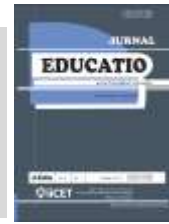




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Toba batak cultural system towards the role of parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of culture on the role of Batak Toba parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge. The Batak Toba people have a strong system of values and traditions, which affect various aspects of life, including education. The role of parents in supporting children's education is crucial for the success of higher education, especially in the midst of existing cultural and social challenges. This study uses a case study approach with a qualitative method, which involves in-depth interviews with parents, children who are pursuing higher education, and community leaders in Bandar Pasir Mandoge. The results of the study show that although the Batak Toba culture highly upholds family values and hard work, There are challenges in terms of adapting to the modern education system which requires a change in mindset and habits in supporting higher education. Batak Toba parents in Bandar Pasir Mandoge tend to support their children's education through moral and material motivation, although there are differences in their level of understanding of the importance of higher education. This study concludes that Toba Batak culture plays a significant role in shaping parents' attitudes and actions in supporting children's higher education, but there is a need to educate the public about the importance of cultural adaptation in the context of modern education.



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Introduction

Education is one of the main factors in determining the quality of human resources who are able to compete at the global level (Girsang, 2023). In Indonesia, cultural diversity and customs are an important element that affects the development of education, including in terms of parental support for children's education. One of the tribes that has a strong tradition and an important role in social life is the Toba Batak tribe (Hutahean & Agustina, 2020). The Toba Batak, spread across the North Sumatra region, including in the Bandar Pasir Mandoge area, have a distinctive system of values and social norms, which not only affect daily life, but also the way parents support their children's education (Trismayangsari et al., 2023). Toba Batak culture highly appreciates the importance of family, dignity, and social responsibility. Therefore, the role of parents in educating and guiding children, especially in achieving higher education, is considered a very important obligation (Munawwarah et al., 2023). However, the development of higher education that is increasingly advanced, with the demands of adapting to the development of the times and a more modern education system, presents its own challenges for Batak Toba parents in providing appropriate support for their children's education (Sibarani et al., 2024).

Higher education in Indonesia has now become one of the important priorities in improving the quality of human resources. The government through various policies continues to encourage more Indonesian children to access higher education, both through formal and non-formal channels (Iskandar, 2021). However, support from parents remains one of the factors that affect the success of children's education, especially in entering higher education. On the other hand, Indonesian society has a very rich cultural diversity, and each culture has its own way of supporting children's education (Pratama et al., 2022). One of the cultural groups that has characteristics in supporting education is the Batak Toba community. Batak Toba is known for its strong traditional values, such as mutual cooperation, respect for family, and the importance of maintaining family dignity through educational achievements. This culture influences parents' views on education and their role in supporting children's education.

Although there are many studies that discuss the role of parents in supporting children's education, especially in the context of Indonesian culture, there are still few studies that specifically examine how Toba Batak culture affects the role of parents in supporting children's higher education. Most of the existing research focuses more on the general aspects of the role of parents in education without considering the strong influence of local culture (M. B. Harahap & Marsa, 2024). In addition, many studies highlight parental support in primary or secondary education, while support for children's higher education, which has its own dynamics and challenges, is still underpaid (Naibaho et al., 2024). On the other hand, although the Batak Toba culture is known for its values that highly value education, the role of parents in supporting their children's higher education in the midst of changing times and educational modernization has not been researched in depth (Firmando, 2023). Some aspects such as the challenge of applying traditional values in the midst of the demands of a more global and technology-based higher education have not been clearly revealed in the existing literature (Sinaga, 2020). Thus, the research gap in this study lies in the lack of studies that focus on the relationship between Toba Batak culture and the role of parents in supporting children's higher education, especially in the Bandar Pasir Mandoge area. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the influence of local culture on parental support for higher education in the Batak Toba community.

In Bandar Pasir Mandoge, an area where the majority of the population comes from the Toba Batak tribe, the culture plays a major role in social life and education. However, although these cultural values encourage the spirit to support education, challenges in adapting the culture to the demands of more global and modern higher education have arisen. Therefore, it is important to explore how Batak Toba culture affects the role of parents in supporting their children's higher education. This study aims to identify and analyze the influence of Batak Toba culture on the role of parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge. This research is expected to contribute to understanding how cultural factors can strengthen or hinder the success of higher education in the Batak Toba community, as well as provide recommendations related to the role of parents and communities in supporting children's education in the future.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to understand the influence of culture on the role of Toba Batak parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge. The qualitative approach was chosen because it aims to explore and analyze in depth phenomena related to individual perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors in a specific cultural context. The case study method is used to focus research on a specific community or group, in this case the Toba Batak community in Bandar Pasir Mandoge, to provide a more comprehensive picture of the influence of culture on parental support for children's higher education (Ramdhan, 2021).

This study is designed to explore in depth how Toba Batak culture influences the role of parents in supporting their children's higher education. The data collection process is carried out through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies related to culture and education in the area (Abdussamad, 2021). This research was conducted in Bandar Pasir Mandoge, a sub-district in Asahan Regency, North Sumatra, where the majority of the population is the Batak Toba tribe. This area was chosen because it has a strong Batak Toba community, with a diversity of traditions and customs that can influence the mindset and behavior of parents in supporting their children's education, especially at the higher education level.

The study participants consisted of three main groups. The first is taken from various backgrounds, both those who have children who are pursuing higher education and those who have not. This is to find out the difference in perspectives and roles of parents towards children's higher education in their cultural context. Second, students who come from a Batak Toba family and are continuing their studies at university. Third, figures who have influence in the Batak Toba community and can provide insight into the relationship between culture and education in their community.

Some of the data collection techniques used in this study include: The researcher observed interactions in the family and society related to children's education. This observation aims to see how culture and tradition are translated in support of higher education. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents, children pursuing higher education, and community leaders. Questions in the interview will focus on parents' perceptions of higher education, their role in supporting their children, as well as how the cultural values of the Batak Toba affect their views. Secondary data collection is in the form of relevant documents, such as customary records, family books, and local education policies related to higher education and Toba Batak culture.

The data collected from interviews and observations will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The steps in data analysis include. The interviews will be transcribed, then coding will be carried out to identify emerging themes related to the influence of Toba Batak culture on the role of parents in supporting higher education. The codes found will be grouped into key themes related to cultural influences, such as family roles, customary values, and challenges and opportunities in supporting children's higher education. The findings that have been analyzed will be explained by an interpretation that links the Toba Batak culture and the role of parents in supporting higher education, as well as how this culture influences parents' attitudes and actions.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study uses a triangulation technique, namely by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking, which is to ask for confirmation from several participants regarding the results of the interview to ensure that the data obtained is in accordance with their understanding (Fadli, 2021). This research will comply with the principles of research ethics, including obtaining written consent from all participants, maintaining the confidentiality of participants' identities, and giving participants the freedom to resign at any time without any consequences (Iskandar, 2022). By using this method, this study is expected to provide an in-depth picture of how the Batak Toba culture influences the role of parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge, as well as the challenges and opportunities that exist in maintaining a balance between tradition and the demands of modern education.

Results and Discussions

This study revealed several key findings related to the influence of Toba Batak culture on the role of parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge. Based on in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, the following are the findings found in this study.

The Role of Parents in Supporting Children's Higher Education

The majority of Toba Batak parents in Bandar Pasir Mandoge show a high commitment to supporting their children's higher education. Parents consider education as one of the ways to maintain family dignity and achieve a better social status. Their support, both morally and materially, is enormous, despite differences in understanding the importance of higher education (Cantika et al., 2025). Some parents with lower educational backgrounds tend to emphasize the importance of hard work and discipline, while parents with higher education levels understand the importance of higher education in facing the challenges of globalization and technological developments. The results of the observation are also in accordance with the results of interviews with the community, where Mrs. Sitorus said;

"As a parent, I feel that higher education is very important for the future of my children. We, the Batak Toba people, have long had a strong value about education. Even though I work as a farmer and my income is not too big, I always try to support my children so that they can continue their higher education. We teach them to be independent and take advantage of the opportunities that exist, despite economic challenges. We believe that higher education will open up better opportunities, both inside and outside the village."

Furthermore, it was reaffirmed with a different answer but the same meaning by the surrounding community, namely Mrs. Sirait, 45 years old, Private Worker said;

"In my opinion, Batak Toba parents have a very big role in supporting children's education. We attach great importance to education because we know this is the key to a better future. As parents, we are not only financially supportive but also motivating and motivated. In this village, higher education is not an easy thing to achieve, especially in terms of cost, but we try various ways to get children to go to college, for example by looking for scholarships or supporting them to work while studying. We strongly believe that higher education is the way out of poverty."

Then the results of the next interview with one of the communities, namely Mrs. Purba, she said;

"Batak Toba parents strongly emphasize the importance of education from an early age. In Bandar Pasir Mandoge, many parents are struggling to get their children to go to college despite the sometimes difficult economic conditions. I see the role of parents not only in terms of material, but also in providing moral and mental support. They provide moral education

and strong character, so that their children can face the challenges out there. Parents often talk about how important education is to improve lives, and this is a motivation for children not to give up despite many obstacles."

These three interviews reflect how Toba Batak parents in Bandar Pasir Mandoge have different roles in supporting their children's higher education, both in terms of economy, motivation, and cultural values instilled. This is also in line with several previous studies. The following is a discussion of the role of parents in supporting children's higher education, taken from several journals relevant to the topic. This discussion aims to provide a deeper understanding of the contribution of parents in supporting their children's higher education.

In many studies, especially in developing countries, one of the main challenges faced by children who want to pursue higher education is financial problems. Parents often play a big role in providing financial support, whether through personal savings, help from family, or through education loans. According to research by (Nababan, 2023), Parents who have an understanding of the importance of higher education will try to raise funds even in limitations. They will do everything possible to support their children to continue their studies at the university level, because they believe that higher education will improve the social and economic status of the family.

Parental support in terms of morals and emotions is also very important for the continuation of children's higher education. In a study conducted by (Siregar & Amal, 2024), It was revealed that parents who provide emotional support and encourage their children to stay motivated despite facing great challenges in higher education have a significant impact on their children's academic success. Parents who are actively involved in their children's academic lives, either by encouraging, giving advice, or just listening to their children's complaints, will make their children feel more confident and able to overcome academic challenges.

Parents also play a role in instilling educational values and cultures that can motivate children to pursue higher education. In Research (Suharto et al., 2022), explained that parents from various cultures, including Toba Batak parents, often provide character education and values that prioritize the importance of hard work and education. For people who have strong traditions, such as Batak Toba, higher education is not only seen as a personal achievement, but also as an obligation to bring honor and dignity to the family. Parents motivate their children by setting an example and passing on the hope of achieving higher.

Based on research by (D. M. Harahap et al., 2024), The role of parents in encouraging academic independence is also very important. Parents who encourage their children to be independent in learning, for example by giving them the freedom to manage their study time, choose study programs, and complete academic tasks, can increase their children's confidence and academic resilience. Parents also serve as figures who provide direction and choices that help children to be more aware of their career choices and long-term goals in higher education.

Research by (Fitri et al., 2023), revealed that parents involved in their children's higher education not only provide financial and emotional support, but also play an active role in opening access to college. Parents are often the bridge between their children and educational institutions, for example by helping with the registration process, researching information about scholarships, and establishing relationships with college alumni to make it easier for their children to get scholarship or other assistance opportunities.

Overall, the role of parents in supporting children's higher education is very important and multifaceted. Parents not only provide financial support, but also emotional, moral, and cultural support that motivates children to strive to continue their education to a higher level. In a society that highly values education such as the Batak Toba community, this role becomes more pronounced because there are cultural values that direct children to achieve their goals and improve the quality of life of their families through higher education. Parents who are actively involved in supporting their children's education will have a positive impact on their children's academic success and future careers.

Toba Batak Cultural Values System

The Batak Toba culture, which highly values family values, dignity, and mutual cooperation, plays a major role in supporting children's higher education. Batak Toba parents often feel a moral obligation to ensure their children achieve higher education as a symbol of family success and honor. Strong family values make parents feel that the child's education is not only the personal responsibility of the child, but also the responsibility of the extended family. In addition, customary norms that prioritize respect for parents and seniors also affect the mindset of parents in providing support for children's education (Parinduri et al., 2022). Many parents consider higher education as a way to prove respect and pride in the family, especially in front of indigenous peoples. The results of the research observations are also in line with the results of interviews with the surrounding community where Mrs. Hutapea said;

"As the Batak Toba community, we really appreciate education. The most basic values in Batak culture are hula-hula (the big family of the male side) and boru (daughter) which means mutual respect and support for each other. In the context of education, these values teach us not only to seek knowledge for ourselves, but also for our families and society. Education is considered a shared responsibility, and the extended family takes part in encouraging the younger generation to achieve higher education. Here, parents not only teach the importance of learning, but also teach how to maintain family honor through education."

This is supported by the results of a study to one of the local residents, who said that;

"The cultural values of Batak Toba in education are very closely related to mutual cooperation and tulung tulungan or helping each other. In education, we are taught not to be selfish and to share knowledge with others. In daily life, especially in the village, we place a lot of emphasis on the value of togetherness, both in the family and in the community. The Batak people also highly appreciate teachers and education as a way to change their fate. So, even though children have to work hard, they still have to prioritize education because education is a way out of economic and social limitations. Parents always instill that education is a very valuable investment."

Following the results of the decision of local officials, it was said that;

"For us, education is highly appreciated, because in the Batak Toba culture, there is a concept of dalihan na tolu that teaches balance and order in life, be it in the family, community, or work. In terms of education, Batak Toba parents teach children to appreciate science, because with knowledge, a person can be more advanced in life. In addition, there is also the value of sipa-sipa or cooperation. Batak Toba education teaches the importance of maintaining harmony and working together in achieving common goals, including in learning. So, even though we come from a simple farming family, we still teach our children to be serious about learning and keep trying to be better than their parents."

These three interviews illustrate that the Batak Toba cultural value system in education places great emphasis on respect for the family, the importance of working together, respecting teachers, and seeing education as a means to improve family and community life. Values such as hula-hula, boru, gotong royong, and dalihan na tolu are a strong foundation that encourages the Batak Toba people to educate their young generation responsibly.

Toba Batak culture is rich in traditional values that shape the way of life of its people, including in terms of supporting education, especially higher education. These values include aspects of kinship, family life, honor, and social responsibility, which greatly influence the way parents guide their children in achieving higher education. In this discussion, several relevant journals will be discussed to explore more deeply how the cultural values of Batak Toba play a role in supporting higher education.

One of the main values in Batak Toba culture is kinship. In the Batak Toba society, the family is considered a very important social unit. Parents, especially fathers and mothers, play an active role in supporting their children's education, both financially, emotionally, and morally. This value of kinship is reflected in the obligation of parents to ensure that their children get the best education, including higher education. In research (Simanungkalit et al., 2024), explained that in the Batak Toba community, parents are not only responsible in terms of financing education, but also provide motivation and moral support to their children. The gotong royong system in large families is also often involved, where large families work together to support children who want to continue their education to a higher level. Therefore, parents are expected to instill the values of hard work and sacrifice in supporting their children's education.

The value of honor or dignity in Toba Batak culture has a great influence on the way parents educate their children, especially in supporting higher education. The Batak Toba community highly values family honor, which is reflected in the hard work of parents to ensure that their children receive an education that can enhance the dignity of their family. Higher education, in this context, is seen as a means to achieve a higher social status and bring honor to the family. In research (Abbas et al., 2024), explained that this value of honor motivates Toba Batak parents to provide full support to their children in achieving higher education. As part of family tradition, parents often sacrifice their personal needs to ensure their children can continue their education in college. In addition, parents also often teach their children the importance of discipline, hard work, and integrity, all of which are related to the noble values taught in the Batak Toba culture.

Toba Batak culture is very thick with traditional traditions that include the rules of social life, including in educating children. The traditional Batak Toba system teaches that education is very important, and parents have an important role in supporting their children's education. Parents in the Batak Toba culture are not only responsible for educating their children at home, but also must teach their children to respect the existing customs and traditions. In research (Parinduri et al., 2022), It was explained that parents in Batak Toba often educate their children not only with academic science, but also with profound traditional values. Toba Batak parents believe that higher education will not only make their children successful in the academic world, but also help

them maintain traditional values in their lives. Therefore, parents are expected to be role models in practicing these customary values, while supporting their children to continue to pursue higher education.

In addition to moral and social responsibility, parents in the Batak Toba culture also play an active role in finding resources to support their children's higher education. In many cases, parents have to face economic challenges to finance their child's education in college. Therefore, they will look for various ways, including working harder, seeking scholarship funds, or asking for help from extended families to ensure their children get higher educational opportunities. According to (Firmando, 2023), Toba Batak parents often instill the value of hard work in their children, which is reflected in their determination to achieve higher education. They believe that education is the best way to improve the economic and social conditions of the family. With this value, parents work hard to meet the educational needs of their children despite having to face great challenges.

Parents in the Batak Toba culture not only support financially, but also play an active role in motivating and encouraging their children to continue higher education. In research (Cantika et al., 2025), explained that Batak Toba parents often act as mentors and emotional supporters, providing encouragement for their children to stay focused on their educational goals despite facing various challenges. Parents are also often involved in direct communication with their children who are pursuing higher education, providing advice on how to overcome academic barriers, and reminding their children of their responsibilities to bring honor to the family. Batak Toba parents believe that higher education is a legacy that must be preserved and continued, as well as a way to improve the quality of life and family status.

When compared to other cultures, Batak cultural values related to education have some similarities with the culture in Javanese or Balinese society, which also emphasizes the importance of education for the advancement of the family. However, in Batak culture, the value of family togetherness and parental sacrifice for children's education is more prominent. In Javanese culture, for example, there is a very strong influence of religious values in supporting education, while in Balinese culture, education is considered part of maintaining social and customary harmony. In research (Trismayangsari et al., 2023), revealed that in Batak culture, Javanese culture also highly appreciates education. In Javanese culture, parents consider education as an obligation and part of *ngjeni* (respect) parents and ancestors. However, Javanese culture tends to prioritize the value of religiosity in education. Education is considered a means to achieve success in this world and the hereafter. On the other hand, in Batak culture, although religiosity remains, the focus is more on improving the social and economic status of the family through higher education. In Bali, education is also highly valued, but more focused on maintaining traditions and social values contained in education. In research (Widiastuti, 2022) Balinese society, education is considered a way to achieve harmony in social life, as well as cultural preservation. The Batak community, although they share some similarities in terms of respect for education, emphasizes the achievement of family prosperity as the main goal of higher education, while the Balinese emphasize the preservation of social and cultural values through education.

In Batak culture, the family has a very important role in children's education. Parents are often considered the main directors and drivers in educational achievement. Values such as *daliha na tolu* (three family roots) which teach about strong family relationships and mutual respect, create an impetus to provide good education to children as a form of family responsibility to the next generation. In Batak culture, parents have great authority in decisions related to children's education. They tend to prioritize formal education as one of the ways to achieve welfare and recognition in society. Batak parents often try hard to get their children higher education, because education is considered a symbol of social status and a way to improve family life. Other cultures, such as Javanese or Minangkabau culture, also consider education as important. However, there are differences in how parents support higher education. For example, in Javanese culture, there is an emphasis on harmony in the family and a more humble attitude, while in Batak culture, there is a tendency to be more open and active in providing encouragement for children to achieve higher education. Although the value system in Batak culture is very traditional, along with the times, there is a tendency to be more open to the modern education system, as long as it can support family values. Batak culture is also beginning to recognize the importance of flexibility in choosing an educational path that suits the child's interests and potential. The role of parents in supporting higher education, both in Batak culture and other cultures, faces challenges in balancing social expectations, changing the mindset of the younger generation, and economic development. However, parents still play an important role in providing the motivation and financial support needed to realize higher education for their children. Overall, although each culture has a different way and approach, family values remain an important foundation in supporting higher education. Parents from various cultures, including Batak culture, act as agents of change that encourage children to achieve higher education in an effort to improve their standard of living and advance society.

Challenges in Supporting Higher Education

Although Toba's Batak culture supports education, there are several challenges that parents face in supporting their children's higher education. The first challenge is financial limitations. Many parents cannot afford the cost of their child's higher education, especially when their child wants to continue to college outside the area. This makes them have to find creative solutions, such as borrowing money, finding sponsors, or working harder to meet these needs. The second challenge is the incompatibility between traditional values and the demands of more modern higher education. Although the values of kinship and hard work remain upheld, there are some parents who feel confused when their children face the demands of higher education that is more based on innovation and technology. Some parents do not fully understand the development of the world of higher education which is increasingly connected to technology and globalization.

This is also in line with the results of interviews with several villagers, where Mrs. Sitorus said that;

"Toba Batak culture really values education, especially for boys. In Batak families, parents tend to consider education as a way to achieve success in life. However, there are also challenges faced, especially for girls. Despite high expectations for education, cultural pressures related to women's roles in the household are often a hindrance. Parents usually support boys to pursue higher education, while for girls, they are often more focused on preparing to be good housewives. This is certainly a challenge that must be faced by Batak families in supporting their children's higher education."

Likewise, the results of the interview with Mr. Situmorang said, that;

"One of the big challenges is the economic aspect. Although Batak culture prioritizes education, many parents struggle financially to finance their children's higher education. Many Batak families prefer their children to work or help in the fields rather than continue their education. In addition, there are also cultural challenges, such as uncertainty about whether higher education will respect traditional values. There are fears that children who pursue higher education could lose their Batak identity and be alienated from the community. Batak parents are often worried that their children will prefer a modern life that is far from their cultural roots."

He added again with the results of interviews with village children who are carrying out education outside the city, where he said that;

"I feel that my parents are very supportive of my education, especially since I am a daughter. However, there is pressure to hold on to tradition. My parents always reminded me not to forget Batak values, even though I was pursuing higher education. Sometimes, there is also pressure to get married immediately after graduation, because it is considered more important in our culture. Sometimes, I feel like I'm at the crossroads between pursuing a career and cultural expectations to take on traditional roles. This is a big challenge for many young Batak who want to pursue higher education while still maintaining a harmonious relationship with their family and culture."

Based on the results of the interviews conducted, it can be concluded that the Batak Toba cultural system has a significant influence on the role of parents in supporting their children's higher education. In general, the Batak Toba culture highly values education as a means to achieve success, but there are differences in treatment between boys and girls. Boys tend to have greater support to pursue higher education, while for girls, there are cultural challenges that lead to traditional roles as housewives. In addition, the main challenge faced by Batak Toba parents in supporting their children's higher education is economic problems, as the high cost of education is often the main obstacle. In addition, the fear of losing traditional values and Batak culture is also an obstacle in supporting children to pursue higher education, especially those that have the potential to change their perspective on culture. For the younger generation, despite the support of their parents, they are often between two worlds: maintaining family traditions and pursuing higher education or careers. This creates a tension that must be faced, where Toba Batak children must balance family and cultural expectations with their personal ambitions to continue their education.

The Batak Toba cultural system, as reflected in various studies and literature, exerts a significant influence on the role of parents in supporting their children's higher education. Although this culture values education very much, there are differences in the support provided to boys and girls, as well as the challenges that arise in efforts to support higher education, both in terms of economy, culture, and social expectations.

In Toba Batak culture, education is considered a means to improve social status and family welfare. Batak parents place great emphasis on education, especially for boys, as they are expected to continue the lineage and become the head of the family. For example, in Batak culture, boys have a major role in maintaining family dignity and customs. Therefore, they are more often encouraged to pursue higher education (Sibarani et al., 2024). In contrast, education for girls tends to be seen more as an adjunct, as women are expected to take on domestic roles such as marriage and household care after adulthood. This is reflected in a study by Situmorang in (Munawwarah et al., 2023) who mentioned that although Batak Toba parents value education, there is an

assumption that women's education does not have to be as high as men's, and there are often limits in supporting higher education for girls.

In comparison with other cultures in Indonesia, such as Javanese or Minangkabau culture, the role of parents in supporting higher education is also heavily influenced by traditional values and expectations of gender roles. In Javanese culture, for example, there is a strong influence on women's role as housekeepers, but education is still valued, despite differences between women and men in higher education opportunities (Naibaho et al., 2024). Meanwhile, in Minangkabau culture based on the matrilineal system, women are often given greater freedom to pursue higher education because they have a strong position in the social structure of the family.

One of the biggest challenges faced by Batak Toba parents in supporting their children's higher education is economic problems. Many Toba Batak families are in rural areas, and access to higher education is limited due to high costs. This leads to difficulties in financing children's higher education, especially those from families with lower middle economies (Siregar & Amal, 2024). In addition, a cultural orientation that prioritizes working in the fields or family businesses is often the main choice for children, so that higher education is less prioritized.

In addition to economic problems, cultural challenges also play a role in limiting support for higher education. In the Batak tradition, there is a fear that higher education can change children's views of family values and traditions. In research (M. B. Harahap & Marsa, 2024) explains that there is often a tension between parents' desire to maintain cultural values and children's expectations for higher education and employment outside of traditional settings. This is also reflected in a phenomenon where children who pursue higher education often feel alienated from their cultural roots.

From the perspective of other cultures, such as Minangkabau culture, higher education is indeed seen as one of the paths to prosperity, but on the other hand, there is pressure to maintain strong relationships with communities and customs. In a study by (Nababan, 2023) revealed that although higher education is encouraged, there is still an expectation that the younger generation will not forget their traditional values. This tension is also a challenge similar to that faced by Toba Batak parents in supporting their children's higher education.

Changes in the views of Toba Batak parents towards higher education have occurred in recent decades, especially with the growing access to information and technology. Many Batak Toba children who have received higher education now play the role of agents of change in the family, by convincing parents about the importance of education for the progress of the family. This is supported by research conducted by (Firmando, 2023) who stated that the young generation of Batak Toba who have succeeded in continuing higher education now play a role in reducing the tension between traditional values and educational progress.

The same thing happens in other cultures. In Javanese and Minangkabau culture, along with the development of education and community understanding, the view of women's education is also increasingly open. In Javanese culture, for example, women are increasingly given the opportunity to pursue higher education, although they are still faced with social expectations that lead to domestic roles (Sinaga, 2020).

Based on discussions from various journals about the Batak Toba cultural system and other cultures on the role of parents in supporting higher education, it can be concluded that culture has a strong influence in determining the extent to which parents support their children's education. In the Batak Toba culture, there is a difference in treatment between boys and girls, where boys are more often encouraged to pursue higher education, while for girls, education is often considered as an adjunct and is more focused on domestic roles. However, Batak Toba parents generally value education as a path to success, although there are still cultural challenges related to gender roles. The main challenge in supporting higher education, both in Batak Toba and in other cultures, is economic problems, which limit the ability of parents to finance their children's education, especially in families with economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, there is a fear from parents that higher education may change their children's view of family cultural values and traditions. The tension between following the development of education and maintaining cultural values is a challenge in itself in supporting higher education.

However, as times change and an increasing understanding of the importance of education, both Toba Batak parents and families from other cultures are increasingly open to supporting higher education, although they still have to balance cultural expectations and educational ambitions. Higher education for children is now increasingly seen as an investment in the future that benefits not only individuals, but also families and society as a whole. Overall, although the Batak Toba culture and other cultures have challenges and obstacles in supporting higher education, the changing views that have occurred among the younger generation and the elderly give hope for a balance between continuing education and maintaining cultural values.

Conclusions

Research on the Batak Toba cultural system on the role of parents in supporting children's higher education in Bandar Pasir Mandoge shows that the Batak Toba culture has a great influence in shaping the role of parents. Cultural values such as kinship, dignity, and mutual cooperation strongly support parents' commitment to provide the best education for their children. This culture that highly values family honor encourages parents to support their child's higher education as a means to improve the social status and dignity of the family. However, despite their strong commitment, Toba Batak parents also face a number of challenges, especially in terms of financial limitations. The high cost of higher education is often a major obstacle for families with lower-middle economic backgrounds. In addition, there is a tension between traditional values that prioritize certain professions and the demands of the world of education which increasingly leads to more modern and technology-based fields. Overall, although Batak Toba parents have a strong determination to support their children's higher education, economic factors and challenges in keeping up with changes in the education system are obstacles that must be overcome so that they can more optimally support their children's education.

Further research can explore more deeply the impact of financial limitations in supporting higher education among Toba Batak families. By mapping out more factors related to access to resources and scholarships, research can provide more detailed recommendations regarding practical ways to address education financing issues. Further research can conduct a comparative study between the older generation and the younger generation in looking at higher education and more modern professions. In this way, more information can be found about the differences in perceptions between generations towards higher education, as well as how parents and children can understand each other in choosing the appropriate educational path. Researchers can further delve deeper into how Toba Batak culture can be combined with modern education. This includes research on ways in which indigenous leaders, communities, and educational institutions can work together to create programs that support higher education without sacrificing local cultural values. Further research can focus on the role of traditional leaders or other community leaders in shaping the perception of higher education among parents and children of Batak Toba. This will provide a deeper insight into the social and cultural influences in shaping attitudes towards education. Further research can also examine the importance of financial literacy education for Batak Toba parents. Knowledge of how to manage finances, seek scholarships, or support children in planning an efficient education can be an important aspect in increasing parental participation in a child's higher education. By expanding the scope and delving deeper into various aspects related to culture, economy, and education, further research will be able to make a greater contribution in understanding the dynamics between Toba Batak culture and the role of parents in supporting children's higher education.

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