

# The Impact of Migration on the Assimilation of the Customs and Traditions of the Bugis Community in the Fisheries Activity

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## Abstract

Migration has affected the customs and culture of the Bugis people. As immigrants, their local beliefs, customs and culture have been assimilated into their daily activities. Thus, this study was conducted to examine the knowledge of the customs and culture practised in fishing activities among the Bugis people by comparing the past with the present. A series of qualitative in-depth interviews were carried out to 10 informants in five areas in the Pontian district, Johor. This study found that a number of systems, culture and principles such as *pemmali*, *penggaderreng* and *ade'* are still practised in their fishing activities, though there are some assimilation of local religion and culture occurred. Many of the Bugis traditions and culture that contradict Islamic beliefs have been left out by the Bugis people who have converted Muslim. Reciting Quran and salawat have now been practising in the beliefs. These practises are due to the influences of Islamic traditions and culture in the Bugis fisheries activity, as well as local people and the current technology changes. In order to sustain the original customs and culture of Bugis, the involvement of young generation and increasing cultural activities should be emphasized so that the Bugis heritage is not forgotten. The original customs and culture however, must not contradict Islamic beliefs.

**Keywords:** Assimilation, Bugis Community, Customs, Fisheries, Traditions

## Introduction

The Bugis originated from South Sulawesi. Bugis people are sea merchants with high sea navigation and trading skills. They are known as good sailors and wise merchants throughout history. Over the years, the Bugis community settled down and became involved in fisheries and farming (Asmiaty, 2013, Kaplan & Manners, 2002; Makmur et al., 2013). Most live in fishing villages (*pakkaja*) along the coast (Hasse et al., 2018; Mattulada, 1995). According to Rahim (2011), Thomas Stamford Raffles once called 'Celebes' (Sulawesi), the native land of

the Bugis community, the heart of maritime activities and an important trading centre in the Celebes archipelago. Their great sailing skill has made the Bugis courageous, zealous, confident, persevering, and skilful in trades (Nordin, 2008; Nur, 2019). During their heyday, the Bugis helmed the trades of spices and incense beyond the Malays archipelago up to the Australian and African continents. Makmur et al (2013) mentioned that they are brave warriors and skilled merchants. Their competitors, the Dutch and the British called the Bugis well-respected pirates with good propaganda tactics. At that time, Ujung Pandang or Makassar, became the focal point for the economic and cultural activities of the Bugis community.

Fishery activities have become the Bugis community's main occupation in their native and adopted lands (Nolan, 2011). Bugis fishermen export fish such as *taripan* fish to Tanimbar archipelago, West Irian coast, North Australia, Asia and Europe. They also sell fishery and agricultural produce (Irfan, 2010). In this light, migration is part of the Bugis culture of the Bugis people or better known as *pasompe'* (seafarers/merchants), because of their agility in sailing (Nur, 2019). Bugis migration was driven by the conflicts and uprisings in their native districts, the impact of the Dutch conquest in the 17th century (Pelras, 1997; Rahilah et al., 2012), and the desire to improve the quality of life in other regions (Kesuma, 2004; Nur, 2019). This drives the migration of the Bugis from different districts such as Bone, Wajo, Makassar, Pinrang dan Sidenreng Rappang (Susilowati & Rabith, 2013).

The Bugis migrated, hoping for better life opportunities than their native land. The initial settlement of the Bugis tribe in their new location was along the coast and near trading. They are usually involved in fisheries and agricultural economic activities (Nur, 2019). Subsequently, they began to inhabit the coastline and offshore islands, in Peninsular Malaysia, specifically around Pasir Gudang, Pontian, Kota Tinggi in Johor, and Sungai Kelang, Selangor (Omar et al., 2012; Nur, 2019). Furthermore, Pelras (1997); Rahilah et al (2009) mentioned most Bugis people chose Johor as the main migration destination. There is also a large Bugis community settlement in Sabah, especially in the east coast part of Sabah, which is Tawau, Semporna, Kunak, Lahad Datu, and Sandakan, and also in Sarawak (Asmiaty, 2013; Makmur et al., 2013). They also migrated to eastern Sumatra, islands and river estuaries in the Riau-Lingga Islands, Batam Islands, Pulau Tujuh, and Singapore Island (Makmur et al., 2013). This massive migration also led to the formation of the Johor Malay kingdom in Riau, as the Bugis became assimilated with the local community (Nordin, 2008).

The main impact of migration is the assimilation of Bugis' native customs and traditions with local customs and traditions, in addition to religious influence. Therefore, the study's main goal is to study the effect of migration on the assimilation of Bugis customs and traditions practises in fisheries' economic activities. This assimilation focuses on the previous and current practices of Bugis fishermen in the fisheries economy as they accept local influences, religions, and other elements.

## Literature Review

### ***The impact of migration on the assimilation of the customs and traditions related to fisheries in the Bugis community***

The Bugis-Makassar community are better known as "seamen who catch fish". This can be seen from the perspective of the Bugis people. The term 'Bugis' is derived from *the word tolu' pabbungi'*, which means great sailors (Mattulada, 1991; Supratman, 2013). Their involvement in sea activities makes the Bugis people known as a maritime tribe (Dhanang et al., 2016). According to Susilowati and Rabith (2013), a maritime tribe refers to social groups that

depend entirely or part of their economic life based on marine resources and social, cultural, and customs systems. They have a high capacity in international maritime activities, business matters related to fisheries, and marine products trade. The entrepreneurial culture of the Bugis society with the belief of '*Resopa natinulu na temmangingngi, namalomo naletei fammase Dewata*', that is, working hard and persevering, is the only way to obtain the almighty's mercy (*hidayah*).

The tradition of migration and travelling is strengthened by the philosophy that Bugis need to have a firm stand and be prepared to face This is evident in their belief, '*pura babbara sompeku pura tangkisi gulikku, ulebbireng tellengnge natowalia*', which means 'I've expanded the sails and already installed the rudder, if it's backward, it's better to sink with the boat' (Hamid in Dhanang et al., 2016). The Bugis should know where they will migrate to, as well as the social and cultural systems of the local community. This migration led the Bugis to adapt to the customs and traditions of the local community in the new location, and over the years, they began to gain economic and political dominance at the migration site (Harun et al., 2013), including in language and speech (Firdaus & Raihan, 2021; Zawawie & Raihan, 2022).

Furthermore, they are very open to adapting to the local community's culture by learning the culture and technology of fisheries and agriculture practised by the local community (Simon, 2017). This is also driven by the high spirit and value of work derived from the cultural values of *siri na pesse* (self-worth and compassion), as well as based on the philosophy of life (Akhmar et al., 2017). These participants still maintain the influence of their lives in art and culture, connect and communicate, tolerate, and have strong family ties (Harun et al., 2013). This is because the Bugis community is very proud of their traditional culture (Omar et al., 2012).

In line with the Bugis philosophy of life, they also pass down the principles of *siri, pesse*, and *ade'* to generations so that their lives are full of civility and dignity (Harun, Katutu & Yahya, 2013). The continuation of these practices preserves their customs and cultural traditions, shaping the cultural heritage of the Bugis community, despite external influences. *Siri* is a concept related to ideas and philosophies based on the Bugis' identity and the notion of humility (Nordin, 2008). *Pesse* is the belief based on spiritual unity in each individual. *Ade'* encompasses Bugis customary traditions and rituals practised at certain times. These traditions are divided into two; The first includes rituals during pregnancy, birth, and death. The second involves economic activities, such as determining the day to make fishery equipment and the day to start planting and harvesting crops (Harun et al., 2013).

The Bugis community is known for its strong religious belief (Bakti, 2010), and the majority are Muslim (Harun et al., 2013). However, some groups still practice the pre-Islam belief in the universe and the supernatural. Despite migration, their lives are still shaped by strict customs and *pemmali* (taboo) (Mattulada, 1995; Harun et al., 2013; Makmur et al., 2013). For example, the Bugis in Jambi practice a culture that combines Jambi Malay, Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist beliefs and customs. The Bugis community in Jambi has assimilated their culture with the aspects and rituals of various religions. These include the recitation of mantras, giving offerings, burning incense, the use of temple stupa-shaped ornaments, and believing in the existence of deities from Hinduism (Harun, Katutu & Yahya, 2013).

*Pemmali* is the order of a legal system in the Bugis community inherited by generations (Mattulada, 1974). Zaenal et al (2019) defined *pemmali* as a prohibition on actions against the Bugis' original customs and traditions. They believe that the violation of *pemmali* will lead to bad luck and misfortune, and it is considered to go against *panggadereng*. Thus, *pemmali* has become the life guideline for the Bugis community (Ismail & Subki, 2010). This prohibition

reflects the expectations and desires of previous ancestors or parents in shaping their children's morality, spirituality and lifestyle to behave and act according to the customs of a dignified Bugis society. For example, in carrying out fishery activities or sailing, fishermen or sailors are prohibited from saying bad words at a certain place and time, such as the word "fire" while sailing (Mattulada 1974). They believe that these negative expressions could lead to unwanted incidents. *Pemmali* is also seen as providing local wisdom to guide community life, encompassing social systems, organisational order, economy, politics, religion, customs, attitudes, and values (Mansur et al., 2019). This wisdom shapes the Bugis identity, preserving it while the community absorbs and adapts foreign cultures according to suitability and their abilities (Ayatrohaedi, 1986).

*Panggadereng*, on the other hand, is a cultural system encompassing customary norms and rules. *Panggadereng* covers (i) policies, fundamentals and norms (*ade'*); (ii) the court (*speak*); (iii) an important provision in the norm (*rapang*); (iv) the limits of the rights and social obligations of each individual (*wari'*); and (v) Islamic teachings (*sara'*) (Mattulada, 1995). According to Hasse et al (2018); Sabara (2018), the understanding of the true teachings of Islam is still low in some parts of the Bugis community resulting in various nonconformities in customs and traditions practised. The Bugis community still practices their original customs and traditions of the original and local traditions but is infused with Islamic elements such as *Bismillah*, the recitation of prayers and Quran verses. The assimilation of customs and traditions with religion is reflected in the concept of *panggadereng*, which includes *sara'* or Islamic teachings (Nurnaningsih, 2015; Hasse et al., 2018).

Since fisheries is an important economic activity for the Bugis, they possess the skills to make boats like pinisi, lambo palari, lambo calabai, rareka, jongkong, lopi, somppe and pajjala. These boats are used for marine transportation and fishery activities (Harun et al., 2013). Boats and fishing equipment are also adapted to suit the fishing environment (Dhanang et al., 2016). During boat-making, rituals and ceremonies are performed so the boat can give many returns and benefits. The Bugis will find a good /blessed day' to start the process of boat making. This day involves finding the wood for the boat, where a ceremony will be held to expel the wood's spirit before a lunas clamping board is installed. Another blessing ceremony will be conducted when the boat is completed (Harun, Katutu & Yahya, 2013).

According to Mattulada (1995), apart from their boats, the Bugis fishermen use the same equipment as the local fishermen. These include fixed fishing nets (*pa'bagang*), different types of nets (*puka'*) and other types of fishing tools like ring trawlers (*purse seine*), trolling lines, longline rods, fish traps (*bubu*), fish pot (*lukah*) and fishing poles used to catch fish and other seafood products along the coasts not far from the mainland (*panambe*). Dhanang, Rabith and Mahendra (2016) study in Batulawang, Karimunjawa, observed modifications to fishing tools such as squid jig, bamboo, fish traps and nets to suit the fishing environment. In some communities, fishing is done to fill free time only. Meanwhile, Yuliaty, Triyanti and Kurniasari (2016) mention that fishermen in Kota Kendari have a high work ethic. They have long working hours, take advantage of free time, and are highly disciplined and far-sighted.

In fisheries, *the mappanretasi* (sea thanksgiving), or giving an offering to the sea, has become the main practice of the Bugis (Habriani, 2017). This thanksgiving ritual is performed in the middle of the sea as a form of gratitude to the "Almighty" for the gift of the catch of the sea (Andi, 2016; Diananta, 2016; Dhanang et al., 2016; Zamzami, 2016). They believe in the power of deities and the supernatural. Hence the worship is done by reciting mantras (Andi, 2016), followed by other ceremonies, among them the burning of incense and giving

food offerings to supernatural beings (Hasse et al., 2018; Sabara, 2018). The process begins with setting a good time by the shaman (*sanro*), the imam of the mosque (*pua imang*), the head of custom or juragan (*pongawa*) (Andi, 2016). The ceremony is performed in the middle of the sea, accompanied by a fishing boat. This ritual offers the “sea spirit” by draining or pouring the blood of farm animals such as buffalo, cows, goats and chickens into the sea and giving food like crabs and fruits and crabs (Habriani, 2017). Usually, this ceremony is conducted in the last week of April every year (Andi, 2016). However, this ritual does not guarantee that fishermen get many catches yearly (Diananta, 2016).

The Bugis also conduct a blessing ceremony when constructing the *bagang* or fishing stake on the seashore. According to Raduan and Sharir (2008), the ritual ceremony will be performed the day before the *bagang* is built to find the area suitable for the *bagang*. The ceremony is conducted by offering a variety of foods containing goat heads, roast chicken, yellow rice, coloured rice, royal bananas, coconuts, chicken eggs, betel leaves and some other types of food to gain permission from the sea spirit/ guardian to build the *bagang* and catch fish in the area.

A tray will be floated on the water surface, and it will be left drifting to sea after the *mattoana tasik* ceremony, which involves the recitation of prayers and mantras. This ritual is performed to seek the safety of fishermen and a good catch. After that, the owner of the *bagang* and the shaman will erect the pole, and a mantra will be recited to seek permission from the sea spirit. The owner of the *bagang* believes that if the sea spirit does not give his permission, the *bagang* will collapse and last only a week.

In addition, some taboos need to be observed. For instance, the *bagang* workers cannot call out what they see at sea. Furthermore, the wives and children of the *bagang* owners and workers are not permitted to laugh and enjoy themselves excessively. They are also not allowed to sweep or throw garbage when the fishermen are out in the *bagang*. Garbage should only be collected and thrown after they return from the sea. Another taboo is that family members chase away cats and chickens in the house. The fisherman also cannot sneeze when going down to the sea, and the children cannot ask where their father is going. Bugis fishermen believe that breaking the taboo will bring misfortune (Raduan & Sharir, 2008).

The presence of the Tarekat (Islamic) movement in Batulawang, Indonesia, has also led to the assimilation of the customs and traditions of Bugis traditions. For example, before a ship sails, the ship will be “bathed” first with *selametan* and *manakiban* (hagiographic reading of Syaikh Abdul Qadir al-Jaelani). A simplification in ritual practices is likely closely related to wasteful acts involving large expenditures prohibited in religious teachings (Dhanang et al., 2016). There is an assimilation of the customs and traditions of the Bugis community with Islamic teachings, as seen through the recitation of prayers. However, this ceremony can be seen as a distortion of Islam which is the religion of most immigrant Bugis communities.

The clash between Bugis customs and traditions and Islamic practices has changed some of the cultural practices of the Bugis community, including rituals related to the fisheries economy. Although some ritual ceremonies are still practised, they are accompanied by reciting Al-Quran verses. Prayers are offered to Allah the almighty for protection and to gain lucrative returns. According to Andi (2016), the group that integrated the Bugis tradition with the teachings of Islam was greatly influenced by the teachings of tasawuf. At the same time, other groups strongly oppose the merger of customs and ritualistic cultures that are contrary to Islamic teachings. This is because the rituals performed, such as offering and drifting the head of an animal into the sea in the *mappanretasi* ceremony, are contrary to the Islamic teachings.

### **Method and Study Area**

This study is a descriptive qualitative study. The subject of the study comprises a minority Bugis community residing in the Pontian district, Johor. The study areas are Kampung Tampuk Laut, Parit Makuaseng, Sungai Karang, Sungai Kual and Benut in Pontian, Johor, which are mostly inhabited by the Bugis community. These study areas are selected because they are some of the earliest Bugis settlements in the Malay Peninsula. It was reported that the first Bugis settlers resided in the southern Pontian area of Johor. This is evident in the Bugis language's widespread in Pontian, Johor (Hashimah et al., 2020).

This study adopted the qualitative approach. In-depth interviews were carried out during the field studies to understand the informants' knowledge of the assimilation of the Bugis customs and traditions, specifically in fishery-related economic activities. 10 informants were randomly selected carried out by randomly selecting 10 informants. The number of informants is sufficient as the data has reached saturation.

### **Results and Discussions**

#### ***Demographic Profile***

This qualitative study involved in-depth interviews with 10 informants from eight villages around Pontian district, Johor. Nine informants were aged 50 years and above, while one informant was 48 years old. They consist of seven male and three female informants. According to the interview, only six informants are fluent in the Buginese language and use Buginese when interacting with family members, while two can use Buginese fluently, one informant is less fluent, and one cannot speak Buginese. In this regard, members of the Bugis community speak the Malay language in their daily affairs and interact with their families. This is in line with a study by Zawawie and Raihan (2022), which found that the local community influences the Bugis' language and speech patterns.

Table 1

*Demographic profile of the informant*

Informant	Gender	Age (years)	Study Area	Ability to communicate in Buginese language	Medium of communication in family	
1	Male	48	Sungai Kuali	Fluent	Buginese language (1), Malay language (2)	
2	Female	70	Sungai Kuali	Fluent	Buginese language (1), Malay language (2)	
3	Male	83	Kampung Laut	Tampuk	Fluent	Buginese language (1), Malay language (2)
4	Male	60	Kampung Laut	Tampuk	Fluent	Malay language (1), Buginese language (2)
5	Female	57	Benut		Fluently	Malay language (1), Buginese language (2)
6	Male	52	Benut		Fluently	Malay language (1), Buginese language (2)
7	Male	53	Parit Muakuaseng		Cannot speak in Buginese language	Malay language only
8	Male	70	Parit Muakuaseng		Less fluent	Malay language only
9	Female	83	Sungai Karang		Fluent	Buginese language (1), Malay language (2)
10	Male	60	Sungai Karang		Fluent	Buginese language (1), Malay language (2)

***Assimilation of the customs and traditions of the Bugis Society in Fisheries Economic Activities***

All informants agreed that fishery is one of the main economic activities for the Bugis community, besides farming. Fishery activities are influenced by customs and cultural practices grounded on belief in the power of the universe and the supernatural, environmental factors such as weather and wind direction, as well as one's emotions in an act (Mattulada, 1974, 1995; Ismail & Subki, 2010; Hasse et al., 2018; Sabara, 2018). Nevertheless, the migration of the Bugis community has led to the assimilation of these practices. The study found that assimilation occurs because of interaction with local customs and traditions of the local community, development over time, the current technology and the influence of Islam. Many researchers, including Harun et al (2013); Ismail & Subki (2010), Nirmala (2016); Andi (2017); Hasse et al (2018); Sabara (2018); Zaenal et al (2019) evidenced this.

Regarding the equipment used in fisheries, all informants stated that Bugis fishermen used similar fishing equipment as the local community. Among them are boats, nets, trawlers, nets, fishing boats, *serkap*, *lukah*, *bubu* and fishing rods. This is in line with the studies by Dhanang et al (2016); Yuliaty et al (2016) proven through informant statements.

“Bugis fishermen also use trawlers, nets, trawlers, wounds, fishing and others like the local community” (Informant 1).

“Fishing equipment is the same as the locals” (Informants 6 dan 9).

“The tools used are similar to the locals, such as boats, trawlers, nets, *lukah*” (Informant 10).

Environmental factors, weather and wind directions also greatly influence the customs and traditions of the Bugis community, as reported in studies by Sabara (2018). Bugis fishermen are highly skilled navigators and will weather conditions before going to sea. If the weather indicators are good, the Bugis fishermen will go to the sea to make a living. There are also ceremonies, such as weighing the water and holding water to predict the amount of catch that day. The recitation of prayers and salutes also accompanies this practice, showing that there is assimilation with religion in the practice of fisheries. This is reflected in the following statements;

“Before going to the sea, the fisherman will weigh the water by placing the wooden spikes vertically facing the sun. If the shadow obtained is short, the fisherman should not go down to sea because he believes there is less catch. If there are big waves in the ocean, they will throw salt into the sea to calm the water, while reading the mantra and praying” (Informant 8).

“While at sea, the fishermen will touch the water to see whether there will be many catches today. If there are many, the catch signs will be many too” (Informant 1).

“Look at the wind direction and the weather. If the weather is good, the fishermen will go down to the sea with a salute” (Informant 7).

Bugis fishermen also believe that emotions and their deeds before going to sea to earn a living influence their catch and income and can foreshadow the good and bad situations of the day. This is in line with the concept *pemmali* (taboos) stated by Mattulada (1974); Raduan and Sharir (2008), as well as Ismail and (Subki, 2010). The informants expressed that the fishermen and family members need to show calm emotions. Family members are also not allowed to sweep the floor or chase out animals such as cats or chickens from the house before the fisherman goes out and returns from making a living at sea. The acts of sweeping the floor and chasing out animals are likened to driving away fish or other catches that day. This finding aligns with (Raduan and Sharir, 2008). In most costumes, they include religious elements by reciting certain surahs and prayers, as stated below,



“Fishermen and family members will usually look at emotions. Their emotions must be stable. You can’t feel sad and cry. Family members should also not sweep the floor. It’s like driving away the fish and the day’s catch” (Informant 3).

Among the customs practised before going to sea is to look at the fisherman’s nose, which is bigger, the left or right. If the right nose is bigger, it signifies a large catch. This good sign encourages fishermen to go out to the sea and recite Surah al-Ikhlas” (Informant 1).

“Emotions have to be good because they’re going to show good or bad things that day. If a cat or chicken is coming into the house, you can’t chase it out. If we chase them out, we will repel fish and other catches” (Informant 6).

The study found that most of the traditions and culture of the Bugis community are being eroded, like *mappanretasi*, *ade’* and *pemmali*. This is more evident for practices that are contrary to the Islamic teachings, although there are still some fishermen who still practice it (Ismail & Subki, 2010; Harun et al., 2013; Zaenal et al., 2019). A study by Harun, Katutu and Yahya (2013); Nirmala (2016) found that the original Bugis tribe carry out many rituals and ceremonies, from the initial phase of searching for wood to make a boat to launching the boat into the ocean. For example, the ritual of giving thanks to the sea is a sign of gratitude for the sustenance available in the sea. The fishermen will pour chicken blood on the new equipment and into the sea. They will also offer food to the sea spirit to seek protection and sustenance from the power of the sea (Andi, 2017; Habriani, 2017; Diananta, 2016). However, the sea thanksgiving ceremony is no longer carried out on a large scale in most places as it goes against Islam’s teachings. This is in line with the study of (Hasse et al., 2018; Sabara, 2018). Although a few still practice it, the ceremony is conducted in moderation to avoid wastage, as taught by Islam. The results of this study are also in line with Dhanang et al (2016), who found that ceremonies are simplified to avoid wastage.

However, this practice is no longer relevant due to the passage of time, the traditions of the local community, and the development of technology. Furthermore, it is contrary to the teachings of Islam, as stated by (Nirmala, 2016; Andi, 2017; Hasse et al., 2018; Sabara, 2018). Thus, these customs and traditions are adapted and infused with the local traditions, the current development and religion. Among them are moderation, *barzanji* (*berzanji*) (Sabara, 2018), recite salawat to the prophet, reciting prayers and verses of the Quran, and local the adoption of local traditional practices (Hasse et al., 2018). This can be seen in the informants’ statement;

“I still pour chicken blood into new equipment such as boats and newly purchased cars, as well as feeding the power to keep alive and sustenance. Followed by recite salawat to the prophet” (Informant 2).

“There are more ceremonies done, but simply put it mildly. Avoid waste as taught in religion” (Informant 7).

“We pray, for example, this is a sincere gift from me please take care of me, help me earn halal sustenance. The sireh leaves are also used in customary ceremonies to provide sustenance” (Informant 4).

“The barzanji custom is still practised, especially when using new equipment such as boats. No more blood offering ceremonies. Many previous wasteful practices contrary to Islamic teachings have been abandoned. After all, times have changed. No more ceremonies are performed before and after obtaining the catch. The excessive catch is only shared with the neighbours as alms” (Informant 5).

“Most practices are accompanied by reciting prayers, prayers, or Quranic verses in line with Islamic teachings. For example, before going to sea, the fisherman will usually look at his nose, which side is larger, left or right. If the right nose is larger, it signifies a large catch. This is a good omen and will encourage fishermen to go out to see the sea. They will recite Surah al-Ikhlâs (Chapter 112) before stepping home. While at sea, fishermen need to touch the water. If the fish comes, it is a sign that they will get a good catch that day” (Informant 1).

“Times and technology have changed. Young people do not practice and are less interested in old traditions. So, the practice has changed a lot too” (Informant 10).

The study found that the presence of the tasawuf approach also influenced the assimilation of culture and traditions related to the fishery economic practices of the Bugis fishing community. This is supported by Andi (2016), who found that the tasawuf approach has integrated Bugis traditions with the teachings of Islam. The influence of tasawuf in assimilating the customs and traditions of the Bugis is evident through the use of mantras in their rituals. For example, they believe that the letter “Alif”, the first letter in the Arabic alphabet, represents a good thing, as mentioned;

“Bugis fishermen will read mantras, among them “*Alif ke laut, Alif dalam diriku*” (*Alif to sea, Alif inside of me*). Alif is considered a good/lucky letter as it is the first letter in the Arabic alphabet (Informant 2).

“Fishermen will read some mantras and pray to attract sustenance” (Informant 8).

The emphasis on Islam has stopped the practice of many conflicting customs and traditions, as mentioned in (Rasid, 2013; Alham, 2015; Nurnaningsih, 2015; Andi, 2016; Hasse et al., 2018; Sabara, 2018). Most Bugis committee members adhere to their Islamic faith. Most fishermen will pray and recite the Verses of the Quran to ask for sustenance from Allah, besides working hard as mentioned by (Zamzami, 2016). This can be seen through the informants’ statements;

“Many previous practices are no longer practised because it is haram. Most fishermen will only pray and read the Quran to seek protection and to get more catch, aside from working hard” (Informant 3).

“Many previous practices are no longer practised because it is contrary to the Islamic teachings. Besides praying, the custom of barzanji is also performed” (Informant 5).

The study found that many customs and practices of the Bugis community in fisheries economic activities are no longer practised. The interview found that all informants are aware that the Bugis community has rich customs and traditions. However, an estimated 65 per cent of the Bugis community in the study area do not practice it anymore. However, there are still customs and cultures practised in a simpler manner and adapted to suit the local community, passage of time, the development of technology, and their religion. Studies have found that many original Bugis customs and traditional culture contradict Islamic teachings. Assimilation with religion indicates a weak understanding of Islamic teachings, which prohibits ritualistic practices, belief in the forces of nature and the supernatural, and certain taboos. In this regard, some of the Bugis community still practice rituals, mantras and customs that are not Islamic, although some Islamic elements were added to the rituals performed. The spread of Islam has undoubtedly led to the transformation of a society’s culture, practices, attitudes and behaviour.

The study concludes that most of the aforementioned customs and traditions s are no longer practised for several reasons:

- i) Contradictions with Islamic teachings. As the Bugis embraced Islam, they started to distinguish between superstition and the customs permitted by their religion.
- ii) These customs and rituals require considerable money/ funds to prepare the equipment. Hence, it is costly to implement and preserve these customs.
- iii) The practices are time-consuming. As most of the community members, especially those working, are working, it is difficult to find time to implement these cultural practices.
- iv) The passage of time. As we venture into the modern era, customs and traditions s to change with the times. Many of the remaining traditions are simplified to suit the modern era; what we see now is just a remnant of traditional practices.
- v) The lack of knowledge of the original traditions, customs, and culture of the Bugis community. This situation is due to time, the bustle of work and the lack of interest among the latest generation to learn about and practice the original traditions of the Bugis community.

## **Conclusion**

The original principles and philosophy of the Bugis are very intact. This has helped them to develop strength, potential, and high self-competitiveness. Therefore, it is not surprising that they can successfully start their new life after migrating from their native land. While they are highly skilled as sailors and traders, most members of the immigrant Bugis community are involved in fisheries and farming as their main economic activities. Despite migration, the Bugis still maintain their customs and traditions. However, many of these practices have been assimilated with religion and adapted to the customs and traditions of the local community. They are also influenced by development over time and the rapid growth of technology. As a result, the customs and traditions of the Bugis are increasingly marginalised in the daily affairs of today’s Bugis community. Therefore, to preserve the customs and traditions of the original Bugis tribe, there is a need to uphold the customs and traditions of the Bugis. This could be done through various cultural activities and by encouraging the younger generation to be

involved in cultural activities. The younger generation's involvement is important so that the customs and cultural heritage of the Bugis can be preserved and not disappear due to modernisation. However, ensuring that such customs and traditions do not contradict the Bugis community's Islamic teachings today is important.

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