



REVITALIZATION OF BATAK TOBA CULTURAL IDENTITIES USED LANGUAGE AS COMMUNICATION IN THE SIANJUR MULA-MULA, SAMOSIR REGENCY

REVITALISASI IDENTITAS BUDAYA BATAK TOBA MENGGUNAKAN BAHASA SEBAGAI KOMUNIKASI DI SIANJUR MULA-MULA KABUPATEN SAMOSIR

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Abstract

At the moment, there are indications that the Toba Batak people of Sianjur Mula-Mula District have disregarded the sociocultural values embodied in indigenous wisdom regarding the protection of Lake Toba. The deterioration of sociocultural values has increased environmental damage to Lake Toba, which is currently escalating. This study aims to examine how Toba Batak sociocultural values can be revitalized to protect the Lake Toba environment in Sianjur Mula-Mula Regency. The descriptive qualitative method with purposive sampling was used in this study. The informants interviewed using this sampling technique are individuals aware of the deterioration of Toba Batak's sociocultural values associated with the Lake Toba environment. The data analysis process begins with collecting primary data via in-depth interviews guided by interview guidelines and supplemented with library data. The interview results were compiled, tabulated, analyzed, verified, and presented for conclusions. The findings indicate that environmental damage to Lake Toba occurs due to the Toba Batak people in Sianjur Mula-Mula District largely disregarding sociocultural values and indigenous wisdom regarding environmental conservation. Therefore, preserving the environment is critical to revitalizing the Toba Batak community's sociocultural values related to environmental preservation according to contemporary needs.

Keywords: cultural values, environment, revitalization, preservation, Toba Batak.

Abstrak

Saat ini terdapat indikasi bahwa masyarakat Batak Toba yang tinggal di Kecamatan Sianjur Mula-Mula telah mengabaikan nilai-nilai sosial budaya yang mengandung kearifan lokal dalam menjaga Danau Toba. Degradasi nilai sosial budaya menyebabkan meningkatnya kerusakan lingkungan Danau Toba yang saat ini semakin parah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis revitalisasi nilai-nilai sosial budaya Batak Toba dalam menjaga lingkungan Danau Toba di Kabupaten Sianjur Mula-Mula. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik purposive sampling. Analisis data diawali dengan pengumpulan data primer melalui wawancara mendalam melalui pedoman wawancara yang dipadukan dengan data kepustakaan. Hasil wawancara dikumpulkan, ditabulasi, dianalisis, diverifikasi, dan ditampilkan untuk disimpulkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan



bahwa terjadinya kerusakan lingkungan Danau Toba karena masyarakat Batak Toba di Kabupaten Sianjur Mula-Mula sebagian besar telah mengabaikan nilai-nilai sosial budaya dan kearifan lokal terkait pelestarian lingkungan. Untuk melakukan pemeliharaan lingkungan, nilai-nilai sosial budaya masyarakat Batak Toba terkait pelestarian lingkungan penting untuk direvitalisasi sesuai kebutuhan saat ini.

Keywords: *revitalisasi, nilai budaya, Batak Toba, pelestarian, lingkungan*

1. INTRODUCTION

Damage, environmental preservation, and degradation of socio-cultural values are two important issues today. Factors that cause environmental damage are generally natural and human factors. Environmental damage in the area of Lake Toba and Sianjur Mula-Mula District began with the establishment of various companies, namely: (a) in 1976 PT. Inalum (aluminum smelting company). The presence of this company resulted in a decrease in the water discharge of Lake Toba + 2 m, (b) In 1988 PT. Inti Indo Rayon Utama which changed its name in 2003 to PT. Toba Pulp Lestari. This company carries out logging in the vicinity of the Lake Toba catchment area. The existence of this company causes deforestation in the Lake Toba area, (c) In 1995 PT. Allegrindo Nusantara is engaged in pig farming, located in Purba District, Simalungun Regency, disposing of waste (dung) + 1,200 tons/day into Lake Toba via the Silali river, and (d) In 2006 PT. Aqua Farm Nusantara, operating in Lake Toba, Simanindo District, is engaged in fish farming (floating nets). This fishery business disposes of fish feed residues every day into Lake Toba (Situmorang, 2013, Silaen, 2006, Hasibuan et al, 2003). The existence of these four companies so far around Lake Toba has the potential to cause environmental damage. The results of research by Simanjuntak (2015) and Harahap (2009) stated that the existence of the above companies caused the environmental damage of Lake Toba to worsen because it was not following the environment's carrying capacity. The environmental damage of Lake Toba is getting more serious due to industrial development, logging, and development of floating net fish farms, waste disposal and inconsistent government policies towards environmental conservation. This causes a decrease in the environmental quality of Lake Toba. The results of Causey's (2003) research, the current environment of Lake Toba is damaged because the water has been polluted, not managed, many floating nets, hotel waste disposal, livestock, households, ulos weaving and increasingly denuded forest areas.

Economic development that is too pursuing growth by ignoring environmental conservation causes environmental damage to Lake Toba (Situmorang, 2013). The Lake Toba area is very potential in economic growth because it is a tourist area that can generate foreign and domestic tourists. To achieve high economic growth targets, natural resources tend to be exploitative regardless of environmental sustainability (Pranoto, 2010; Ananda & Zuve, 2018). Realizing the crucial importance of this problem, the government and elements of society must seek solutions with various approaches. Based on the results of Causey's (2003) research, it is necessary to innovate, redefine and revitalize cultural values and change the behavior of the Toba Batak people as the dominant ethnic culture in the Lake Toba area. Dominant culture is a culture of a certain ethnic group, the rules of which are mostly used as guidelines for living in an environment or wider community consisting of one or more ethnic groups, with the following criteria: (1) Demographics; the population of the members of the ethnic group is the most in its community, (2) the culture is a local culture whose rules are standardized as a guide for relating



and interacting in public places and, (3) is a place of power, meaning that people from ethnic groups have priority to occupy the most important positions in society (Bruner, 1974). Based on these criteria, the Toba Batak people are the ethnic majority. They have a dominant culture in Sianjur Mula-Mula District, contributing to environmental conservation because local cultural values are used as guidelines and behavior for all communities living around Lake Toba. The success or failure of efforts to preserve the environment of Lake Toba is influenced by cultural values and the commitment of the Toba Batak. People in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of environmental conservation and optimizing the utilization of Batak cultural values, which are considered positive and revitalizing the cultural values of the Toba Batak.

Cultural values related to environmental conservation include: *poda nalima*, *dalihan na tolu*, *marsipature hutanabe*, *horja*, *marsialapari*, *marsiurupan*, and other local wisdom. The current fact is that there are indications that these cultural values have experienced a crisis (shift in meaning) causing the need for adjustments and refinements to these cultural values for today's life (Simanjuntak, 2003). The implementation of development needs to be held cultural revitalization based on the order of Batak *Dalihan na Tolu* cultural values (three stoves). Revitalization is an effort to revive the new spirit of the entire *Dalihan na Tolu* order, local wisdom and other cultural elements in the context of development in the Toba area. This means not rebuilding old traditions and cultural values that hinder progress, but in the sense of reviving the entire cultural order in the context of present and progress (Sihaan, 1987).

In the context of the present and modern life, it is necessary to revitalize the noble values of Batak culture which include all values relevant to the development of society, be it cultural values, local wisdom, politics as well as ethical and aesthetic values that live in the community, for example: honesty, cooperation, hard work and others (Simanjuntak, 2015). To optimize the programs, it is necessary to utilize local cultural values that support environmental conservation because; elements of local culture have the legitimacy of social traditions in society which are a means of development. After that, the elements of the local culture are symbolically the most important means of communication within the local population, elements of local culture have a variety of functions, both tangible and hidden as useful means to bring about change (Mardikanto, 2014). So, it the importance to use cultural values and local wisdom in preserving the environment of Lake Toba because there are still various cultural values and local wisdom that have the potential to be utilized and revitalized in environmental conservation programs. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze the importance of cultural values and other local wisdom related to environmental conservation. The Batak Toba people as the majority of the population living around Lake Toba are expected to be able to empower socio-cultural values and local wisdom to return to maintaining the Lake Toba environment in Sianjur Mula-Mula District.

2. METHODS

A qualitative research approach is used to observe, collect, analyze and interpret data related to the meaning of revitalizing the Toba Batak culture in the preservation of Lake Toba. A qualitative approach is used to explore and understand the meaning that a number of individuals (groups) derive from social (humanitarian) problems (Creswell, 2014). Miles and Huberman (1992) stated that research with a qualitative approach is basically an investigation process to



analyze social phenomena by comparing, reflecting, classifying, presenting/categorizing and verifying data. All of these activities aim to find uniformity in patterns and general characteristics of the social world being studied. According to Miles and Huberman (1992: 35), analytical activities consist of three streams of activities that occur simultaneously, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction activities, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification are intertwined activities before, during, and after data collection.

Data reduction is part of the analysis. Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of rough data that emerges from written notes in the field. This activity takes place continuously during data collection activities. These data reduction activities include summarizing, coding, tracing themes, creating clusters, partitioning, and writing memos. The researcher's choices about which passages are coded, which are discarded, which patterns sum up some scattered passages, and what stories are developing are all analytical choices. Presentation of data as a set of structured information allows for drawing conclusions and taking action. Through the data presented, the researcher sees and can understand what is happening and what must be done based on the understanding gained from these presentations. Presenting data in qualitative research can now be done in various types of matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. It is designed to combine organized information in a coherent and easily accessible form.

The third stage of data analysis activities is drawing conclusions and verification. During data collection, a researcher looks for the meaning of things, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal pathways, and propositions. At first, the conclusions were not clear, but gradually increased in more detail. Conclusions may not appear until the end of data collection, depending on the size of the field note collection, its coding, storage and retrieval methods used, and the researcher's skill. Conclusions are then verified by reviewing field notes, or perhaps a review to develop intersubjective agreements. In collecting data and in the research process, researchers are involved directly and simultaneously as an integrated research instrument, have sensitivity to community conditions, and interpret cultural phenomena from various community activities so that subjectivity in this research can be avoided (Spradley, 1997). The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with a total of seven informants. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with informants and observed various community activities related to environmental conservation. In addition, researchers also conducted a library approach.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Utilization of Natural Resources and Activities of the Toba Batak Community in Sianjur Mula-Mula District

Utilization of Natural Resources

The Toba Batak community in Sianjur Mula-Mula District cannot be separated from the socio-cultural system they adhere. This system influences the views and behavior of the Toba Batak people to utilize and manage the limited natural resources around Lake Toba (Napitu, 2021). The Toba Batak socio-cultural system influences the attitudes and behavior of the Toba



Batak people towards utilizing and controlling natural resources around the lake. Based on the Toba Batak kinship system, which adheres to a patrilineal lineage of natural resources in the form of land and other abiotic elements related to communal land ownership, each *bona ni pasogit* lineage group (marga) consists of the mainland and Lake Toba. Natural resources in the territorial area (*huta*), controlled by clan groups for generations, are managed and utilized under the Toba Batak customs (Causey, 2003; Vergouwen, 2004; Pareet, 2010; Silalahi, 2014). Local institutions in the form of the *dalihan na tolu* system, which live in the Toba Batak community, show that all local communities live supported by existing resources in the form of water resources and other natural resources. For example, the land used for sheep grazing is the common property of the forest as a place for collective buffalo grazing (Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Situmorang, 2013).

The forest area (*harangan*) is used to support the socio-economic life of the local community because most of the local population live as farmers on dry land and rainfed land. Forests (*harangan*) are used for agricultural land by opening fields, after a few years they are abandoned as shrubs (relationships). This land is sometimes planted with various types of trees and plantation crops, such as: coffee, rubber, candlenut and others. The Toba Batak community in forest utilization recognizes forbidden forest zones (*harangan tokka*) which cannot be used as agricultural land but as a place to hunt animals and gather forest products. The *tokka haragan* is protected because of taboos and traditional beliefs that limit the Toba Batak community from using it freely and unrestrictedly (Situmorang, 2013; Simanjuntak 2015). The Toba Batak community conceptualizes the management and utilization of water resources (lakes) as a combination of the principles of common property (shared property) and public property (open access) (Hardin, 1968; Situmorang, 2013). Lake Toba and its contents are considered as open natural resources, not owned by a person or group of people, but controlled and used together. The residents of Sianjur Mula-Mula Sub-district have determined that the water of Lake Toba is common property. In certain parts, there are parts designated as prohibited areas.

In ancient times, the continuous transformation of Toba Batak traditional wisdom, taboos and sanctions for taboo violators made the control, management and utilization of natural resources around Lake Toba more controlled and measurable. For example, in terms of land use, immigrant clans outside the land clan (*raja tano*) may not carelessly use the field without the approval of the land clan under the ulayat rights owner. There will be no inequality in land tenure and use with regulations like this. Access and management of natural resources wrapped in customary rules and traditional wisdom ensure the continuity of good and sustainable use of natural resources.

The development of anthropocentric understanding and modern economics in the life of the Toba Batak society which prioritizes material gain, wise and natural use of natural resources is considered less effective and efficient to obtain material benefits and encourage economic growth (Dwi Susilo, 2008; Keraf, 2010). Such understanding encourages local communities and migrant communities to exploit natural resources beyond the carrying capacity of Lake Toba. Due to over-exploitation, the balance of the lake ecosystem is disturbed. Exploitation that exceeds the carrying capacity of the lake has a broad impact on the sustainability of the bio-physical and bio-social life of the community, including: the cycle time of farming activities is getting narrower and shorter, the lake water discharge continues to shrink, soil fertility decreases



due to soil surface erosion and Lake Toba is increasingly polluted (Nontji , 2016; Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Situmorang, 2013).

The Toba Batak community has local wisdom in natural resource management. The local wisdom possessed by the Toba Batak community consists of: (1) knowledge about humans, nature and their relationship with nature is a communal property, not individual property. Toba Batak local wisdom is socialized, then disseminated collectively and from generation to generation informally and integrally. This model of mastery of knowledge, in contrast to modern knowledge that is individual, (2) The local wisdom possessed by the Toba Batak community in agricultural business is practical and practical. In a sense, this knowledge is a guide for the Toba Batak community to live wisely in an ecological community. Taboos, which are an important part of farming life, are not only normative without technical values related to knowledge and sustainable natural resource management. (3) The local wisdom possessed by the Toba Batak community is holistic and moral. Holistic because his knowledge involves knowledge and understanding of all aspects of life and their relationship to the universe, and moralists such as farming and hunting are not only rational knowledge to meet the needs of life, but contain moral and social values guidance in their implementation (Situmorang, 1982; Sinaga 2008; Naingolan, 2014; Marluga, 2016).

The local wisdom possessed by the Toba Batak community in managing natural resources with the above characteristics provides a philosophical basis for the sustainability of the ecology of the lake with the expression *mangalakka tu jolo marpanaili tu pudi* which is currently largely not followed in the life of the Toba Batak people. Ecological sustainability is only possible to achieve and create if natural resources are not only interpreted in terms of purely economic value, but are also given ecological, ethical and aesthetic values. This understanding requires a paradigm shift in looking at the benchmarks of development, not only measured from the economic aspect, but also measured from the ecological aspect and the socio-cultural values of the Toba Batak (Situmorang, 1982; Keraf, 2010). The management of Lake Toba's natural resources is an activity that includes the utilization, regulation, maintenance, restoration, control, development and conservation efforts that are carried out in an integrated manner. Lake Toba management is an integrated effort to preserve environmental functions which includes policies for structuring, utilizing, balancing, maintaining, restoring and controlling Lake Toba. The importance of proper management of Lake Toba is intended to achieve balance and harmony in the life of the Toba Batak community with its environment (Nontji, 2016; Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Situmorang, 2017).

The management and utilization of natural resources carried out by the Toba Batak community in meeting their daily needs has an impact on the good and bad of the lake environment. If the Toba Batak community manages and utilizes natural resources wisely and adapts according to the availability of natural resources, it will not cause damage to the lake environment, but otherwise it will increase lake degradation. The Toba Batak community in the management and utilization of Lake Toba's natural resources should be able to re-apply socio-cultural values, local wisdom, ecological wisdom, behavior in accordance with sustainable development and avoid exploitative use of natural resources.

The practice of utilizing natural resources and the environment should be carried out by the Toba Batak community based on a system of local knowledge, local wisdom, values, norms,



rules and religions that apply to their lives. Although natural resources can be used to meet the needs of the Toba Batak community, natural resources and the environment must be managed and utilized wisely. Local residents in treating natural resources and to support their lives, do not only use them freely, the most important thing is to maintain harmony (Mitchell, 2007; Dwi Susilo, 2008; Keraf, 2010). The natural resources found around Lake Toba are absolutely managed and put to good use. If the natural resources around the lake are not managed and used wisely, the Toba Batak community will not be able to obtain maximum benefits to support their lives. The Toba Batak community should implement a strategy for managing and utilizing natural resources that are environmentally friendly to maintain balance, harmony and adaptation to the availability of natural resources and the environmental carrying capacity of Lake Toba.

To avoid destructive behavior towards Lake Toba, the Toba Batak community manages and utilizes natural resources properly and avoids exploitative behavior. Natural resources are utilized and managed in a planned manner without damaging the lake. This behavior is inseparable from the belief of the Toba Batak community that all nature and everything in it has the same spirit (*tondi*) as humans (*jolma*) (Gultom, 2010; Sinaga, 2012; Marluga, 2016). Therefore, in the management and utilization of natural resources, the Toba Batak people: (i) must behave well with fellow living beings and not damage the environment; (ii) in carrying out the work, one must be honest and not exploit natural resources; (iii) utilizing natural resources in moderation should not be greedy, with the principle of using sufficient natural resources to meet needs (*ndang boi mokus manggunahon hamoraon ni portibi*); (iv) the Toba Batak community is obliged to maintain and preserve the natural resources found around Lake Toba; and (v) the Toba Batak people guide and re-function the values of local wisdom, social culture, religion and local knowledge in utilizing and treating natural resources around Lake Toba (Situmorang, 1982; Gultom, 2010).

The Toba Batak community believes that in utilizing and maintaining natural resources, it must be carried out in a planned and sustainable manner so that the lake is well maintained and based on socio-cultural values, local knowledge and local wisdom. Lake Toba is an integral part of the universe that is beneficial for the welfare of the Toba Batak people and other living creatures that must be maintained properly (Causey, 2003; Nainggolan, 2014). God gave the Toba Batak community this mandate to treat natural resources well (*sasude tinoppani debata mulajadi na bolon ikkon in haholongi*). The Toba Batak people are not prohibited from utilizing the natural resources found around Lake Toba but still maintain them properly under the value of local wisdom which requires the Toba Batak community to maintain Lake Toba. This view is in line with the opinion of Steward (1955) that the factors that influence human activities outside the core of culture are socio-cultural values, arts, language and mythology. The current reality is that in managing and utilizing water resources and natural resources in the Lake Toba area, the Toba Batak community pays little attention to ecological wisdom and environmental ethics. Management and utilization of natural resources in lakes tends to be exploitative without considering the limitations and sustainability of natural resources for the needs of present and future generations.

The Relationship between the Toba Batak Socio-Cultural System and Lake Toba



In maintaining their survival, all living things, including humans, absolutely maintain harmonious relationships with their environment because humans live in integration with the environment, have interdependence, and interact reciprocally with nature (Adimihardja, 1993; Henneberg, 2001; Soemarwoto, 2004). The relationship between sociocultural systems and the environment related to natural processes emphasizes the interdependence between humans and other living things and natural objects. Therefore, the relationship between Lake Toba and the Toba Batak socio-cultural system (abiotic) is functional, interacting with each other as a whole (holistic) (Situmorang, 1982; Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Sitanggang, 2017). The Toba Batak community has traditional and ecological wisdom that is very good for the environment, such as: *harangan tokka, poda na lima, marsidapari, tokka marulaon nasumsam, manuan hau sari marnaek, tokka marobu harangan, mambagan bagas ditepi tao, maralup dekke dohot toba, padeggan nausea* and others (Tobing, 1956; Sijabat, 1970; Causey, 2003; Sitorus, 2017).

When traditional wisdom is obeyed and guided by the Toba Batak community, the condition of the natural environment is still well maintained. However, along with the progress and dynamics in the life of the Toba Batak community, there is a change in views and understanding of the value of traditional wisdom which is destructive to the maintenance of Lake Toba causing disruption of interaction with Lake Toba. Destructive changes occur because the Toba Batak people do not follow traditional wisdom in their daily lives, affecting their behavior towards the environment. The goodness or badness of Lake Toba depends on the consistency of the Toba Batak community in guiding the socio-cultural system and traditional wisdom and their behavior in treating Lake Toba. This is under the Batak Toba philosophy which contains *ulini tao toba taruntung tu parange dohot parsaoan ni halak Batak Toba na denggang tu tao toba* (maintaining Lake Toba is very dependent on the behavior and interactions of the Toba Batak community with Lake Toba).

The Toba Batak community in its interaction with Lake Toba is mediated by its socio-cultural value system (Blommaert, 2013). The traditional wisdom (local knowledge and local wisdom) possessed influences the behavior of the Toba Batak people towards Lake Toba which has now changed. Some of the socio-cultural values of the Toba Batak are less adaptive to the maintenance of Lake Toba, causing the interaction (parsaoan) between Lake Toba and the Toba Batak people to be less harmonious and harmonious (Causey, 2003; Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Sitanggang, 2017). To maintain a harmonious relationship with Lake Toba, the Toba Batak cultural value system that contradicts the maintenance of the lake must be revitalized, for example: *ulaon na sumsam, materialist, hamoraon philosophy, hasangapon, harajaon, hosom, elat, late, teal, hidup menerabas* (mokkas) and behavior of the king. Traditional wisdom and ecological wisdom that are expected and recommended again to be guided by all communities living around Lake Toba, consist of: *sidapot solup do na ro, rhyme hamoluan tois hamagoan, marsidapari, marsiaminin songo lapak ni gaol, mangka holongi sude tinoppa ni debata, marobu, harangan tokka, poda na lima, martutu aek, manuan sarimarnaek, aek godang aek sea, dos ni roha sibaen na saut, martutu aek, manuan sarimarnaek, mangase tao, las roha tuna ias, roha na dame, mangalakka tu jolo marpanaili tupudi and parbahul bahul nabolon* (Tobing, 1956; Simanjuntak, 2015; Siagian, 2018).

This traditional wisdom has now changed and experienced dysfunction in the life (Maryelliwati et al., 2022). The Toba Batak community in Sianjur Mula-Mula District causing



disharmony in interactions with Lake Toba. As a result of the dysfunction of traditional wisdom which is full of ecological wisdom in the life of the Toba Batak community, the environmental degradation of Lake Toba is increasing, so that the homeostasis between the Lake Toba environment and the Toba Batak community is disturbed (Napitu, 2021). The relationship between the Toba Batak community and Lake Toba is influenced by the functional and dysfunctional socio-cultural systems associated with biophysical systems. The reciprocal relationship between social systems, traditional wisdom, and biophysics is harmonious because of energy, material, and information flow. The Toba Batak community needs energy, materials and information in their lives. These three elements contribute to the life of the Toba Batak people around Lake Toba (Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Arif, 2014; Sitanggang, 2017).

The Toba Batak socio-cultural system includes ideology, values, traditions, local wisdom, beliefs, knowledge, and social structures. The ideology or beliefs of the Toba Batak people consist of religion, *dalihan na tolu*, values, norms, customs and other values in the form of local knowledge and wisdom. Traditional wisdom is expressed through behavior in managing and utilizing Lake Toba's natural resources. With the traditional wisdom of the Toba Batak people can understand various forms; natural conditions, climate, change of seasons, use of equipment, technology, science and works of art under natural phenomena around Lake Toba. The importance of this understanding is that the Toba Batak people avoid destructive behavior towards Lake Toba (Tobing, 1956; Sijabat, 1970; Situmorang, 1982).

The life of the Toba Batak community cannot be separated from the Lake Toba ecosystem as its environment. Lake Toba colors the life of the Toba Batak people and is influenced by the behavior of the Toba Batak people towards Lake Toba. The relationship between the Toba Batak community and Lake Toba can harmonize if the Toba Batak community implements good and adaptive behavior by avoiding *nasumsam* behavior towards Lake Toba. Today, the Toba Batak people tend to behave maladaptive and destructively towards Lake Toba (Tobing, 1956; Situmorang, 1982). The interdependence between soil (*tano*), plants (*suan-suanan*) and water (*aek*) means that the Toba Batak people cannot separate their lives from Lake Toba, water, soil, plants and other natural objects, have dependence and attachment. The attachment of all these elements to the life of the Toba Batak community cannot be separated, complementing each other to create a harmonious relationship between the Toba Batak community and the natural surroundings (Situmorang, 1982; Causey 2003; Simanjuntak, 2015).

The beauty of Lake Toba inspired the composer to compose a song that describes Lake Toba as a very beautiful lake with the title song: *O tao toba rajani sude tao. Ulimi tarbarita do tu sap portibi* (Oh Lake Toba, king of all lakes, your beauty and beauty are famous worldwide). The meaning of the lyrics of this song illustrates that Lake Toba is related to the socio-cultural system, art in the Toba Batak community. Sitor Situmorang (late) as a Batak composer, composed a poem with the sound *Alogo dohot aekni tao toba, dibagas parningotan debti hon ho, situriak di Sihaetekon, tongtong do icon dipadenggan jolma ho, asa boi dilehon ho nauli dohotna with tu hanguloan* (angin tu hanguloan) (Lake Toba is cool and beautiful in my memories, I listen to your stories when you were young, you must keep it up so that you can give the best for life). The meaning of this poem implies that the Toba Batak social system is taught to maintain good relations with Lake Toba. If Lake Toba (abiotic) is maintained properly, it will provide the Toba Batak people a good life. The content of this poem suggests that the entire Batak Toba



community living around Lake Toba must be in harmony with Lake Toba so that the beauty and coolness of Lake Toba is maintained and provides a source of life to people who treat Lake Toba well. This poem describes the Toba Batak socio-cultural system related to natural (abiotic) objects (Situmorang, 1982; Pasaribu and Marpaung, 2000).

Other compositions about Lake Toba written by Sitor Situmorang (late) are as follows: *O tao Toba, tao na wellung iasna, nalubomi ulimi, molo huidarupami sian na dao, tudos do ho tu sere denggan na jala ulina, mangalehon hangoluan tusude jolma na mangkaholongi* (Oh Lake Toba, the most beautiful lake, if I look at your face from a distance, your beauty looks like a diamond, giving life to all those who love you). The meaning of the lyrics of this song tells that Lake Toba is a beautiful lake and its beauty is like a diamond gem. The beautiful Lake Toba provides coolness and prosperity for the Toba Batak people who love it. The lyric of this song is a manifestation of the Toba Batak social system, while Lake Toba is part of the abiotic element (Situmorang, 1982; Causey, 2003). The Toba Batak community living and living around Lake Toba cannot be separated from their lives from Lake Toba. This is in accordance with the sound of the Batak Toba philosophy which states *dang tarsirang halak Batak dohot tao Toba* (the Toba Batak people cannot be separated from Lake Toba). The meaning of this expression is that the Toba Batak people during their lives are very dependent, related, integrated with Lake Toba (abiotic) and the Toba Batak social system. The Toba Batak community cannot carry on their life without the role of inanimate objects (abiotic) around Lake Toba. These abiotic objects, contribute to the life of the Toba Batak people. Inanimate objects (abiotic) found in the Lake Toba area consists of: stone, sand, soil, air, Lake Toba and other objects. These abiotic objects are useful for the life of the Toba Batak community. The Toba Batak people use all these objects wisely and wisely. These abiotic objects must be properly maintained for the present and future needs of the Toba Batak community. Lake Toba as one of the abiotic elements and a place to live for various types of living things provides benefits for the lives of living things, including the Toba Batak people who live around Lake Toba (Nasution and Damanik, 2009; Arif, 2014).

Revitalizing Toba Batak Socio-Cultural Values in Environmental Preservation

Analyzing and comprehensively understanding the meaning of cultural revitalization in environmental preservation of Lake Toba begins with an understanding of the general description of the ideal Toba Batak culture with Toba Batak culture which has changed at this time. Toba Batak cultural values are currently experiencing a crisis related to environmental preservation. Revitalization in this case is to awaken and reuse the cultural values of the Toba Batak which are considered progress. If this can be maximized and implemented, the repositioned Toba Batak cultural values will significantly impact environmental conservation. However, understanding Toba Batak cultural values today cannot ignore the occurrence of cultural changes that will bring progress, but on the other hand, can bring setbacks. In the context of the environmental preservation of Lake Toba, if the change in cultural values is regressive, then the Toba Batak people will not change their behavior and mentality for environmental conservation. But on the contrary, if the Toba Batak people are willing to revitalize culture through changes in mentality, attitude, and behavior, then will support environmental conservation. There have been a lot of costs and environmental conservation development programs that the government has implemented until now. But in reality, the Lake Toba



environment is not getting more sustainable but is increasingly damaged, which is marked by the declining quality of the Lake Toba environment. If this is jointly realized, there will be a change in the mindset and behavior of the community in maintaining the Lake Toba environment.

Development programs that have paid less attention to community participation and use a cultural approach will be revived together with all elements of society. Such a cultural approach will change the attitudes and behavior of the people who are ethnically the majority of the Toba Batak, revitalize cultural values and mutually support the Lake Toba Conservation Program. Such conditions are necessary because in essence, environmental conservation is part of the development program, not only the government's responsibility but also a shared responsibility. Therefore, the success or failure of environmental conservation is highly dependent on the revitalization of the socio-cultural system and the commitment of the entire Batak Toba community who live around Lake Toba and the Sianjur Mula-Mula District in particular.

This value, in the past, was still guided and implemented by local communities in daily life, influencing the character and behavior of the Toba Batak people in carrying out various activities (Silalahi, 2014; Situmorang, 2012; Simanjuntak, 2015). The values that have undergone these changes that affect the behavior and interactions of the Toba Batak community towards Lake Toba and are important for revitalization consist of; *hamoraon*, *hosom*, *elat*, *teal*, *late* and *raja* (Siahaan and Harahap, 1987; Simanjuntak, 2015a). Socio-cultural values that have experienced degradation include:

1) *Hamoraon, Hasangapon, and Hagabeon*

At present, the attitude of materialism and pragmatism has hit almost all ethnic groups, including the life of the Toba Batak people. The development of this lifestyle is due to the demands of increasingly complex needs and a wasteful lifestyle. The slogans "time is money" and "money grow money" color the life of the Toba Batak people, which are considered characteristics of modern society. These cultural values encourage the Toba Batak people to often justify any means to achieve *hamoraon*, *hasangapon*, and *harajaon*. However, sometimes they violate religious norms and legal norms. In contrast, in these noble values the Toba Batak people are motivated to work hard and honestly to achieve *hamoraon*, *hasangapon* and *hagabeon*. (Siahaan and Harahap, 1987; Vergouwen, 2004; Silalahi, 2014). For the maintenance of Lake Toba, sacrifice and a sincere attitude are needed in carrying out various activities aimed at preserving, maintaining and restoring the polluted condition of Lake Toba. The philosophy of *hamoraon*, *hasangapon*, *harajaon* and *hagabeon* adopted by the Toba Batak people tends to be unfavorable to the maintenance of Lake Toba. So it is important to revitalize it because the lifestyle of local people today tends to be a materialist, and the pursuit of wealth as much as possible sometimes justifies any means. This socio-cultural value exacerbates the interaction of the Toba Batak community with Lake Toba because the activities needed to restore Lake Toba are sincere activities of the entire Toba Batak community and treat Lake Toba well.

2) *Sifat hosom, elat, teal dan late*

The negative attitudes and characters possessed by the Toba Batak people are reflected in the attitude of *hosom*, *elat*, *teal*, and *late*. The negative attitudes and characters are regressive traits in the life of the Toba Batak community, which were inherited from their ancestors and are still found in the life of the Toba Batak community. This negative trait is difficult to remove and hinders progress for the Toba Batak people. Suppose this attitude is related to the adaptation and



maintenance of Lake Toba. In that case, it is very contradictory because the Toba Batak community is difficult to work with in implementing the Lake Toba maintenance program, which requires the whole community's participation. The nature of *hosom, elat, teal and late*, makes it difficult to maintain Lake Toba because it is difficult for Toba Batak people to be directed to carry out cooperation (*marsidapari*) work without any strings attached. The character and nature of the Toba Batak people, often described in the expressions *pistar dang tarpangguruan, oto dang tarjari* (said to be smart but cannot be used as a place for learning, is said to be stupid but cannot be taught), means stubborn and wants to win on their own. The stubborn and unruly character of the Toba Batak people complicates their adaptation to the Lake Toba environment (Silalahi, 2014; Simanjuntak, 2015).

3) Raja (Government)

In the Toba Batak kinship structure, all *dalihan na tolu* kinship elements have the nickname king and apply to all relatives, namely *rajani hula-hula, rajani dongan sauntunga and rajani boru*. Basically the *dalihan na tolu* kinship system in ancient times was to teach virtue and wisdom to all Toba Batak people to be egalitarian because all Toba Batak people had played the role of *raja ni hula-hula, boru and dongan sauntunga*. This equality of status and position is reflected in the attitude of *manat mardongan tubu, elek marboru, and sombo hula-hula*. However, this egalitarian value has changed over time. The king's nickname is no longer interpreted as a person who is elder/respected in the life of the Toba Batak people but as a ruler who tends to be arrogant (Vergouwen, 2004; Sinaga, 2012; Silalahi, 2014). The deviation in the behavior of the *dalihan na tolu*, is the cause of the emergence of the attitude of the Toba Batak people, who find it difficult to behave like servants, feel powerful, feel smart, and feel superior to others. To improve the character of the Toba Batak people, the behavior they want to serve must be changed into serving behavior. Such behavior change is very constructive and adaptive to carry out the maintenance of Lake Toba. The problem is, currently, in the social life of the Toba Batak people in Sianjur Mula-Mula District, a phenomenon is found that the king is not only limited to the structure of *dalihan na tolu*, but in everyday life is interpreted as a ruler (Vergouwen, 2004; Silaen, 2014).

In cultural revitalization, it is important to empower and explore local wisdom and social capital related to environmental conservation, namely: *Poda na Lima, Horja, Huta (marsipature forestabe), marsiurupan, marsialapare and Dalihan na Tolu*. Under Batak culture, the Batak community is bound by *Dalihan Natolu's* kinship in carrying out all work, both joy and sorrow, including the implementation of development, which is done together. The concept of *Huta* is a territorial unit inhabited by several nuclear family groups and extended family groups who jointly carry out any work that is realized through cooperation activities (*marsida pari*). For example, suppose *gotong royong* is carried out by the government and the community. In that case, the direction of the workforce will be maximized because there is no work on Batak land that is carried out partially but carried out together. This concept can be developed from the village, sub-district, and district levels together. *Poda na lima* which is essentially an advice to all Batak people to consciously preserve the physical and non-physical environment. These cultural values are preserved and maintained and most importantly implemented in environmental conservation, including motivating the community to actively participate in carrying out all types of activities, including environmental conservation.



Applying Toba Batak's socio-cultural values in the context of environmental preservation of Lake Toba requires the courage to revitalize and reform old socio-cultural values. Through honest, rational, and objective changes in attitudes towards what has been and will be implemented through self-reflection. This means that the Toba Batak community must be able to evaluate positive socio-cultural values that must be developed and that progress in nature must be abandoned. Likewise, old cultural values (local wisdom) that are positive must be explored and empowered for progress. Old cultural values used in everyday life but were counterproductive for development and environmental preservation must be abandoned. Cultural values that are progressing are re-optimized so that what is expected can be realized in all aspects of people's lives (Siahaan, 1987).

Cultural values are redeveloped for environmental preservation as in the philosophy of *Poda Na Lima*, consisting of: 1) *Paiasroham* means cleaning your soul, mind, feelings, heart, and value of taste and character. 2) *Paiaspamatang* means to clean your body and maintain your physical fitness. 3) *Paiasparabitanmu* means cleaning clothes and tidying up your makeup. 4) *Paiasbagasmu*, clean your house and your home environment. This advice asks the Batak people always to be environmentally friendly. 5) *Paiaspakaranganmu*, clean your environment in a physical sense. Humans are taught to always carry out a harmonious, balanced life with the environment (Lubis, 1996).

Cultural revitalization implies three dimensions of time. The past dimension, namely cultural traditions as the ancestral heritage of the past. It needs to be protected in the context of preservation and activated and even revived. Development and management imply the present dimension, namely cultural traditions that need to be developed in the concept of preservation and managed in the concept of revitalization. In development with a cultural perspective, cultural preservation and revitalization efforts must prioritize empowerment, ethnic culture, and national culture to build national character, welfare, and civilization as the spearhead of the preservation and revitalization of culture is a reliable resource. Six cultural resources need to be considered in the preservation and revitalization of culture: actors, supporters, academics, government, cultural promoters, and cultural industrialists (Sibarani, 2013). The revitalization of socio-cultural values through the empowerment of cooperation institutions in the community will form a synergistic strength in society. This will be realized through socio-cultural dynamics and the process of strengthening customs in a relatively large period.

The model of revitalization and preservation of cultural traditions requires special planning and research because it involves the community that owns it. Six steps are categorized into three revitalization components: revitalizing/reactivating management, and inheriting cultural traditions and preserving components, namely: protection, development, and utilization of cultural traditions. Revival is intended, so that cultural traditions that have become extinct are reactivated, while reactivation is intended for cultural traditions still alive (Sibarani, 2013). The strengthening and revitalization of indigenous peoples is the initial part of touching the progress and sustainability of development pursued through the revitalization of cultural values and customs in the community, strengthening the gotong royong institution, which is a strategic entry point for community empowerment (Pranaji, 2009).

Starting from the above, in the context of environmental conservation, Lake Toba demands that renewal and innovation of old habits be carried out through honest, rational, objective



attitude changes towards what has been and will be implemented through self-reflection. Through refinement and renewal of cultural values that once existed, even those lost have been revived so that they are functional in environmental preservation. Toba Batak cultural values that need to be revitalized in the context of environmental conservation are: *Poda na lima*, *marsialapari*, *marsiurupan horja*, *marsipature forestabe*, *dalihun na tolu* and various other folktales which suggest that humans must respect nature. If this is revived, these cultural values will gradually function again in preserving the Lake Toba environment.

The utilization of local wisdom is important because the elements of local culture play a role in environmental preservation. (a) Elements of local culture have the legitimacy of social traditions within the community that become a means of development, and (b) elements of the local culture are symbolically the most important means of communication within the local population. (c) Elements of local culture have a variety of functions, both tangible and hidden as a useful means to bring about change. Mardikanto (2014). Utilization of local Toba Batak wisdom that lives in local communities and is related to environmental care is very appropriate for environmental care. Through the use of local Toba Batak wisdom, all elements of society can collectively be motivated and empowered for the environmental conservation activities of Lake Toba. The very important meaning of maintaining the environment of Lake Toba is not only the responsibility of the government but also the shared responsibility of all elements of the existing community. One thing that is no less important in environmental conservation is the involvement and role of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in the form of collective movements. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other social organizations were born and developed in the community under social dynamics, supporting various sustainable development programs in the Lake Toba area.

4. CONCLUSION

The environmental damage to Lake Toba is getting more serious due to industrial development, logging, development of floating net fish farms, waste disposal, dysfunction of socio-cultural values, and government policies that prioritize economic growth without synergizing with socio-cultural and environmental development. Socio-cultural values of the Toba Batak are dysfunctional for preserving the Lake Toba environment so that the Lake Toba environment can be preserved again. These cultural values must be revitalized so that the socio-cultural values are adaptive to the Lake Toba environment. Maintenance of the environment of Lake Toba can be carried out comprehensively and optimally if local wisdom is used in the management and utilization of natural resources and water resources in the Lake Toba area. The economic development program should be implemented in Sianjur District first by synergizing economic development and socio-cultural and environmental development under sustainable development. Based on the research results, the authors suggest the following points, (a) to restore the function of maintaining and preserving Lake Toba, all communities living in the Lake Toba area must have the awareness that Lake Toba must be passed on not only to current generations but also to future generations. Therefore Lake Toba must be maintained and preserved properly good. (b) cultural values that are regressive to the preservation of the Lake Toba environment must be repositioned, redefined, and revitalized to suit the needs of today's society. Likewise, local wisdom that becomes social capital in the maintenance and preservation



of the environment must be maintained and implemented in daily life to preserve the environment of Lake Toba.

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