

IIUM JOURNAL OF HUMAN SCIENCES

A Peer-reviewed Journal
ISSN 2682-8731 (Online)

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Strengthening the Local Wisdom of Paissangang Sumombal Sandeq Boat in Attitude Tawakkal of Mandar Tribe Fishermen

Andi Nur Fitrah, Tuti Bahfiarti & Muhammad Farid

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ABSTRACT

Paissangang Sumombal represents one of the local wisdoms deeply embedded in the lives of Mandar fishermen in the Sulawesi Barat community. This tradition is not merely a distinctive technique of sailing and navigating sandeq boats but also reflects spiritual values, particularly the attitude of tawakkal (reliance on God) in Islam. This study aims to analyse the application of paissangang sumombal by the Mandar fishermen and to elaborate on the values of paissangang sumombal that embody the spirit of tawakkal. The research employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, observations, and literature reviews. The research was conducted in Karama Village, Polewali Mandar Regency, a place renowned for mastering sandeq boat navigation. The findings indicate that paissangang sumombal as a form of Mandar local wisdom, demonstrates the courage of Mandar fishermen in navigating the sea, which is not solely based on technical expertise but also rooted in profound spiritual beliefs, especially when facing challenges such as high waves or extreme weather conditions. The attitude of tawakkal is the foundation of mental resilience, enabling them to confront natural adversities with calmness, patience, and perseverance. The study reveals that the principle of eco-spirituality provides a deeper understanding of the harmony between culture and spirituality in the lives of coastal communities. Therefore, this study emphasises the importance of preserving paissangang sumombal as a cultural identity of the Mandar people that reinforces the value of tawakkal and adaptation to nature.

Keywords: *Mandar Tribe, Paissangang Sumombal, Sandeq Boat, Local Wisdom*

INTRODUCTION

Islam has covered the sides and aspects of human life. Because the Qur'an and hadith as a guide to life for Muslims have explained everything that humans need in their lives, as Allah states in Surah an-Nahl [16] verse 89, " . . . and we have sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (al-Qur'an) as an explanation of everything, guidance, and mercy and good news for the Muslims (who surrender)". (Qs. An-Nahl:89).

One of the fundamental principles in Islamic teachings is *tawakkal*, which is the sincerity of the heart in relying on Allah to obtain benefits and prevent harm concerning the affairs of the world and the end. Sa'id bin Jubeir said, "*Tawakkal* is the whole of faith" (Rajab, 2018, pp. 121-122). Practising *tawakkal* does not mean neglecting effort because people who practice it surrender to Allah after making maximum efforts. The concept of *tawakkal* is reflected in many verses of the Qur'an, such as in Surah Ali-Imran verse 159: "Then when you have made up your mind, then put your trust in Allah. Verily, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him." (Wahyuni, 2021). Thus, this teaching emphasises the balance between human effort and complete independence from God's will in facing various life challenges, including in the context of communities living in coastal areas. (Sunarti, 2017)

Talking about the context of coastal communities in Indonesia, one of them is the Mandar tribe. Mandar contains two notions based on the term: Mandar as a language and Mandar as a federation of small kingdoms (Grimes, 1987, pp. 15-18). In the 16th century, the region had seven small kingdoms on the coast. At the end of the 16th century, these small kingdoms agreed to form a federation of Mandar named Pitu Baqbana Binanga, which means seven kingdoms at the mouth of a river or beach. The seven kingdoms included in the alliance are Balanipa, Sendana, Banggae, Pamboang, Tappalang, Mamuju, and Binuang. (Annisa, 2020)

In the 17th century, this federation of seven kingdoms at the mouth of the river was joined by seven kingdoms in the mountains, named Pitu Ulunna Salu, which means seven kingdoms in the river's upper reaches. The seven kingdoms were Rantebulahang, Aralle, Tabulahang, Mabi, Mantangnga, Tabang, and Bambang. The combination of the two federations was called Pitu Baqbana Binanga and Pitu Ulunna Salu, meaning seven kingdoms at the mouth of the river and seven kingdoms upstream (Alimuddin, 2013, p. 7).

The concept of *tawakal* among Mandar fishermen is reflected in their local wisdom, *paissangang sumombal*. Mandar fishermen exert full effort in fishing and overcoming challenges at sea, yet they always trust Allah. They believe that Allah assures sustenance without disrupting the marine ecosystem's balance. This local wisdom, encompassing knowledge and values in sailing, includes choosing the best time to go to sea, interpreting natural signs, employing environmentally friendly fishing techniques, and navigating challenges at sea. It is all encapsulated in *paissangang sumombal*.

The knowledge and skills they use for sailing go beyond technical abilities, requiring immense courage and resilience. These values closely align with the Islamic concept of *tawakal*. Reliance on Allah does not preclude taking practical measures (*al-akhdhu bil-asbab*), as faith and obedience to Allah's commands include adopting appropriate means (Ash-Shallabi, 2014, p. 359).

Before setting sail, Mandar fishermen conduct a ritual called *mambaca-baca*, involving family and community prayers for a blessed and successful journey. They also consider the best time for sailing, such as *Konda*, when the sea is calm, neither at high nor low tide. This practice demonstrates their reliance not only on faith but also on local knowledge passed down through generations.

Efforts reflecting the principle of *al-akhdhu bil-asbab*, such as employing permissible means within Islamic teachings to achieve goals, are evident in how Mandar fishermen navigate. They use natural signs like the position of stars at night, the direction of the sun during the day, and the sound of ocean waves. As a local knowledge system, *paissangang sumombal* integrates the Mandar community's social, economic, and spiritual aspects. This navigation and sailing technique conveys the Mandar people's values of balance, simplicity, beauty, speed, precision, and sturdiness (Fitrah et al., 2018).

However, amid modernisation and globalisation, local values such as *paissangang sumombal* face considerable challenges. The modernisation of boat technology and climate change that alters ocean weather patterns have affected how fishermen conduct their voyages. In this context, local wisdom values have the potential to regress, especially when the younger generation is more focused on technological innovation than maintaining traditions. (Siswadi et al., 2011).

Therefore, preserving *paissangang sumombal* values is very important, not only as a cultural heritage that needs to be maintained but also as part of Islamic ethics that encourage humans to live

with full spiritual awareness and responsibility for nature (Rakhmawati, 2022). From this perspective, research on the attitude of *tawakkal* in *paissangang sumombal* aims to understand aspects of local culture and reveal the relevance of Islamic spirituality in the lives of coastal communities.

The Entry of Islam into the Land of Mandar, West Sulawesi

Mandar refers to one of the maritime cultural ethnic groups in Indonesia, originating from Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi Province. From a linguistic perspective, the name "Mandar" carries two meanings (Yahya, 2013). First, it is believed that the Mandar people are associated with the Mandar River, whose headwaters are located in Malunda District or Majene Regency and whose mouth is in Tinambung. Second, it is derived from the Hindu language, consisting of two words, *man* and *dhar*, which combine to form the phrase *dharman*, meaning "inhabited."

The emergence of the Mandar ethnic group can be traced back to the 16th century. According to Alimuddin (2013), the Mandar people originated from seven small kingdoms that formed a federation in the 16th century. This federation was called *Pitu Baqbana Binanga*, meaning "seven kingdoms at the river mouth." In addition to this federation, another federation was known as *Pitu Ulunna Salu*, meaning "seven kingdoms at the river source." Due to their proximity to coastal areas and their location facing the Makassar Strait, the Mandar people have developed a strong connection with the sea.

Before the advent of Islam, the Mandar people were recognised as having their own unique culture, much like other ethnic groups in Indonesia. Mandar culture was deeply rooted in traditional values heavily influenced by Hindu beliefs, particularly in spirituality and rituals. In terms of belief, the Mandar people of ancient times revered spirits and supernatural forces believed to possess power beyond human capabilities. However, much remains undisclosed about the religion and beliefs of the Mandar people before the arrival of Islam. Historical records, including *lontara* manuscripts and writings by foreign visitors, primarily discuss governance and general societal conditions (Ismail, 2012:62).

The *Lontara Kerajaan Balanipa* mentions that Abdurrahim Kamalauddin, an Islamic scholar from the Middle East, is considered one of the foundational figures who established Islam in Mandar. Additionally, a prominent scholar from Gowa, Tuanta Salamaka or Sheikh Yusuf, is documented in the *Lontara Gowa* as having played a significant role in spreading Islam in the Mandar region.

Sandeq Boat

Because they live near the coast, Mandar people eventually have a strong attachment to the sea. Also known as great sailors since ancient times, this was proven by research conducted by Horst H. Liebner (maritime researcher from Germany), in collaboration with the Coastal Community Assessment and Development Project (P3MP) Hasanuddin University in 1992. He conducted direct research on the prowess of the Mandar tribe in sailing the sea using *sandeq* boats. The results of his research were written under the title "Boatbuilding and Seafaring in the Mandar area, South Sulawesi". Liebner stated that no other traditional boat is as strong and fast as the *sandeq*, which is considered the fastest in the Austronesian region (Amrullah, 2015).

Pelras (2006) also stated that the Mandar people are highly skilled sailors. This fact is verified by their use of *sandeq* and *roppo* boats for fishing activities. The *sandeq* boat, now recognised as a distinctive feature of Mandar maritime culture, emerged in the 1930s. According to Muhammad

Ridwan, a maritime researcher specialising in the Mandar ethnic group, the *sandeq* boat was first developed by boat builders in Pambusuang Village, Mandar. These craftsmen drew inspiration for the design and sail function from large boats docked at the Makassar harbour during that era. The triangular sail design was adapted for use on outrigger boats called *lepa-lepa*.

In April 1938, a Professor of Anthropology from the University of Amsterdam, G. Nooteboom, visited Mandar. His findings were documented in a publication titled "Vaartuigen van Mandar" (*Mandar Boats*), which provides evidence of the *sandeq*'s emergence. The *sandeq* refers to a traditional sailing boat distinct to the Mandar region. In Indonesian, the term "sandeq" means "pointed." The boat's physical dimensions typically range from 5 to 16 meters long with a width of about 60 to 80 centimetres. On both sides of the boat, bamboo outriggers serve as stabilisers. The *sandeq* relies on wind power captured by its triangular sail (Alimuddin, 2013).

This sail enables the *sandeq* to achieve 15–20 knots, equivalent to a distance of 30–40 kilometres. The boat's hull features a deck designed to shield it from large ocean waves and prevent water entry. The placement of outriggers is tailored to the type of sail used on the *sandeq*, reflecting the extensive knowledge and experience of Mandar sailors accumulated over centuries (Fitrah et al., 2018).

Local Wisdom

The Mandar tribe's life background encourages it to have a view of life that the proof of selfunification with the sea is to become a fisherman or sailor. In the Mandar language, the sea is called "*sasiq*". In addition to believing that *sasiq* is a creation of God, the sea is considered sacred and has a mystery or secret. No wonder Mandar fishermen greatly honour the sea (Dwi Jayanti et al., 2023). According to Geertz (1973), in traditional societies, local knowledge is not only information but also a means for humans to give meaning to the world (Fatiha et al., 2023).

Local wisdom related to life in the sea is essential in maintaining survival. Local wisdom is an accumulation of knowledge and policies that grow and develop in a community, summarising theological, cosmological, and sociological perspectives. Local wisdom relies on traditionally institutionalised philosophies, values, ethics, and behaviours to manage natural and human resources, formulated as a formulation of a community's worldview on natural and social phenomena that are traditional or steady in an area. The worldview becomes the community's identity that distinguishes it from other groups (Musanna, 2012: 328-341).

The role and status of local wisdom as a law or rule implemented in coastal areas is significant considering the historical side, which is obtained in a very long process and passed down orally by the community from generation to generation. Moreover, in terms of the purpose of its application, namely, as a control of human nature whose needs and desires are unlimited, allowing the existence of local wisdom to affect significantly the preservation of the human environment as a place to live, especially coastal areas. (Juniarta et al., 2013).

Tracing local wisdom in many studies, one of which was written by Hagi Primadasa Juniarta, Edi Susilo, and Mimit Primyastanto in 2013 published in the ECSOFiM Journal with the title "Profile Study of Local Wisdom of Coastal Communities of Gili Island, Sumberasih District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java" explained that there are seven cultures that exist on Gili Island, namely *onjem*, *petik laut*, *nyabis*, work contracts, *pengambek*, *telasan* and *andun*. By looking at the local community's cultural conditions, the development considered suitable for implementation is based on local

communities, commonly called co-management.

In several regions in the country, many local pearls of wisdom become examples in environmental management, such as *Panglima Laot*, *Awig-awig*, and *Mane'e*. These local wisdoms are applied almost from generation to generation by the local community, for example, *phanglima laot* in Aceh and *awig-awig* in Buleleng Bali. Their existence significantly affects the sustainability of the local environment. This starkly contrasts current conditions where foreign cultures are rapidly entering the modern globalisation era. (Juniarta et al., 2013).

The collection of values, knowledge, and practices passed down from generation to generation to face various natural and social challenges unique to Mandarese fishermen is *paissangang sumombal*. This local wisdom of the Mandar tribe is technical and contains spiritual or religious meaning. As a local knowledge system, *paissangang sumombal* is a sailing and navigation technique for *sandeq* boats that combines various aspects of the social, economic, and spiritual life of the Mandar people.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative research. Creswell said qualitative researchers try to build meaning about a phenomenon based on participants' views. Thus, qualitative researchers collect information by talking directly to people and seeing the behaviour of the subject under study naturally. The data produced will be more original because of their closeness to the research subject (Fadli, 2021). Meanwhile, in examining the research topic, researchers use phenomenological studies.

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to discovering or exploring the human experience. In addition, phenomenological research focuses on something that individuals consciously experience. This is referred to as intentionality (Hajaroh, 2010). The phenomenological approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand how Mandarese fishermen experience and the meaning of cultural values in the context of the *sandeq* boat local knowledge system. This research was conducted in Karama Village, Tinambung District, Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi, on 23 October November 2023. Karama village was chosen because it is one of three regions in West Sulawesi that are famous for producing sander boats and applying *paissangang sumombal*. In addition, people who work as accomplished sailors can still be found there.

The data used in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data, using data collection techniques of in-depth interviews with five Mandarese fishermen, in-depth observation, and literature study. The researcher selected informants using the purposive sampling technique, which is determining informants intentionally according to criteria that have been considered by the researcher (Lenaini, 2021). The requirements set by the researcher are described as follows: (1) primary informants, namely Mandarese fishermen who are directly involved in *sandeq* boat activities and transmit the values of *paissangang sumombal*; (2) key informants are nautical researchers or observers of *sandeq* boats who are recognised in the community. He has in-depth knowledge of the traditions, culture, and values of *paissangang sumombal* inherent in the lives of Mandarese fishermen; (3) additional informants in this study can involve members of the Mandarese fishing community who are not included in the fishermen's families who are the primary informants. In addition, community leaders of Karama Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Application of Paissangang Sumombal Sandeq Boat by Mandarese Fishermen

Their adaptation to natural conditions makes Mandar fishermen or sailors have a local knowledge system consisting of *paissangang aposasiang* (marine knowledge), *paissangang paqlopiang* (boatbuilding knowledge), and *paissangang sumombal* (maritime knowledge). *Paissangang sumombal* is the basic knowledge that Mandar fishermen must have. However, this knowledge can reach the highest level when fishermen study it in detail and more deeply. Getting the highest knowledge of *paissangang sumombal* takes a long time, and the practice of steering the boat is risky. As explained by Pua' Nasir, a senior fisherman in Karama Village who has been fishing for 40 years, *paissangang sumombal* with the highest level of knowledge up to the business of reading (in the form of mantras or special prayers) is not arbitrarily owned by fishermen.

Seeing Mandar fishermen signals to us that it is not just skills in catching fish that are needed, but to go to sea and pursue the fishing profession like them, a man must have courage, fortitude, and physical strength. Even special conditions may not exist in other areas, only among Mandar coastal communities. It should be understood that the requirements referred to here are not something that must be proven through formal examinations, but what is meant is that the ability is born naturally through a series of encouragements from the results of their observations of the surrounding environment and learning directly from their parents who do work as fishermen. Pua' Fadlan said in an interview (24 October 2023):

"My parents taught me everything. Not just taught but given examples. Like this, like this."

Based on interviews conducted by the author, Mandar fishermen apply *paissangang sumombal* by looking at natural conditions. Before fishing, fishermen will see the moon's rise (hilar) and calculate it. In addition, a good sign of sailing, according to the local community, is during Konda, when the sea water is calm, neither high nor low tide. *Konda* is found during the rising of the eighth month. Mandar sailors use navigation to determine the direction of the sander boat by looking at the stars at night. While during the day, they utilise the sun or the sound of ocean waves. Determination of direction is done by looking at the stars; that is, when the shape of the constellation is seven in the sky, it indicates the direction of the southeast wind.

They look at the constellations that the Mandarese call *boyang ke pang* to determine the southern direction. There is also a name for the star that signals the entry of dawn, namely the constellation of the big star or the introduction to the sun. The belief in local wisdom remains strong today, especially among senior fishermen. They firmly hold that *paissangang sumombal* is a heritage from their ancestors that has proven invaluable in helping them navigate the challenges of the sea for centuries. These senior fishermen are committed to preserving Mandar cultural traditions by introducing *paissangang sumombal* to their children who accompany them at sea.

Moreover, *paissangang sambal* is not merely a technical guideline but also embodies the spiritual and cultural values deeply ingrained in the Mandar people's way of life. However, in this modern era, adaptation is evident among the younger generation of Mandar fishermen. While they continue to learn and respect *paissangang sumombal*, they also integrate modern navigational tools, such as compasses, into their practices.

"Even if it's the waves, we Mandarese can use the stars to point the way. There is a star that never misses its visible stop. For example, it rises when the east rises, so if you want to sink towards the southwest, you must know that this star rises from the east through to

the south. It never misses its position because it is not the man who made it but God. So he can help show the direction." (Pua' Nasir, interview 23 October 2023)

The cleverness of the Mandar people with their maritime knowledge does not end there. Furthermore, Pua' Fadlan, a fisherman famous for his experience facing challenges at sea (he has drowned 10 times), explains that they do not immediately go to sea without knowing the presence of fish. This is so that fishermen can get a lot of catches.

Thus, fishermen also know seasonal determination as their sailing technique. It all comes back to watching the rising of the moon (*hilar*). On the count of 1-15 moon rises most fish will gather in the deep-sea area. Meanwhile, if the count of the rising moon is 16-30, fishermen will position their *sandeq* or ship in sea areas with low depths. They apply *paissangang sumombal*, including when fishing. Pua' Fadlan explains that the optimal times for fishing are between 5:00-10:00 a.m. and 4:00-5:30 p.m. The maritime knowledge of the Mandar fishermen is not based solely on 'physical' knowledge. Beyond that, they must also understand the mystical dimension of *paissangang sumombal* (maritime knowledge), which pertains to spiritual or esoteric knowledge. This knowledge is applied not only when they are on the boat but also when they are on land and have committed to setting sail.

Before setting out to sea, fishermen must prepare their inner state, refraining from sailing if any events or concerns weigh heavily on their minds. As expressed by Pua' Nasir:

"Paissangan sumombal is related to breathing. One must take a deep breath when doing sailing activities including during the sandeq race, this is where the intention in the heart must be straightened out properly. That's why all the ritual processes of the voyage are not arbitrary! If someone wants to hold or tie something on the ship. The breath must be held first, this is because of the form of caution. This is the breath if you want to leave for the sea, you have to be careful." (Interview statement 23 October 2023)

All of this is related to the practice of *ussul* and *pemali*. Before a Mandar fisherman enters his boat to embark on a sea journey, he must experience an "internal call" that indicates his readiness. If his feelings suggest he is not ready, then departure is postponed. Of the many explanations of Mandar fishermen's sailing understanding, the culmination of *paissangang sumombal* lies in the ability to sail the *sandeq*. It takes a high level of knowledge and skill because *sandeq* boats differ from boats that use engines. *Sandeq* is manually steered so that courage and speed of decision-making must be owned by a *pangguling* (*sandeq* boat driver).

The *pangguling* does not only focus on controlling the *rudder*, but the sail opening must also be considered. The step taken by the *pangguling* is to control the *baya-baya* (rope connecting the mast of the *sandeq* boat). The connecting rope must be tightly secured yet quickly released when the sail's position needs adjustment. This is where the coordination of foot and hand movements becomes essential. For example, in the 2023 *sandeq* race, Fadlan, a 25-year-old son of Pak Hasan, was assigned the role of *baya-baya* puller (the rope connecting the *sandeq* sail mast). While his hands managed the rope slack and pulled the *baya-baya*, his feet were assisted by bracing to maintain tension during the pulling process. This exemplifies the physical endurance required to steer a *sandeq*, as the static position and specific role demand prolonged sitting.



Figure 1: Pangguling Pulling and Tying the Baya-baya (Sandeq Boat Sail Rope) © Muhammad Ridwan 2013

The challenges typically encountered by Mandar fishermen include strong sea winds, heavy rains, high waves, and occasional breakage of parts on the *sandeq* boat. These four challenges pose a risk of capsizing. To mitigate these risks, Mandar fishermen apply *paissangang sumombal*. For instance, if strong winds arise unexpectedly during the journey, fishermen act according to their knowledge, furling the sail of the *sandeq*. Conversely, when winds are less intense, the sail remains unfurled, but it must be aligned with the direction of the *rudder* (glueing). They carry a spare to anticipate potential sail tears, ensuring the journey remains uninterrupted. During normal wind conditions, they may take turns resting.

In addition, fishermen use *kayang* leaves (*nipah*) as shelter during the rainy season. These leaves serve as flexible canopies that can be folded and rearranged as walls, much like the foundation of a shelter, to protect them from heavy rain. When the boat's canopy is unsuitable, fishermen have an alternative: a small, enclosed space below the deck where they can take refuge and sleep.

Beyond wind and rain, high waves also pose a challenge. *Paissangang sumombal* provides knowledge on how to respond: in high waves, the *sandeq* should not be sailed. One crew member will swim to tie the boat to a floating fish trap (*rompong*), allowing them to wait out the waves. In an interview, Pua' Arifin explained that it is unwise to fight against strong currents, as this is dangerous and overly risky; patience is required to wait until the waves subside.

Paissangang Sumombal Values Reflect the Trusting Attitude of Mandar Tribe Fishermen

Reliance on Allah (*tawakkul*) does not preclude taking necessary measures. For a believer, engaging in effort or striving (*ikhtiar*) first represents faith and obedience to Allah. However, one must not regard these efforts as the source of outcomes, assuming that success is solely due to personal endeavours and not the will of Allah. Thus, *tawakkul* means refraining from attributing outcomes to the means after the means have been employed (Ash-Shallabi, 2014, p. 359). This concept is illustrated in the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Tie it, then rely [on Allah]" (Sahih Ibn Hibban).

Paissangang sumombal, a form of local wisdom in the Mandar community, provides insights into the Mandar fishermen's sailing knowledge. Beyond demonstrating practical skills for navigating the sea, this knowledge reflects a profound spiritual attitude of *tawakkal* or surrender to Allah. This

attitude of *tawakkal* is a moral foundation that guides the Mandar fishermen in their seafaring activities.

The practical application of *paissangang sumombal* and *tawakkal* is evident in how Mandar fishermen thoroughly prepare their provisions and mental state. They believe their intentions must be clear before setting sail and their inner state free from disturbance or unrest. For example, Pua' Nasir emphasises that maintaining calm breathing and intention is essential during preparations, including setting up and securing equipment on the boat. This reflects high caution and a firm belief that mental strength is crucial in safeguarding Mandar fishermen at sea.

The practice of *paissangang sumombal* begins with the sacred ritual of *mambaca-baca*. This ritual necessitates deep concentration and humility in seeking blessings through prayer. During *mambaca-baca*, all involved parties, including families and invited community members, engage in contemplation, humbling their hearts and minds while supplicating to Allah for goodness throughout the voyage. This includes praying for safety at sea, a safe return home, and sustenance. Led by an *annangguru* (religious leader), all participants offer prayers for safety to the Almighty and invoke blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This ritual often involves unique dishes rarely served on ordinary days, such as *ule-ule* (a traditional green bean porridge of the Mandar people), *sokkolo* (sticky rice), various types of bananas, and others. These foods are shared with all attendees. Following the *mambaca-baca* ritual, a separate event marks the launching of the *sandeq* boat. With recitations of *basmalah* and prayers to the Prophet, the boat leader instructs everyone to begin pushing the boat into the water.

The *sandeq* boat is launched into the sea, symbolising its readiness for the voyage. However, the launch does not immediately signify the commencement of the journey. The boat is tied and left for a while as the fishermen return ashore to double-check their equipment and bid farewell to their families. Only after these final preparations do they board the boat and set sail.

Every movement and action performed by fishermen—from setting the sails to navigating the boat—is imbued with hope and prayer, done in full consciousness of Allah's presence. After putting forth their best efforts, they embrace surrender, embodying the attitude of *tawakkal*. Moreover, the values within *paissangang sumombal* illustrate how local wisdom can bridge the relationship between humans and nature. In Islam, this understanding aligns with the principle of eco-spirituality. It encourages humans to engage in *tadabbur*, reflect upon Allah's creations, be grateful, and use nature responsibly without harming ecosystems.

The eco-spirituality principles in *paissangang sumombal* are evident in how the Mandar fishermen approach fishing. Their attitude toward *tawakkal* is most apparent when fishing; as Pua' Fadlan explains, fish gather between 5:00 and 10:00 a.m., making catching them more manageable. After 10:00 a.m., however, the fish start to move away from the boat, resulting in little success for fishermen who cast their lines between 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Mandar fishermen rest after the *dzuhur* prayer until the *asr* prayer, resuming fishing between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. This illustrates that without knowledge like this, those going to sea may return empty-handed, carrying no catch.

This explanation indirectly conveys the profound respect Mandar fishermen have for the sea. They believe that the sea, created by Allah, has a life of its own and should not be treated carelessly. They use the ocean's resources wisely and protect its ecosystem. Mandar fishermen firmly oppose

using explosives in fishing; instead, they continue to rely on traditional tools such as the *galendrong* (a large fishhook) and *parratu-ratu* (a small fish hook).

Paissangang sumombal imparts an essential lesson that Mandar fishermen need not worry excessively about their catch, for Allah ultimately determines provision, provided they sincerely try. This concept is affirmed in numerous hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It is emphasised that there is no contradiction between striving (*ikhtiar*) and reliance (*tawakkul*). From Umar ibn Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "If you were to rely upon Allah with true reliance, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds: they go out in the morning hungry and return in the evening full." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi, no. 2344).

Thus, there is no need for greed or overexploitation that could harm Allah's creation. Additionally, *tawakkal* is evident when Mandar fishermen observe natural signs before setting sail, such as the lunar phases (crescent moon) and calm sea conditions, known as *konda*. This preparation, as part of *paissangang sumombal*, guides them in determining the best time and conditions for sailing while anticipating potential risks.

Navigation relies on observing the stars at night, while fishermen use the sun and the sound of waves for direction during the day. Their knowledge of star positions steers their journey, providing a sense of security, as they believe the stars are Allah's creation, intended as a guide, as expressed by Pua' Nasir in an interview:

"Even the waves, even the stars we Mandarese can use as a direction. Some stars never miss the visible stops. For example, it rises when the east rises, so if you want to sink towards the southwest, you must know that this star rises from the east through to the south. It never misses its position because it is not the man who made it but God. So he can help show the direction." (Pua' Nasir, interview 23 October 2023)



Figure 2: Mandar fishermen's fishing rods, paratu-ratu, and galendrong © Andi Nur Fitrah 2023

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study reveals that *paissangang sumombal*, as a form of local wisdom, elucidates the significance of the sailing knowledge possessed by the Mandar fishermen in maintaining a balance between human efforts and dependence on Allah. The Mandar fishermen implement *paissangang sumombal* in several ways, including: (1) the optimal sailing time is during *konda*, which

refers to the calm sea conditions when the tides are neither high nor low, typically observed during the rising of the eighth moon; (2) for navigation, Mandar fishermen observe the stars at night, while during the day, they utilise the sun and the sound of the waves; (3) they determine the best times for fishing, which are in the morning (5:00-10:00) and in the evening (16:00-17:30); (4) the helmsman of the *sandeq*, referred to as *pangguling*, is responsible not only for steering the boat but also for managing the baya-baya (the line connecting the mast with the *pangguling*); and (5) they have specific strategies for facing challenges at sea, such as strong winds, rain, and high waves, depending on the prevailing conditions.

The values embedded in *paissangang sumombal* reflect the *tawakkal* attitude of the Mandar fishermen. The courage of Mandar fishermen in navigating the sea is not solely supported by technical skills but also by a profound spiritual conviction. The attitude of *tawakkal* serves as a foundation for their mental strength, aiding them in facing natural challenges with calmness, patience, and resilience. Even in uncertain sea conditions, fishermen remain still and wait for better circumstances, demonstrating their adaptation, reinforced by their belief that safety and ultimate success are in Allah's hands. The principle guiding Mandar fishermen is that regardless of what happens at sea, they must be courageous in facing challenges and refrain from returning until they achieve optimal results.

Therefore, this study illustrates how *paissangang sumombal* not only serves as a sailing guide but also reflects the faith and ethical *tawakkal* ingrained in the daily lives of Mandar fishermen. The integration of local wisdom and religious values highlights a way of life that fosters harmony between culture and religion, which is continuously upheld in the lives of the Mandar coastal community.

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