



Mutual Cooperation In The Modern Era: Is It Still Relevant?

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Abstract

Background. *Gotong royong* is a cultural value rooted in the life of the Indonesian people. It reflects the spirit of togetherness, help-to-help, and cooperation in solving various social problems. However, as times develop and lifestyles become increasingly individualistic, these values face challenges in maintaining.

Aim. This research aims to analyze the relevance of *the culture of mutual cooperation* in the modern era and how this culture is still applied despite social changes.

Methods. The study used a qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques with three respondents who lived in the KPAD area. The data obtained was analyzed to identify the form of mutual cooperation implementation and its supporting and inhibiting factors.

Results. The study's results show that mutual cooperation is still carried out in various forms, such as community service, social activities, and the construction of public facilities. However, several obstacles, such as individual busyness, differences in values between generations, and the influence of technology, decrease active community participation.

Conclusions. The culture of *cooperation* is still relevant in the modern era, but it requires adjustment to the current context of life to remain effective.

Implications. Preservation efforts can be carried out through increasing public awareness through socialization, community coaching, and involving the younger generation in community activities to strengthen the spirit of togetherness.

Avoid writing literature citations and abbreviations in the abstract. Don't forget to include the title of the research.

Keywords: Gotong Royong, Modern Era, Society, Social, Culture.

INTRODUCTION

Gotong royong has been an important foundation in the social life of the community since ancient times, as a noble value of Indonesian culture. Etymologically, this term refers to "working together to achieve a collective goal" (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). This value not only reflects the spirit of togetherness and solidarity but is also in line with the principles of Pancasila, especially the third precept, "Indonesian Unity" (Wibowo & Setiawan, 2016).

However, in the midst of globalization, urbanization, and rapid technological developments, the practice of mutual cooperation faces significant challenges. Changes in the social structure of modern societies tend to erode these traditional values, raising critical questions about their relevance in the contemporary era (Dewanti et al., 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Similar research shows that cooperation is not just a tradition, but an effective strategy in the social and economic development of the community. For example, Haryanto (2017) found that cooperation plays a major role in improving social welfare and strengthening integration in multicultural societies. Meanwhile, Siregar (2020) revealed that the value of cooperation can be social capital in encouraging sustainable development. However, amid modernization, indicators of mutual cooperation, such as togetherness, physical cooperation, and volunteerism, began to be eroded by individualism and reduced face-to-face interaction (Putnam, 2000). This phenomenon sparked a discussion about how cooperation can adapt to the dynamics of modern society without losing its essence. This research aims to analyze the relevance of cooperation in the modern era, focusing on its application in social life, its impact on social cohesion, and the challenges it faces. At the AD Housing Complex in Gegerkalong, Bandung, this study used a qualitative method involving participatory observation and in-depth interviews. By involving respondents from different generations, this study seeks to explore a multidimensional perspective on the transformation of cooperation. The results of the research are expected to provide strategic recommendations to maintain or modify the value of cooperation to remain relevant, as well as enrich academic studies on local wisdom in the midst of changing times.

METHOD

Our research used a qualitative approach using data collection techniques through interviews and direct observation. The study was conducted at the AD Gegerkalong Housing Complex, Bandung, which was chosen because it maintains the tradition of mutual cooperation in modern residential environments. The research involved three main informants who were selected based on their involvement in gotong royong activities, namely Mrs. Etni (57 years old), Pak Ari (44 years old), and Ummu Azzam (53 years old). Two main methods carried out data collection. First, semi-structured interviews with informants to find out information about the forms of mutual cooperation activities that are

still being carried out, the frequency of implementation, and the level of citizen participation. Second, direct observation of the implementation of real activities such as community service and social events in related environments. The data we obtained was then analyzed qualitatively by identifying the participation patterns of the resource persons and the challenges faced in maintaining the tradition of cooperation. To ensure the correctness of the data, in the study we conducted we used a triangulation method by comparing the results of interviews between informants and matching them with the results of direct observation in the field. Although the scope of the study was limited to one location with a relatively small number of informants, the findings of this study can provide an initial picture of the sustainability of the value of mutual cooperation in modern urban society. The results of our research are expected to contribute to understanding the transformation of traditional values in social changes that occur in urban areas.

DISCUSSION

We have four research results: three interviews with respondents and one comparative analysis between past and present mutual cooperation.

Table 1. First Respondent's Answer

Question	Respondents 1
What are the gotong royong activities held at KPAD?	Community service, community gatherings, public health socialization
How often are activities carried out?	Often
How often are you involved?	Rarely, because they have other busy schedules
Do you think that the culture of cooperation is starting to fade?	No, it remains.
What challenges face maintaining and preserving the culture of mutual cooperation in the modern era?	Their respective busyness
What efforts can be made to maintain and preserve culture?	Still trying to participate even though they are busy (example: donating snacks to community service residents as a form of participation)

Source: Research Data

Table 2. Second Respondent's Answer

Question	Respondents 2
What are the gotong royong activities held at KPAD?	Clean Friday, build a gate
How often are activities carried out?	Often, it is carried out weekly, namely on Fridays and on if there is a construction.
How often are you involved?	Often, even building a gate involves
Do you think that the culture of cooperation is starting to fade?	Still, even though it's different from the past
What challenges face maintaining and preserving the culture of mutual cooperation in the modern era?	Busy
What efforts can be made to maintain and preserve culture?	Protecting the community by continuing to invite each other, socialization by residents (e.g. RT, RW)

Source: Research Data

Table 3. Third Respondent's Answer

Question	Respondents 3
What are the gotong royong activities held at KPAD?	Distribution of takjil during the month of Ramadan, community service, and events on public holidays
How often are activities carried out?	Often, some activities span days, weeks, months, to years
How often are you involved?	Often, it just so happens that I'm a manager
Do you think that the culture of cooperation is starting to fade?	It still exists, but compared to previous generations, it certainly has a significant difference
What challenges face maintaining and preserving the culture of mutual cooperation in the modern era?	Local rules/customs, namely having to follow elders or local rules, are often an obstacle, especially for elders who cannot adapt to modern times, as well as young people who camp as a challenge
What efforts can be made to maintain and preserve culture?	Cooperation between RT/RW administrators, involving the younger generation, creating a community to support activities in the local area (youth organization, mosque youth)

Source: Research Data

Based on the results of the interviews, cooperation activities within the KPAD environment are still quite diverse and have an important role in people's lives. Respondents mentioned several activities that are still routinely carried out, such as community service

work to clean the environment, clean Fridays, the construction of public facilities such as gates, and social activities such as the distribution of takjil during Ramadan and national holiday commemoration events. This shows that mutual cooperation still has a place in the life of modern society.

Table 4. Comparison of Mutual Cooperation Then and Now

Aspects	Gotong Royong First	Gotong Royong Now
Form of Activity	Joint house construction, collective harvesting, and disaster management	Community service, clean Friday, health socialization, and takjil distribution
Participation	All residents are expected to participate	Old people dominate it, and only a few young people.
Inhibiting Factors	There are rarely any obstacles; mutual cooperation is a social obligation	Individual busyness, generational differences, and technology
Involvement of the Young Generation	Very high, as part of the tradition	Varied, some are less interested due to differences in values
Frequency	Done almost whenever there is a social need	Done based on specific needs and schedules

Source: Research Data

When compared to the previous community, mutual cooperation used to be carried out with a higher intensity and involved almost all members of the community. In the past, mutual cooperation was not just a social activity, but part of a life system that every citizen must carry out. For example, building houses together, rice harvesting that is carried out collectively, and disaster management that is spontaneous and selfless. In the modern context, mutual cooperation persists, but in a more flexible form and does not always involve all members of society.

The frequency of implementation of this activity also varies. Some activities are carried out every week, such as Clean Friday, while other activities, such as the construction of public facilities, are carried out based on need. However, although cooperative activities still exist, community involvement in these activities varies. Some actively participate, but others are rarely involved due to personal busyness. Busy work and individual responsibilities are the main reasons hindering their involvement in cooperation. In the past, the community work system tended to be more agrarian and communal-based, making it easier to involve the community in cooperation. Nowadays, with more individualistic work patterns and long working hours, participation in cooperation has become more limited.

In addition to the busyness factor, differences in values and perspectives between generations are also a challenge in maintaining a culture of cooperation. Older generations tend to hold fast to the value of cooperation and make it a social obligation. In comparison, younger generations often have a more flexible understanding and see it as optional. Some respondents also revealed that obstacles exist in the form of customary rules that are sometimes not in accordance with the times, making the younger generation feel less interested in participating.

To overcome this challenge, the KPAD community has made several efforts. One is by contributing in other forms, such as donating food or cleaning tools for residents who cannot participate directly in cooperation activities. In addition, socialization carried out by the head of RT/RW and the formation of communities, for example, youth organizations and mosque youths, are also strategies to attract more participation from the younger generation. In this way, cooperation can still occur even with a more flexible format and under the current conditions of society.

CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that cooperation is still relevant in the modern era, although there are various challenges in its implementation. Individual busyness and differences in perspectives between generations are the main factors that affect community involvement in cooperation activities. However, with adaptations such as socialization, community involvement, and other innovative approaches, the culture of cooperation can remain sustainable and contribute to building togetherness in society. In the future, there needs to be stronger collaboration between the community, stakeholders, and the younger generation to maintain the sustainability of the value of cooperation in the modern era. Innovation in the way of implementing cooperation is also important so that this culture remains attractive to the younger generation and relevant in society's increasingly dynamic life.

IMPLEMENTATION

Preservation efforts can be carried out through increasing public awareness through socialization, community coaching, and involving the younger generation in community activities to strengthen the spirit of togetherness.

Acknowledgement:

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to Ann's publication team and Ann's editorial team for their support, guidance, and significant contributions in compiling and improving this journal. The cooperation and dedication have helped significantly improve the quality of writing. Hopefully, this collaboration can continue to be established in the future.

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