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LIVESTOCK TRADING WITH COVERING CLOTHS: A CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE MUARO PANEH LIVESTOCK MARKET, SOLOK

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Abstract

This article examines the phenomenon of buying and selling livestock carried out at the Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market, with a focus on the practice of livestock trading using a unique method during transactions, namely when haggling over prices between buyers and sellers using cloth coverings and finger symbols to determine the price. livestock, so no one knows how much livestock prices are offered by sellers to buyers. The culture of transactions using cloth coverings is a tradition carried out by the local community with the aim of establishing an attitude of mutual care and respect for fellow traders. This is one of the local wisdoms found in the Muaro Paneh livestock market, Bukit Sundi sub-district, Solok regency. This research aims to analyze the cultural and economic aspects of this practice as well as the relevance of this tradition in the lives of local communities. Using a qualitative approach and participant observation, this research found that the use of cloth coverings in livestock transactions not only has economic value, but also reflects rich social, symbolic, and cultural dimensions in social interactions between sellers and buyers. The results of the analysis show that the cloth covering is not only a transaction tool, but also a symbol that contains deep religious and social meaning.

Keywords:

Culture, economy, livestock trade, cover cloth, livestock market

INTRODUCTION

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is a traditional livestock market located in Muaro Paneh, Bukit Sundi District, situated in the highlands of West Sumatra. This geographical setting is favorable for agricultural and livestock activities. Muaro Paneh is positioned in a fertile highland area approximately 50 kilometers from the city of Solok. The district lies along a major transportation route that connects various regions in Solok Regency, making it strategically important for the flow of goods and services.

According to the historical origins of Nagari Muaro Paneh, before the area was named Muaro Paneh, it was known as *Dusun Tuo Surambi Nan Duo Baleh Koto*. At that time, there were no traditional chiefs (*penghulu*); instead, the community was led by a religious leader responsible for managing religious, customary, and administrative matters. This figure was Sikudah Laweh, titled *Tuan Syekh Labay Panjang*, a representative of *TuanKu Kadhi* from Padang Ganting, who resided in Sigok, known as *Perhentian Tinggi*. Syekh Labay Panjang was the leader of Cupak Selayo and later arrived in *Dusun Tuo*. As the population of Dusun Tuo grew, Tuan Syekh Labay Panjang held a deliberation with traditional leaders Dt. Rajo Mansue, Dt. Gunuang Ameh, Dt. Puncak Rajo Bandaro, and Dt. Putieh to appoint *penghulu* (clan leaders) to serve as protectors (*parik paga*) of the *nagari*. Representatives from Pariangan, Padang Panjang, namely, Dt. Maharajo Basa and Dt. Bandaro Kayo also participated in the deliberation.

The consensus resulted in the appointment of three *penghulu*: Dt. Gadang, Dt. Kayo, and Dt. Bungsu. Additionally, six clans (*suku*) were established in the *nagari* of Dusun Tuo Surambi Nan Duo Baleh Koto: Kutianyie, Melayu, Caniago, Piliang, Tanjuang, and Koto Sikumbang. [Zulfirman, *Monografi Nagari Muaro Paneh Kecamatan Bukit Sundi*, 2013, p. 6]. The name *Muaro Paneh* (meaning “hot estuary or Muara Panas”) is believed to originate from an incident in which the water at the end of the river felt hot during a bath.

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is widely recognized as one of the traditional markets facilitating the trade of livestock, particularly cattle, goats, and buffalo. In addition to livestock, the market also features the exchange of other commodities, such as *cover cloths* used as part of the negotiation process. This unique practice not only reflects the economic aspect of the market but also illustrates the strong cultural dimension within Minangkabau society. The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role as one of the key economic hubs in Solok Regency and its surrounding areas. It serves as a gathering place for farmers, traders, and buyers from various parts of Solok and other regions in West Sumatra. Its strategic location makes it a central meeting point for livestock and agricultural transactions.

The market is easily accessible to the people of Muaro Paneh and neighboring areas in Solok Regency. Its proximity to the main road allows farmers and traders to transport their goods—both livestock and agricultural products—with ease. This accessibility also facilitates the distribution of livestock to other regions within West Sumatra and even to areas outside the province. Besides livestock, the surrounding area of Muaro Paneh is also known for its fertile agricultural activities, especially in rice, vegetables, and fruit production. As a major livestock market, Muaro Paneh supports the trade of various agricultural and livestock products, which are closely linked within the local economic system. Additionally, the market serves as a crucial link between rural livestock traders and larger markets in urban centers such as Solok City, Padang, and nearby regions.

METHODOLOGY

This article employs a qualitative approach using a case study method conducted at the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market. Data were collected through direct observation at the

market. The researcher conducted fieldwork by observing and interviewing various informants, including traders, buyers, community leaders, and local residents involved in the livestock market activities. Additionally, the researcher observed the physical space and environment of the market and reviewed relevant literature concerning market traditions and local economic practices.

The material objects analyzed in this study include several key aspects related to the research focus. First is the **livestock trading transaction process**, where the study concentrates on the procedures and methods of transactions to analyze them from cultural and economic perspectives. The second object is the **use of cover cloth in the transaction process**. The cloth serves as a symbolic object in this study, and the transactional cloth can take various forms such as towels, sarongs, hats, or even clothing worn by the traders or buyers themselves. The third object is the **structure of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market**. The market itself is an important object of analysis; its spatial arrangement, market layout, and transaction mechanisms provide insights into the economic patterns that develop there, as well as how local culture influences the conduct of trade.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Brief History of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market, Solok

1. Origin of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is estimated to have existed for hundreds of years, developing in response to the community's need for an adequate place to conduct livestock trading transactions. Muaro Paneh itself is an area located along the Batang Masang River, historically known as an important site within the traditional trade routes of West Sumatra.

Initially, the market functioned primarily as a meeting place for farmers, traders, and livestock breeders to trade animals such as cattle, goats, and buffalo. The market became the center of economic activity for the surrounding community and a primary place for those wishing to buy or sell livestock for daily needs, as well as for traditional ceremonies and customs.

2. Market Development and Its Impact on the Local Economy

Over time, the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market experienced rapid growth, especially during the 19th and 20th centuries, as livestock trade became increasingly significant to Solok's economy. The market's development was strongly influenced by Minangkabau traditions that uphold the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), where livestock trade was not only an economic activity but also an expression of social and cultural relationships within the community.

The market also became a strategic location for traders from outside Solok, who came to buy or sell livestock, making it one of the largest livestock markets in the West Sumatra region. In its development, trading activities at the market involved not only money but also the exchange of other goods such as cover cloths and daily necessities..

3. Relation to Minangkabau Tradition and Culture

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is closely connected to Minangkabau traditions and culture. One of the market's distinctive features is the use of cover cloths during livestock transactions, which not only serve as a barter tool but also carry strong social and cultural meanings. These cloths, especially traditional woven fabrics or *songket*, are often regarded as symbols of social status, honor, and kinship within Minangkabau society. Furthermore, the market serves as a venue for various customary rituals such as weddings, inaugurations, and other significant events where livestock often symbolizes wealth and social ties..

4. Role of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market in Solok's Economy

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role in the economy of Solok Regency, particularly in the agricultural and livestock sectors. As a major livestock trading hub, the market supports the livelihoods of farmers and breeders who depend on livestock as their primary source of income. Additionally, the market serves as an information center for livestock prices and demand, contributing to the stability of the local market.

5. Current Condition of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

Despite changes over time, the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market remains a symbol of the traditional economic strength and cultural heritage of the Solok community. The market continues to uphold long-standing traditional practices, even as modern technology increasingly influences trading methods. One unique aspect of the market's trading process attracts many visitors, including international tourists, who come to observe the distinctive bargaining practices. The market is equipped with fairly complete facilities, which will be further discussed in the following sections.

B. Strategic Role in the Local Economy

Livestock markets play various important roles in the local economy, especially in regions dependent on agriculture and animal husbandry. The following are some of the main roles of livestock markets in the local economy:

1. Source of Income for Livestock Farmers:

The livestock market serves as the primary place for farmers to sell their livestock, whether for consumption or breeding purposes. Thus, the market becomes a major source of income for farmers, both small- and large-scale. Besides livestock trading, other activities within the market also generate income for the local community. For example, there are food stalls (*warung ampera*) selling breakfast and lunch for market visitors, as well as vendors selling equipment such as ropes and other necessities. Additionally, there are sellers offering snacks, drinks, animal feed such as grass, and much more.

2. Price Stabilization for Livestock:

The livestock market functions to stabilize livestock prices through supply and demand mechanisms. Prices formed in the market often become benchmarks for surrounding areas, helping to determine fair and market-appropriate prices. Uniquely, the market uses a system where buyers and sellers do not know the exact price being offered during transactions. The negotiation process involves using finger symbols under a cover cloth, which may be a towel, hat, sarong, or clothing worn by the parties involved.

3. Provision of Meat and Livestock Products:

The livestock market not only supplies animals for sale but also supports the availability of other livestock products such as milk, hides, and other derivatives. This is crucial for fulfilling the community's needs for these commodities, which are primary products in many local economies. Additionally, items such as ropes and animal feed are also available at the market.

4. Access to Resources and Infrastructure:

Livestock markets often become centers for infrastructure supporting the livestock sector, including feed supply, veterinary medicines, and other farming equipment. Farmers also utilize the market to access information about the latest livestock management technologies. Many other resources and facilities are available, such as meat stalls, pens, loading and unloading areas for livestock, and more.

5. Job Creation:

Livestock markets create numerous employment opportunities, including animal handlers, porters, slaughtering services, and others. Food vendors at the *warung ampèra* and sellers of animal feed from the local community also contribute to job creation.

6. Social and Economic Relationships:

Livestock markets serve as venues for social interaction between farmers, traders, and consumers. This fosters interdependent economic networks and facilitates the exchange of information, strengthening relationships among various community members. Strong familial and social ties also exist among traders, reinforcing community bonds..

7. Driver of Trade and Economic Mobility:

Livestock markets act as trade hubs connecting local farmers with traders from outside the region. This facilitates the circulation of goods and capital on a broader scale, thereby encouraging overall regional economic development.

8. Source of Capital for Farmers:

Livestock trading at the market often enables farmers to obtain capital that can be invested in developing their livestock businesses, such as purchasing better livestock breeds, improving barns, or buying necessary equipment.

9. Livestock Population Control:

Livestock markets also help regulate livestock populations within an area. Through buying and selling activities, farmers can adjust the number of animals they keep according to available resources such as feed and land capacity, preventing overpopulation that could harm farmers or the environment.

C. The Symbolic Meaning Behind Livestock Trading Using a Cover Cloth

Each finger gesture performed by the seller toward the buyer—or vice versa—carries a specific meaning indicating the price being offered. The gestures, made discreetly under a cover cloth, follow a symbolic code understood by the participants: Holding one index finger represents the value of one. Holding the middle finger along with the index finger represents the value of two. Holding the ring finger, middle finger, and index finger indicates the value of three. Holding the pinky, ring, middle, and index fingers represents the value of four. Holding all five fingers represents the value of five. Holding the index finger, followed by holding four fingers and rotating them, symbolizes the value of six. Holding the index finger, followed by three fingers, and shaking them indicates the value of seven. Holding the index finger, followed by two fingers and shaking **them** indicates the value of eight. Holding the index finger, followed by another index finger and shaking it represents the value of nine. These coded hand movements, performed under a cloth, allow the negotiation process to

remain confidential and respectful, aligning with local cultural values and preserving mutual trust between buyer and seller.

The following are the finger symbols used during livestock trading transactions involving a cover cloth:

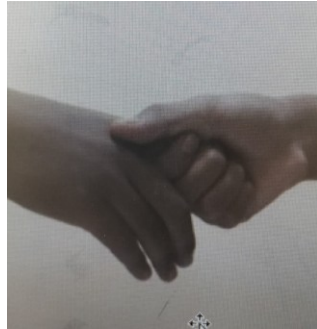


Figure 1. Holding one index finger represents the value of one.

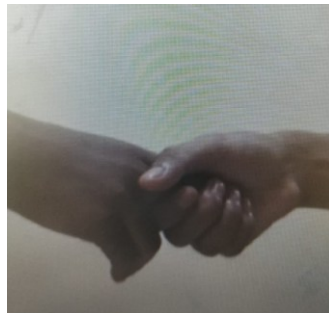


Figure 2. Holding the middle finger and the index finger represents the value of two.

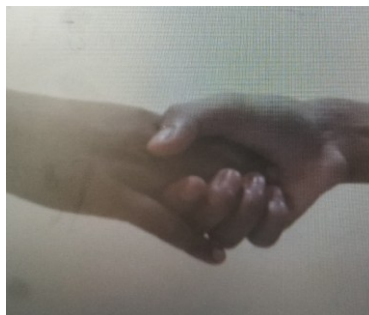


Figure 3. Holding the ring finger, middle finger, and index finger represents the value of three.

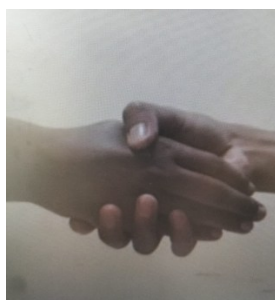


Figure 4. Holding four fingers (excluding the thumb) represents the value of four.

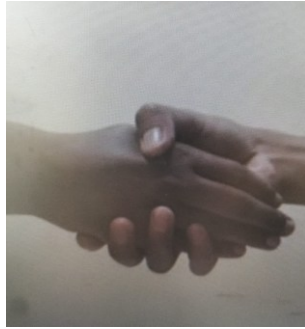


Figure 5. Holding all five fingers represents the value of five.

D. Transaction Procedure in Livestock Trading Using a Cover Cloth

The procedure for conducting livestock trading using a cover cloth can be understood from the explanation of Mr. Asril (65 years old), who shared that livestock traders do not sell exclusively in one market. Instead, they travel from one livestock market to another across various regions of West Sumatra, including the Cubadak Livestock Market in Batusangkar.

The transaction process begins when the seller offers a selling price to the buyer. The negotiation is conducted using hand gestures hidden beneath a cover cloth, as illustrated in the figures provided. Once a mutual agreement on the price is reached, the buyer usually gives a down payment (*panjar*) as a form of deposit. According to customary practices at the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market, the buyer may only take the livestock after a waiting period to ensure that the animal is in good health and not suffering from any illness. This step reflects the local community's commitment to fair and responsible trading practices.



Figure 6. The process of conducting a livestock trading transaction using a cover cloth.

After the buyer completes full payment, a receipt in the form of a livestock sale certificate is issued to ensure that the purchased animal is protected from any potential issues, such as being stolen or other complications.



Figure 7. Receipt as proof of livestock sale transaction.

Time and Place of Activities

This market is located in Muaro Paneh, and livestock trading transactions are only allowed to take place at the livestock market every Monday each week. The buying and selling activities at this market occur only once a week.

Facilities and Administrative Documents Available at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

There are many facilities available at the market, including: *paraku* (tying posts), goat stalls, loading and unloading areas for livestock, toll booths, reproduction check stations, unloading tickets, livestock tax tickets, and others. The following section explains the function of each facility and administrative document found at the market, accompanied by pictures or photos taken during the survey at the location.

Paraku

Paraku is a place used to tie the livestock. It is designed in such a way that the animals cannot easily break free from the bonds and their position is secured.



Figure 8. Paraku at the Muaro Paneh livestock market.

Goat Stalls

For goat farmers, a special area is provided called the goat stalls (*Los kambing*), located next to the toll booth (*pos retribusi*) where livestock are sold. These goat stalls are specifically designated for goat traders.



Figure 6. Goat Traders' Area

Loading and Unloading Area for Livestock

This area is used for loading and unloading livestock. It is positioned level with the truck bed to facilitate the process of moving livestock, especially large animals like cattle.



Figure 9. Livestock Loading and Unloading Area

Retribution Post

The retribution post is the place where livestock officers at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market collect fees for livestock permits and unloading costs. It is also used as the place to issue official documents regarding the transfer of livestock ownership. During the author's visit, the officer on duty was Mr. Yan, a resident of Muaro Paneh.



Figure 10. Livestock Retribution Post

Reproduction Check Area

The Reproduction Check Area is used to determine the gender of the livestock. It features metal supports to hold the animals securely, allowing traders and buyers easier access and better observation during the reproductive examination.



Figure 11. Livestock Reproduction Inspection Area"

Livestock Unloading Ticket and Livestock Trading Fee Ticket

There are two types of tickets issued by the officers to the traders: the livestock unloading fee ticket and the livestock trading fee ticket. The unloading fee ticket is paid by the trader when the animal is unloaded at the designated unloading area. For this ticket, traders are required to pay IDR 1,000 per animal unloaded. At the Muaro Paneh livestock market, this ticket is blue in color.

The livestock trading fee ticket is the permit fee paid to authorize the buying and selling of livestock at this market. The fee charged for this ticket is IDR 2,000 per animal.



Figure 12. Livestock Unloading Ticket



Figure 13. Livestock Trading Fee Ticket

Certificate of Livestock Sale

To obtain a certificate of livestock sale, the issuer is required to pay a fee of IDR 2,000 per transaction certificate. This fee is paid to the market officer at the retribution post.

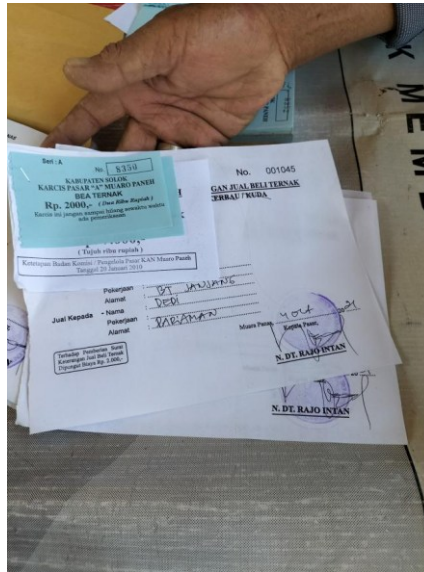


Figure 14. Certificate of Livestock Sale

The Certificate of Livestock Sale serves as proof of ownership of the livestock. This document also holds legal authority for the owner in case of accusations that the livestock is illegal or stolen. The certificate includes detailed information about the type and characteristics of the livestock being traded, as well as the names of both the owner and the buyer.

E. Objects Used in the Livestock Buying and Selling Transactions Using Cloth Covers Sarung

The sarung is used to cover the hand movements of both the seller and buyer, maintaining the confidentiality of the livestock price so that others cannot discern the price being offered. Among the people in West Sumatra, it is common for men to carry a sarung, which has become part of their daily attire. Whether they are going to the coffee shop, working in the fields, or visiting the market, the sarung is consistently worn and regarded as an essential accessory.



Figure 15: Sarung Cloth

Small Towel

A small towel can also be used because it is compact and frequently carried by the traders. It is common for traders to hang the towel around their necks, which has become a habitual practice for many.



Figure 16: Small Towel

Hat

The hat is commonly worn by many of the traders. Besides serving as an accessory, the hat is also used as a cover during livestock transactions in Muaro Paneh. It functions not only to conceal hand movements during the bargaining process but also as a head covering and part of the traders' attire.



Figure 17: Hat used as a cover during livestock transactions at Muaro Paneh market

Clothing

Using a shirt is the simplest method used by the participants, depending on the situation, especially when they do not carry other items such as a sarung or towel.

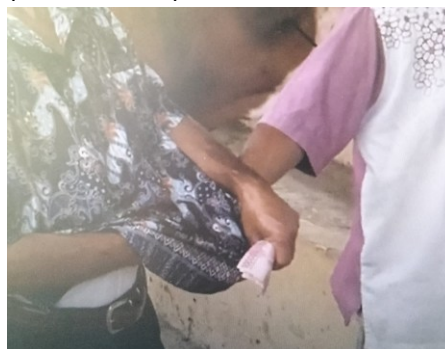


Figure 18: Use of Clothing in the Transaction

Why Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market Is Relevant for Research in the Context of Livestock Trading

The conditions of this market hold significant relevance for research, particularly in the context of livestock trading. Several reasons make this market an interesting object of study from economic, social, cultural, and historical perspectives, among others:

1. A Traditional Livestock Trading Center That Still Persists.

This market maintains conventional trading methods despite the modernization of many livestock markets shifting to more systematic and digital forms. Here, livestock such as cattle, goats, and buffaloes are traded face-to-face, involving direct negotiation between buyers and sellers. Although digital technologies continue to develop, this market remains a venue for direct transactions, making it an important case study for traditional markets that continue to operate today.

2. Importance for the Local Economy

Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role in the economy of Solok and its surrounding areas. It allows local farmers to trade their livestock, fulfilling domestic needs and supporting regional economic activities through trade with merchants from other regions. Studying this market offers insights into how traditional markets still influence local economies and how they adapt to changing times.

3. Cultural and Traditional Linkages with the Minangkabau Community

This market is highly relevant culturally, especially concerning the Minangkabau society. Beyond economic transactions, strong cultural values are embedded in the trading process, such as the use of cloth coverings during transactions. These cloths not only function as trade commodities but also reflect social values, customs, and kinship relationships important in Minangkabau society. Research on this market provides a deeper understanding of the interplay between trade, culture, and social systems in traditional communities.

4. The Market's Role in Preserving Local Economic Traditions

Amid globalization and modernization, traditional markets like Muaro Paneh act as cultural heritage that continues to survive. Research is crucial to understand how livestock trading traditions remain relevant despite structural economic changes and shifting consumption patterns. Observing this market helps comprehend the sustainability of trading traditions in the face of modernization pressures and how the market supports local identity preservation.

5. Livestock Trading as a Reflection of Rural Economy

This market exemplifies the rural economy centered on agriculture and livestock. Transactions often involve not only monetary exchanges but also barter systems, such as exchanging livestock with cloth coverings or other goods. This coexistence of traditional and monetary economies offers valuable insights into rural economic dynamics and how traditional markets help maintain socio-economic balance locally.

6. Uncovering Local Wisdom in Traditional Economy

Research on Muaro Paneh Livestock Market reveals how local wisdom in traditional economies persists in livestock trading practices. One example is the barter system or use of goods besides money in transactions, reflecting longstanding social interaction methods based on trust and fairness within the community.

Cultural Analysis in Livestock Trading

A notable phenomenon at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is the use of cloth coverings during livestock transactions. These cloths, often traditional songket or woven fabrics, are not only exchange items but also carry symbolic meanings in Minangkabau social and cultural life. They represent honor and social status, serving as signs of respect between buyer and seller. This practice strengthens social bonds and builds trust.

Additionally, the use of cloth coverings has a religious dimension. In Minangkabau culture, cloth is associated with purity and blessing. In some cases, cloths used in transactions are believed to bring blessings to the parties involved.

Economic Aspects of Livestock Transactions

Economically, Muaro Paneh functions as a trading hub for farmers and traders, involving various stakeholders from local breeders to larger merchants. Transactions involve not only money but also barter systems, such as the exchange of cloth coverings. The presence of cloth in transactions illustrates a barter mechanism still alive despite the predominance of money. Sometimes, the cloth's value surpasses that of the livestock traded, depending on the cloth's quality and type, indicating its significant economic role.

Social and Cultural Impacts

The practice of trading livestock with cloth coverings also helps reinforce social relationships among the livestock community. Interactions are imbued with familial values of the Minangkabau people. Cloth, as a social symbol, reflects deeper bonds among transaction participants. Furthermore, the cloth covering can signify an individual's social status, wealth, position, and kinship relations within the community. This adds complexity to the seemingly simple livestock transactions, revealing broader social dimensions.

CONCLUSION

The Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market has a long history closely intertwined with the social, cultural, and economic development of the Minangkabau community. Beyond merely serving as a place for livestock trading, this market has become an integral part of preserving local traditions and cultural values, while simultaneously playing a significant role in the regional economy. Over time, the market has continued to evolve but has retained traditional elements that remain its main attraction and defining characteristic.

The Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market is highly relevant for research in the context of livestock trading because it is not only an important venue for local economic exchange but also reflects the social relationships, culture, and traditional values of the Minangkabau people that continue to be upheld today. Studying this market provides valuable insights into the importance of traditional markets in rural economies and how such markets maintain their relevance amid changing times. Therefore, Muaro Paneh Livestock Market serves not only as a subject of economic study but also as a rich source for understanding the social, cultural, and traditional dynamics that remain vibrant within the community.

The practice of livestock trading using cloth coverings at Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market reflects not only the economic dynamics of the market but also reveals deep cultural values. The cloth coverings are not merely commodities in the transactions but carry significant symbolic and social meanings for the Minangkabau people. This analysis demonstrates that livestock trading in this traditional market embodies an interdependent relationship among economic, social, and cultural aspects, creating a trading ecosystem that is both complex and rich in meaning.

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Abstract

This article examines the phenomenon of buying and selling livestock carried out at the Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market, with a focus on the practice of livestock trading using a unique method during transactions, namely when haggling over prices between buyers and sellers using cloth coverings and finger symbols to determine the price. livestock, so no one knows how much livestock prices are offered by sellers to buyers. The culture of transactions using cloth coverings is a tradition carried out by the local community with the aim of establishing an attitude of mutual care and respect for fellow traders. This is one of the local wisdoms found in the Muaro Paneh livestock market, Bukit Sundi sub-district, Solok regency. This research aims to analyze the cultural and economic aspects of this practice as well as the relevance of this tradition in the lives of local communities. Using a qualitative approach and participant observation, this research found that the use of cloth coverings in livestock transactions not only has economic value, but also reflects rich social, symbolic, and cultural dimensions in social interactions between sellers and buyers. The results of the analysis show that the cloth covering is not only a transaction tool, but also a symbol that contains deep religious and social meaning.

Keywords:

Culture, economy, livestock trade, cover cloth, livestock market

INTRODUCTION

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is a traditional livestock market located in Muaro Paneh, Bukit Sundi District, situated in the highlands of West Sumatra. This geographical setting is favorable for agricultural and livestock activities. Muaro Paneh is positioned in a fertile highland area approximately 50 kilometers from the city of Solok. The district lies along a major transportation route that connects various regions in Solok Regency, making it strategically important for the flow of goods and services.

According to the historical origins of Nagari Muaro Paneh, before the area was named Muaro Paneh, it was known as *Dusun Tuo Surambi Nan Duo Baleh Koto*. At that time, there were no traditional chiefs (*penghulu*); instead, the community was led by a religious leader responsible for managing religious, customary, and administrative matters. This figure was Sikudah Laweh, titled *Tuan Syekh Labay Panjang*, a representative of *Tuanku Kadhi* from Padang Ganting, who resided in Sigok, known as *Perhentian Tinggi*. Syekh Labay Panjang was the leader of Cupak Selayo and later arrived in *Dusun Tuo*. As the population of Dusun Tuo grew, Tuan Syekh Labay Panjang held a deliberation with traditional leaders Dt. Rajo Mansue, Dt. Gunuang Ameh, Dt. Puncak Rajo Bandaro, and Dt. Putieh to appoint *penghulu* (clan leaders) to serve as protectors (*parik paga*) of the *nagari*. Representatives from Pariangan, Padang Panjang, namely, Dt. Maharajo Basa and Dt. Bandaro Kayo also participated in the deliberation.

The consensus resulted in the appointment of three *penghulu*: Dt. Gadang, Dt. Kayo, and Dt. Bungsu. Additionally, six clans (*suku*) were established in the *nagari* of Dusun Tuo Surambi Nan Duo Baleh Koto: Kutianyie, Melayu, Caniago, Piliang, Tanjuang, and Koto Sikumbang. [Zulfirman, *Monografi Nagari Muaro Paneh Kecamatan Bukit Sundi*, 2013, p. 6]. The name *Muaro Paneh* (meaning “hot estuary or Muara Panas”) is believed to originate from an incident in which the water at the end of the river felt hot during a bath.

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is widely recognized as one of the traditional markets facilitating the trade of livestock, particularly cattle, goats, and buffalo. In addition to livestock, the market also features the exchange of other commodities, such as *cover cloths* used as part of the negotiation process. This unique practice not only reflects the economic aspect of the market but also illustrates the strong cultural dimension within Minangkabau society. The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role as one of the key economic hubs in Solok Regency and its surrounding areas. It serves as a gathering place for farmers, traders, and buyers from various parts of Solok and other regions in West Sumatra. Its strategic location makes it a central meeting point for livestock and agricultural transactions.

The market is easily accessible to the people of Muaro Paneh and neighboring areas in Solok Regency. Its proximity to the main road allows farmers and traders to transport their goods—both livestock and agricultural products—with ease. This accessibility also facilitates the distribution of livestock to other regions within West Sumatra and even to areas outside the province. Besides livestock, the surrounding area of Muaro Paneh is also known for its fertile agricultural activities, especially in rice, vegetables, and fruit

production. As a major livestock market, Muaro Paneh supports the trade of various agricultural and livestock products, which are closely linked within the local economic system. Additionally, the market serves as a crucial link between rural livestock traders and larger markets in urban centers such as Solok City, Padang, and nearby regions.

METHODOLOGY

This article employs a qualitative approach using a case study method conducted at the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market. Data were collected through direct observation at the market. The researcher conducted fieldwork by observing and interviewing various informants, including traders, buyers, community leaders, and local residents involved in the livestock market activities. Additionally, the researcher observed the physical space and environment of the market and reviewed relevant literature concerning market traditions and local economic practices.

The material objects analyzed in this study include several key aspects related to the research focus. First is the **livestock trading transaction process**, where the study concentrates on the procedures and methods of transactions to analyze them from cultural and economic perspectives. The second object is the **use of cover cloth in the transaction process**. The cloth serves as a symbolic object in this study, and the transactional cloth can take various forms such as towels, sarongs, hats, or even clothing worn by the traders or buyers themselves. The third object is the **structure of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market**. The market itself is an important object of analysis; its spatial arrangement, market layout, and transaction mechanisms provide insights into the economic patterns that develop there, as well as how local culture influences the conduct of trade.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

F. Brief History of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market, Solok

6. Origin of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is estimated to have existed for hundreds of years, developing in response to the community's need for an adequate place to conduct livestock trading transactions. Muaro Paneh itself is an area located along the Batang Masang River, historically known as an important site within the traditional trade routes of West Sumatra.

Initially, the market functioned primarily as a meeting place for farmers, traders, and livestock breeders to trade animals such as cattle, goats, and buffalo. The market became the center of economic activity for the surrounding community and a primary place for those wishing to buy or sell livestock for daily needs, as well as for traditional ceremonies and customs.

7. Market Development and Its Impact on the Local Economy

Over time, the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market experienced rapid growth, especially during the 19th and 20th centuries, as livestock trade became increasingly significant to Solok's economy. The market's development was strongly influenced by Minangkabau traditions that uphold the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), where livestock trade was not only an economic activity but also an expression of social and cultural relationships within the community.

The market also became a strategic location for traders from outside Solok, who came to buy or sell livestock, making it one of the largest livestock markets in the West Sumatra region. In its development, trading activities at the market involved not only money but also the exchange of other goods such as cover cloths and daily necessities..

8. Relation to Minangkabau Tradition and Culture

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is closely connected to Minangkabau traditions and culture. One of the market's distinctive features is the use of cover cloths during livestock transactions, which not only serve as a barter tool but also carry strong social and cultural meanings. These cloths, especially traditional woven fabrics or *songket*, are often regarded as symbols of social status, honor, and kinship within Minangkabau society. Furthermore, the market serves as a venue for various customary rituals such as weddings, inaugurations, and other significant events where livestock often symbolizes wealth and social ties..

9. Role of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market in Solok's Economy

The Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role in the economy of Solok Regency, particularly in the agricultural and livestock sectors. As a major livestock trading hub, the market supports the livelihoods of farmers and breeders who depend on livestock as their primary source of income. Additionally, the market serves as an information center for livestock prices and demand, contributing to the stability of the local market.

10. Current Condition of the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

Despite changes over time, the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market remains a symbol of the traditional economic strength and cultural heritage of the Solok community. The market continues to uphold long-standing traditional practices, even as modern technology increasingly influences trading methods. One unique aspect of the market's trading process attracts many visitors, including international tourists, who come to observe the distinctive bargaining practices. The market is equipped with fairly complete facilities, which will be further discussed in the following sections.

G. Strategic Role in the Local Economy

Livestock markets play various important roles in the local economy, especially in regions dependent on agriculture and animal husbandry. The following are some of the main roles of livestock markets in the local economy:

10. Source of Income for Livestock Farmers:

The livestock market serves as the primary place for farmers to sell their livestock, whether for consumption or breeding purposes. Thus, the market becomes a major source of income for farmers, both small- and large-scale. Besides livestock trading, other activities within the market also generate income for the local community. For example, there are food stalls (*warung ampera*) selling breakfast and lunch for market visitors, as well as vendors selling equipment such as ropes and other necessities. Additionally, there are sellers offering snacks, drinks, animal feed such as grass, and much more.

11. Price Stabilization for Livestock:

The livestock market functions to stabilize livestock prices through supply and demand mechanisms. Prices formed in the market often become benchmarks for surrounding areas, helping to determine fair and market-appropriate prices. Uniquely, the market uses a system where buyers and sellers do not know the exact price being offered during transactions. The negotiation process involves using finger symbols under a cover cloth, which may be a towel, hat, sarong, or clothing worn by the parties involved.

12. Provision of Meat and Livestock Products:

The livestock market not only supplies animals for sale but also supports the availability of other livestock products such as milk, hides, and other derivatives. This is crucial for fulfilling the community's needs for these commodities, which are primary products in many local economies. Additionally, items such as ropes and animal feed are also available at the market.

13. Access to Resources and Infrastructure:

Livestock markets often become centers for infrastructure supporting the livestock sector, including feed supply, veterinary medicines, and other farming equipment. Farmers also utilize the market to access information about the latest livestock management technologies. Many other resources and facilities are available, such as meat stalls, pens, loading and unloading areas for livestock, and more.

14. Job Creation:

Livestock markets create numerous employment opportunities, including animal handlers, porters, slaughtering services, and others. Food vendors at the *warung ampera* and sellers of animal feed from the local community also contribute to job creation.

15. Social and Economic Relationships:

Livestock markets serve as venues for social interaction between farmers, traders, and consumers. This fosters interdependent economic networks and facilitates the exchange of information, strengthening relationships among various community members. Strong familial and social ties also exist among traders, reinforcing community bonds..

16. Driver of Trade and Economic Mobility:

Livestock markets act as trade hubs connecting local farmers with traders from outside the region. This facilitates the circulation of goods and capital on a broader scale, thereby encouraging overall regional economic development.

17. Source of Capital for Farmers:

Livestock trading at the market often enables farmers to obtain capital that can be invested in developing their livestock businesses, such as purchasing better livestock breeds, improving barns, or buying necessary equipment.

18. Livestock Population Control:

Livestock markets also help regulate livestock populations within an area. Through buying and selling activities, farmers can adjust the number of animals they keep according to available resources such as feed and land capacity, preventing overpopulation that could harm farmers or the environment.

H. The Symbolic Meaning Behind Livestock Trading Using a Cover Cloth

Each finger gesture performed by the seller toward the buyer—or vice versa—carries a specific meaning indicating the price being offered. The gestures, made discreetly under a cover cloth, follow a symbolic code understood by the participants: Holding one index finger represents the value of one. Holding the middle finger along with the index finger represents the value of two. Holding the ring finger, middle finger, and index finger indicates the value of three. Holding the pinky, ring, middle, and index fingers represents the value of four.

Holding all five fingers represents the value of five. Holding the index finger, followed by holding four fingers and rotating them, symbolizes the value of six. Holding the index finger, followed by three fingers, and shaking them indicates the value of seven. Holding the index finger, followed by two fingers and shaking **them** indicates the value of eight. Holding the index finger, followed by another index finger and shaking it represents the value of nine. These coded hand movements, performed under a cloth, allow the negotiation process to remain confidential and respectful, aligning with local cultural values and preserving mutual trust between buyer and seller.

The following are the finger symbols used during livestock trading transactions involving a cover cloth:

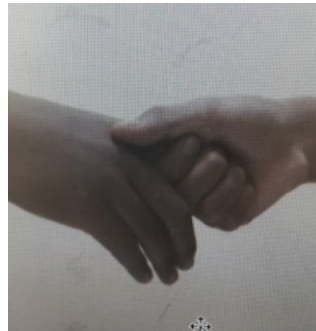


Figure 1. Holding one index finger represents the value of one.

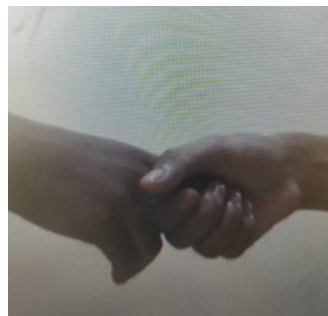


Figure 2. Holding the middle finger and the index finger represents the value of two.

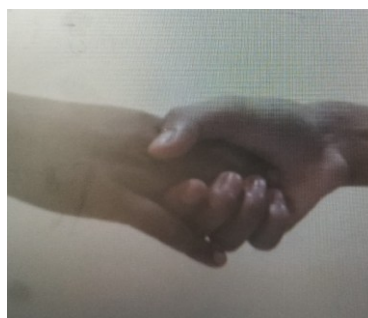


Figure 3. Holding the ring finger, middle finger, and index finger represents the value of three.

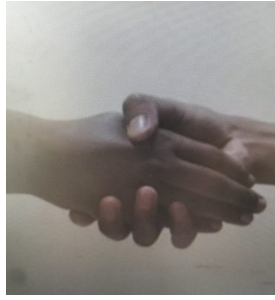


Figure 4. Holding four fingers (excluding the thumb) represents the value of four.

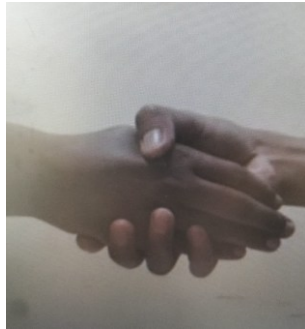


Figure 5. Holding all five fingers represents the value of five.

I. Transaction Procedure in Livestock Trading Using a Cover Cloth

The procedure for conducting livestock trading using a cover cloth can be understood from the explanation of Mr. Asril (65 years old), who shared that livestock traders do not sell exclusively in one market. Instead, they travel from one livestock market to another across various regions of West Sumatra, including the Cubadak Livestock Market in Batusangkar.

The transaction process begins when the seller offers a selling price to the buyer. The negotiation is conducted using hand gestures hidden beneath a cover cloth, as illustrated in the figures provided. Once a mutual agreement on the price is reached, the buyer usually gives a down payment (*panjar*) as a form of deposit. According to customary practices at the Muaro Paneh Livestock Market, the buyer may only take the livestock after a waiting period to ensure that the animal is in good health and not suffering from any illness. This step reflects the local community's commitment to fair and responsible trading practices.



Figure 6. The process of conducting a livestock trading transaction using a cover cloth.

After the buyer completes full payment, a receipt in the form of a livestock sale certificate is issued to ensure that the purchased animal is protected from any potential issues, such as being stolen or other complications.



Figure 7. Receipt as proof of livestock sale transaction.

Time and Place of Activities

This market is located in Muaro Paneh, and livestock trading transactions are only allowed to take place at the livestock market every Monday each week. The buying and selling activities at this market occur only once a week.

Facilities and Administrative Documents Available at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market

There are many facilities available at the market, including: *paraku* (tying posts), goat stalls, loading and unloading areas for livestock, toll booths, reproduction check stations, unloading tickets, livestock tax tickets, and others. The following section explains the function of each facility and administrative document found at the market, accompanied by pictures or photos taken during the survey at the location.

Paraku

Paraku is a place used to tie the livestock. It is designed in such a way that the animals cannot easily break free from the bonds and their position is secured.



Figure 8. Paraku at the Muaro Paneh livestock market.

Goat Stalls

For goat farmers, a special area is provided called the goat stalls (*Los kambing*), located next to the toll booth (*pos retribusi*) where livestock are sold. These goat stalls are specifically designated for goat traders.



Figure 6. Goat Traders' Area

Loading and Unloading Area for Livestock

This area is used for loading and unloading livestock. It is positioned level with the truck bed to facilitate the process of moving livestock, especially large animals like cattle.



Figure 9. Livestock Loading and Unloading Area

Retribution Post

The retribution post is the place where livestock officers at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market collect fees for livestock permits and unloading costs. It is also used as the place to issue official documents regarding the transfer of livestock ownership. During the author's visit, the officer on duty was Mr. Yan, a resident of Muaro Paneh.



Figure 10. Livestock Retribution Post

Reproduction Check Area

The Reproduction Check Area is used to determine the gender of the livestock. It features metal supports to hold the animals securely, allowing traders and buyers easier access and better observation during the reproductive examination.



Figure 11. Livestock Reproduction Inspection Area"

Livestock Unloading Ticket and Livestock Trading Fee Ticket

There are two types of tickets issued by the officers to the traders: the livestock unloading fee ticket and the livestock trading fee ticket. The unloading fee ticket is paid by the trader when the animal is unloaded at the designated unloading area. For this ticket, traders are required to pay IDR 1,000 per animal unloaded. At the Muaro Paneh livestock market, this ticket is blue in color.

The livestock trading fee ticket is the permit fee paid to authorize the buying and selling of livestock at this market. The fee charged for this ticket is IDR 2,000 per animal.



Figure 12. Livestock Unloading Ticket

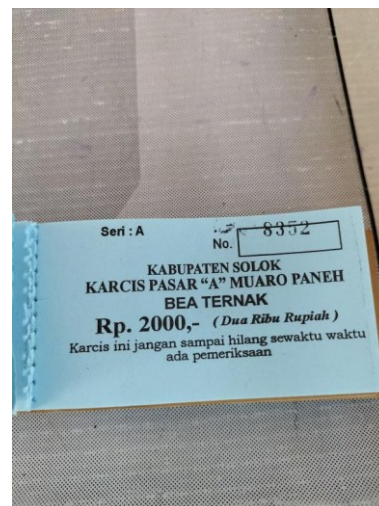


Figure 13. Livestock Trading Fee Ticket

Certificate of Livestock Sale

To obtain a certificate of livestock sale, the issuer is required to pay a fee of IDR 2,000 per transaction certificate. This fee is paid to the market officer at the retribution post.

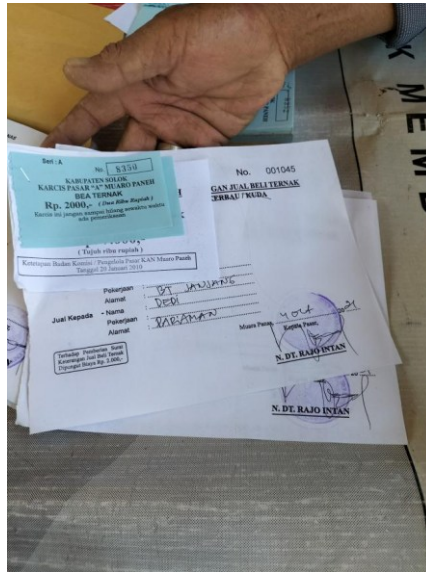


Figure 14. Certificate of Livestock Sale

The Certificate of Livestock Sale serves as proof of ownership of the livestock. This document also holds legal authority for the owner in case of accusations that the livestock is illegal or stolen. The certificate includes detailed information about the type and characteristics of the livestock being traded, as well as the names of both the owner and the buyer.

J. Objects Used in the Livestock Buying and Selling Transactions Using Cloth Covers Sarung

The sarung is used to cover the hand movements of both the seller and buyer, maintaining the confidentiality of the livestock price so that others cannot discern the price being offered. Among the people in West Sumatra, it is common for men to carry a sarung, which has become part of their daily attire. Whether they are going to the coffee shop, working in the fields, or visiting the market, the sarung is consistently worn and regarded as an essential accessory.



Figure 15: Sarung Cloth

Small Towel

A small towel can also be used because it is compact and frequently carried by the traders. It is common for traders to hang the towel around their necks, which has become a habitual practice for many.



Figure 16: Small Towel

Hat

The hat is commonly worn by many of the traders. Besides serving as an accessory, the hat is also used as a cover during livestock transactions in Muaro Paneh. It functions not only to conceal hand movements during the bargaining process but also as a head covering and part of the traders' attire.



Figure 17: Hat used as a cover during livestock transactions at Muaro Paneh market

Clothing

Using a shirt is the simplest method used by the participants, depending on the situation, especially when they do not carry other items such as a sarung or towel.

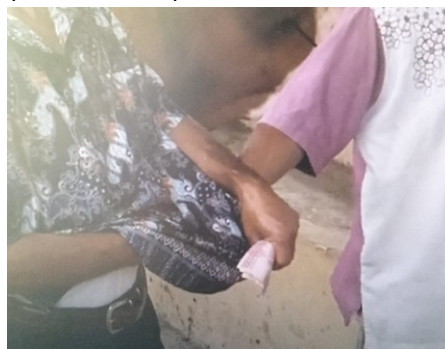


Figure 18: Use of Clothing in the Transaction

Why Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market Is Relevant for Research in the Context of Livestock Trading

The conditions of this market hold significant relevance for research, particularly in the context of livestock trading. Several reasons make this market an interesting object of study from economic, social, cultural, and historical perspectives, among others:

1. A Traditional Livestock Trading Center That Still Persists.

This market maintains conventional trading methods despite the modernization of many livestock markets shifting to more systematic and digital forms. Here, livestock such as cattle, goats, and buffaloes are traded face-to-face, involving direct negotiation between buyers and sellers. Although digital technologies continue to develop, this market remains a venue for direct transactions, making it an important case study for traditional markets that continue to operate today.

2. Importance for the Local Economy

Muaro Paneh Livestock Market plays a vital role in the economy of Solok and its surrounding areas. It allows local farmers to trade their livestock, fulfilling domestic needs and supporting regional economic activities through trade with merchants from other regions. Studying this market offers insights into how traditional markets still influence local economies and how they adapt to changing times.

3. Cultural and Traditional Linkages with the Minangkabau Community

This market is highly relevant culturally, especially concerning the Minangkabau society. Beyond economic transactions, strong cultural values are embedded in the trading process, such as the use of cloth coverings during transactions. These cloths not only function as trade commodities but also reflect social values, customs, and kinship relationships important in Minangkabau society. Research on this market provides a deeper understanding of the interplay between trade, culture, and social systems in traditional communities.

4. The Market's Role in Preserving Local Economic Traditions

Amid globalization and modernization, traditional markets like Muaro Paneh act as cultural heritage that continues to survive. Research is crucial to understand how livestock trading traditions remain relevant despite structural economic changes and shifting consumption patterns. Observing this market helps comprehend the sustainability of trading traditions in the face of modernization pressures and how the market supports local identity preservation.

5. Livestock Trading as a Reflection of Rural Economy

This market exemplifies the rural economy centered on agriculture and livestock. Transactions often involve not only monetary exchanges but also barter systems, such as exchanging livestock with cloth coverings or other goods. This coexistence of traditional and monetary economies offers valuable insights into rural economic dynamics and how traditional markets help maintain socio-economic balance locally.

6. Uncovering Local Wisdom in Traditional Economy

Research on Muaro Paneh Livestock Market reveals how local wisdom in traditional economies persists in livestock trading practices. One example is the barter system or use of goods besides money in transactions, reflecting longstanding social interaction methods based on trust and fairness within the community.

Cultural Analysis in Livestock Trading

A notable phenomenon at Muaro Paneh Livestock Market is the use of cloth coverings during livestock transactions. These cloths, often traditional songket or woven fabrics, are not only exchange items but also carry symbolic meanings in Minangkabau social and cultural life. They represent honor and social status, serving as signs of respect between buyer and seller. This practice strengthens social bonds and builds trust.

Additionally, the use of cloth coverings has a religious dimension. In Minangkabau culture, cloth is associated with purity and blessing. In some cases, cloths used in transactions are believed to bring blessings to the parties involved.

Economic Aspects of Livestock Transactions

Economically, Muaro Paneh functions as a trading hub for farmers and traders, involving various stakeholders from local breeders to larger merchants. Transactions involve not only money but also barter systems, such as the exchange of cloth coverings. The presence of cloth in transactions illustrates a barter mechanism still alive despite the predominance of money. Sometimes, the cloth's value surpasses that of the livestock traded, depending on the cloth's quality and type, indicating its significant economic role.

Social and Cultural Impacts

The practice of trading livestock with cloth coverings also helps reinforce social relationships among the livestock community. Interactions are imbued with familial values of the Minangkabau people. Cloth, as a social symbol, reflects deeper bonds among transaction participants. Furthermore, the cloth covering can signify an individual's social status, wealth, position, and kinship relations within the community. This adds complexity to the seemingly simple livestock transactions, revealing broader social dimensions.

CONCLUSION

The Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market has a long history closely intertwined with the social, cultural, and economic development of the Minangkabau community. Beyond merely serving as a place for livestock trading, this market has become an integral part of preserving local traditions and cultural values, while simultaneously playing a significant role in the regional economy. Over time, the market has continued to evolve but has retained traditional elements that remain its main attraction and defining characteristic.

The Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market is highly relevant for research in the context of livestock trading because it is not only an important venue for local economic exchange but also reflects the social relationships, culture, and traditional values of the Minangkabau people that continue to be upheld today. Studying this market provides valuable insights into the importance of traditional markets in rural economies and how such markets maintain their relevance amid changing times. Therefore, Muaro Paneh Livestock Market serves not only as a subject of economic study but also as a rich source for understanding the social, cultural, and traditional dynamics that remain vibrant within the community.

The practice of livestock trading using cloth coverings at Muaro Paneh Solok Livestock Market reflects not only the economic dynamics of the market but also reveals deep cultural values. The cloth coverings are not merely commodities in the transactions but carry significant symbolic and social meanings for the Minangkabau people. This analysis demonstrates that livestock trading in this traditional market embodies an interdependent relationship among economic, social, and cultural aspects, creating a trading ecosystem that is both complex and rich in meaning.

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