahmud is increasingly positioned as a religious village due to its prohibitions and regulations (Rosyadi, 2011). The people of Kampung Mahmud are Sunni Muslims who follow the teachings of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Maliki, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Shafi'i). Therefore, the people of Kampung Mahmud are more flexible, tolerant, and inclusive in facing diversity and traditions. This respect is shown by building, maintaining, and venerating the graves of their ancestors. In Kampung Mahmud, there are three sacred graves—the grave of Eyang Abdul Manaf, the grave of Sembah Eyang Dalem Abdullah Gedug, and the grave of Sembah Agung Zaenal Arif. Pilgrims come here with the hope of receiving blessings from the ancestors of Kampung Mahmud through the graves they visit. The local economy flourishes and becomes an integral part of this grave pilgrimage tradition. It is not surprising that this village is always filled with pilgrims due to the grave pilgrimage rituals that have become a tradition on certain nights and days.



Source: Researcher's Document, 2024

Figure 4. Kampung Mahmud has become a pilgrimage site for people from various regions in West Java, with the number of pilgrims reaching hundreds or even thousands on certain days.

B. The role of traditional elders in minimizing the undergoing changes

Kiayi Haji Nuron, the traditional elder of Kampung Mahmud, stated that the weakening of these traditional functions is unavoidable. Due to its location in the city center, Kampung Mahmud finds it difficult to resist foreign cultures and to change the perspectives of its residents. Therefore, religious practices continue. The culture may have started to change. However, the Islamic values passed down by Eyang Dalem will never fade. As a renowned spiritual leader, Eyang Dalem H. Abdul Manaf imparted Islamic teachings to his community through a simple and sincere way of life (Dwiyanti, 2022).

As long as these changes do not contradict Islamic law, the elders cannot reject them and will accept them with open hearts. The existing prohibitions and traditions stem from the Islamic beliefs of the Kampung Mahmud residents.

1. Prohibition against building permanent houses (using bricks and glass). Violating this prohibition will result in danger to the individual who builds the house and their family. Misfortune could include household problems or accidents involving family members.
2. Prohibition against digging wells on land because one must bathe in the Citarum River for daily activities, farming, and planting. However, when the Citarum River became polluted, the situation changed. After careful

consideration, the religious leaders and elders of Kampung Mahmud sought permission from the ancestors to allow the construction of wells in each home. They stated that the water in Citarum was no longer pure and safe to use for ablution.

3. Prohibition against keeping geese (soang), which symbolized the Dutch colonizers, who were strongly opposed to religious practices. The prohibition by the ancestors of Kampung Mahmud against raising geese reflects their hatred of the colonizers.
4. Prohibition against using radios and other electronic devices; at that time, radios and other electronics were foreign items, associated with the work of European colonizers. However, from an economic perspective, this prohibition became more valuable as awareness grew of the need for these items, supported by the economic power to purchase them.
5. Prohibition against sounding the gong; the real meaning of this was to avoid making loud music to attract the attention of the colonizers.

Kampung Mahmud faces differences and various changes within society. In the Kampung Mahmud community, the mindset derived from religious traditions shapes their thinking and behavior, which affects their overall behavior and personality. The pregnancy and birth ceremonies in Kampung Mahmud are similar to other Sundanese traditions. Some people believe that these customs may be observed as long as they do not conflict with Islamic teachings. This approach can answer questions about the religious meaning or significance of religious phenomena. Therefore, a phenomenological approach is an appropriate method and approach to understanding these religious phenomena.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Social life in Kampung Mahmud is quite similar to that of the Sundanese community in general. Since Sembah Eyang Abdul Manaf, the founder of Kampung Mahmud, who is considered a semi-saint, spread Islam in the area, it is not surprising that all aspects of community life are influenced by Islamic teachings. Patterns of behavior, obedience, and

social piety are determined by Islamic elements. The people of Kampung Mahmud are very religious. However, elements of Sundanese culture are deeply ingrained in the daily lives of the residents. This is evident in the Sundanese customs in social interactions and daily communication, manners, etiquette, respect for elders, hospitality towards strangers (guests), and mutual cooperation.

Islamic behavior as a cultural practice is combined with adherence to tradition and acceptance of modernity, without opposing it. This characterizes the community in three dimensions: Islamic, traditional adherence, and openness to modernity. The people of Kampung Mahmud have a high level of tolerance due to the strength of their Sunni traditions. As a result, their religious practices align with what is described as syncretic and animistic. Their religious devotion and adherence to ancestral traditions are driven by the flexibility and inclusiveness of the Kampung Mahmud community towards the cultures and traditions they cherish and uphold. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether tradition influences religion or vice versa. In the Kampung Mahmud community, religion and tradition become two inseparable components.

One of the prominent local wisdoms in Kampung Mahmud is the high level of respect and reverence for ancestors. This results in polite behavior that highly honors the living elders. In daily life, it is observed that people are very courteous. For example, when asked to explain various aspects of the village, a person may know the answer but will defer to a more senior individual, stating that they cannot provide the answer and directing us to the elder authorized to explain.

In this context, we can learn about the wise customs of Kampung Mahmud, particularly the respect for elders, which is an extraordinary politeness rooted in tradition. This Sundanese courtesy is a valued trait and a source of national pride as an Eastern identity. The wisdom of respecting, preserving, and maintaining the ancestral heritage of Kampung Mahmud—a traditional village that honors and protects its culture, ancestral legacy, and various traditional customs.

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