



Angkola, and Mandailing. In their daily lives, the Batak people are influenced by their religion, both Islam and Christianity, which also shapes their social and cultural dynamics. (Hatari Marwina Siagian, et.al, 2022)

One important tradition held firmly by the Batak Mandailing people is the prohibition against intermarriage. This prohibition is part of a socio-religious value aimed at maintaining bloodline purity, preventing social conflict, and strengthening inter-clan relations. Violation of this prohibition is considered a form of customary deviation that can be subject to social sanctions such as ostracism or a reduction in social status (Pohan, 2021). Some of the underlying factors behind this prohibition include the belief in blood ties, fear of ancestral wrath, and the belief that inter-clan marriage will disrupt household harmony.

Previous research by (Ali Hamzah, 2021) explored a similar practice in Sibanggor Julu Village, Puncak Sorik Marapi District, focusing on customary law aspects. This research, while sharing a similar theme, will take a different perspective, examining the phenomenon of inter-clan marriage in Bunut Village, Torgamba District, South Labuhanbatu Regency, highlighting shifts in social and religious values and the sociological impacts arising from this practice. (Fitriani, 2018)

In the context of kinship, the Mandailing people recognize a genealogical system (based on the lineage of the Batak King) and sociological kinship (based on agreements and social relationships). Both form the basis for forming a dynamic social structure while remaining firmly rooted in ancestral values. (Fitriani, 2018) However, over time, customary values have begun to shift due to the influence of love, education, religion, economics, and modernization. According to (Muhammad Yusuf Rangkuti, 2021), some communities are now more flexible regarding this prohibition, although social pressure is still experienced by couples who violate it.

Furthermore, Islamic legal perspectives have also influenced the changing perception of this prohibition. In Islam, there is no prohibition on marriage within the same clan as long as it does not violate mahram rules. However, customary communities still implement sanctions, although the form has changed, from expulsion to a fine in the form of a male buffalo (Erliyanti Lubis, 2015).

The study uses Social Change Theory. According to (Selo Soemardjan, 2009), social change is any change that occurs within a society's social institutions, affecting its social system, including values, norms, attitudes, and behavioral patterns. Social Change Theory is used to analyze the shift in values in the practice of intermarriage in Batak society, which was once considered taboo according to custom but is now increasingly accepted due to the influence of religious values, education, and modernization.

In Bunut Village itself, the phenomenon of intermarriage has begun to emerge and spark various social reactions. Some residents still steadfastly uphold tradition and consider this practice a serious violation, while others have begun to accept this phenomenon on grounds of love, individual rights, and religious teachings. Consequently, couples marrying within the same clan often experience marginalization in the form of ostracism, limited participation in traditional activities, and even tension in intergenerational relationships.

This shift reflects the emergence of two poles of values in society: those who strictly uphold traditional customs and those who prioritize modern values and individual rights. The tension between the two has the potential to impact social stability and weaken community cohesion. The authority of traditional leaders is also being questioned, especially when customary decisions are no longer considered in line with humanitarian values.

Based on this, this study aims to examine the shift in socio-religious values in the practice of marriage within the same clan in the Mandailing community of Bunut Village, as well as to analyze its impact on the social position of couples, changes in the function of traditional institutions, and the overall social dynamics of the community. An inclusive and contextual approach is needed to understand the relationship between cultural preservation and respect for individual rights in an evolving society.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a field study using a descriptive qualitative approach (Moleong, 2017) conducted in Bunut Village, Torgamba District, South Labuhanbatu Regency. This study aims to explore in-depth the shifting values in the practice of intermarriage among the Mandailing community. Primary data was obtained directly from in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation with key informants: village heads, community leaders, religious leaders, and couples engaged in intermarriage. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from books, journals, scientific articles, previous research findings, and official documents such as marriage administration records and relevant customary regulations (Suharismi Arikunto, 2010). A phenomenological approach was also used in this study to directly understand the subjective experiences of individuals or groups involved in the phenomenon.

The data collection process was conducted systematically using structured interviews and field observations. To maintain data validity, source triangulation was used, namely by comparing information from various informants who had differing views regarding the practice of intermarriage. (Moleong, 2017) Data were analyzed through three stages: data reduction, thematic data presentation, and drawing conclusions. (Matthew & Huberman, 2014) Data presentation focused on categories such as customary views, religious responses, and public perceptions. With this method, researchers can further understand the dynamics of the relationship between customary norms and religious teachings, as well as the social impacts resulting from these value shifts within the Mandailing community.

### 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

#### **The Form of Socio-Religious Value Shift in the Practice of Single-Clan Marriage in Bunut Village, Torgamba District**

In Bunut Village, Torgamba District, a shift in socio-religious values regarding the practice of marriage within the same clan reflects the dynamics between customary norms and Islamic teachings. Previously, the prohibition on marriage within the same clan was considered absolute and sacred, both from the perspective of Mandailing customs, which emphasize the importance of maintaining lineage (partuturon), and from a religious perspective that equated it with the prohibition on marriage based on mahram (brotherhood), such as breast-feeding. However, over time, this shift has emerged among the younger generation and some community leaders. A more open religious interpretation based on a study of Islamic legal sources has begun to separate customary prohibitions from sharia. Meanwhile, education, urbanization, and media influence have contributed to a more flexible attitude toward marriage within the same clan, although they still face resistance from customary groups. This shift indicates a change in the socio-religious structure of society, where religious norms are beginning to be interpreted more contextually, and custom is no longer the sole reference point in determining marriage eligibility.

An interview with Kamal Harun Nasution, a customary leader in Bunut Village, explains that: (Kamal Harun Nasution, 2025)

*"The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of marriage within the same clan is clearly visible in the changing attitudes of society, especially the younger generation. Previously, marriage within the same clan was considered a serious violation of custom and religion, and those who married could be ostracized or even disowned in traditional ceremonies. However, there has been a marked change: some couples are still marrying despite being from the same clan, and some families are beginning to accept this, as long as the marriage is conducted legally according to religion." Kamal cited a real-life example of a young couple marrying within the same clan. Despite initial family opposition, the couple finally accepted the marriage after paying a traditional fine of a goat, rather than a buffalo as before. He also revealed that in the past, traditional ceremonies could not be held if the marriage was not legally valid according to custom, but now many simply hold religious marriage ceremonies without traditional ceremonies, and society is beginning to consider that sufficient. Another shift, Kamal said, is seen in the perspective of parents, who now prioritize their child's mental and economic readiness over their clan origins. This indicates that traditional and religious values What was once rigid is now being understood flexibly, although some community groups still maintain old views. Kamal hopes that this change will continue to be guided by deliberation and shared understanding to prevent social conflict within the community.*

In line with the statement in an interview with Mustakim Siregar, a community leader in Bunut Village, he explained that; (Mustakim Siregar, 2025)

*"In Bunut Village, Torgamba District, there has been a shift in social and religious values regarding marriage within the same clan. Previously, the prohibition on marriage within the same clan was a very strong customary norm and considered sacred. This prohibition was not only a rule passed down from ancestors but was also believed to align with religious values, both in Islam and Christianity, in maintaining the moral and social order of society. Violating this prohibition was not only seen as unethical according to tradition, but also impacted the social status of the couple and their family within the community, such as being ostracized from traditional ceremonies or not being allowed to participate in cultural and religious activities. However, over time, these values have begun to shift. Now, although still considered taboo by some parents and traditional leaders, the practice of marriage within the same clan is becoming accepted, especially among the younger generation. The reasons for love and freedom to choose a partner are the dominant factors driving this change. In fact, some couples still marry despite being from the same clan, and society is slowly beginning to tolerate this situation. This demonstrates that "Customary norms, once absolute, are now becoming more flexible in the face of modern social realities. This shift is also evident in the changing forms of sanctions. While previously violating customary law could result in total ostracism, sanctions are*

*now more symbolic, such as paying a fine or slaughtering a buffalo, which, once fulfilled, allow the couple to be re-accepted within the customary community. In some cases, families who initially rejected the marriage eventually relented after seeing the couple's sincerity and the social pressure supporting free marriage."*

Based on interviews with traditional and community leaders in Bunut Village, Torgamba District, it can be concluded that there has been a significant shift in socio-religious values regarding the practice of intermarriage. The prohibition, which was once absolute and considered a violation of custom and religious norms, is now being understood more flexibly, especially by the younger generation. This shift is evident in the community's acceptance of intermarriage as long as it is legally valid, even if it has not been celebrated in a traditional ceremony. Furthermore, previously harsh customary sanctions, such as ostracism, have shifted to symbolic ones, such as the payment of a small fine. Factors such as the influence of education, media, and modern values such as love and independence in choosing a partner, have contributed to this change. Although some residents still adhere to old customary rules, social tolerance for intermarriage is increasing, reflecting a shift in the structure of social and religious norms of the Batak community in Bunut Village.

As explained in an interview with Indra Nasution, a Bunut Village resident who has engaged in intermarriage, he explained: (Indra Nasution, 2025)

*"The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of same-clan marriage in his village occurred due to a change in the community's perspective on customs and religion. Indra stated that while marriage within the same clan was previously considered taboo and a violation of Batak customs, society is now more open to it, as long as the marriage is conducted legally according to religion. He himself married a woman from the same clan because he felt they were compatible personally and believed that religion was paramount in validating a marriage. According to him, his parents initially objected, but eventually accepted after seeing that there was no explicit religious prohibition. He also added that many young people are now beginning to question customary rules that they perceive as restricting their freedom to choose a partner. Support from several religious leaders, who stated that marriage within the same clan does not invalidate the validity of a marriage according to Islamic law, is another reason for him. Indra believes this shift is influenced by advances in education, openness to information, and the desire for a modern lifestyle. He said he no longer faces severe social sanctions like previous generations. In fact, many residents are now more tolerant and respect each other's choices. According to him, this shift reflects an adjustment between customs and the realities of today's society."*

In line with Azizah's statement, a resident of Bunut Village who performed a marriage within the same surname explained that; (Azizah, 2025)

*"Initially, Azizah's parents strongly forbade her marriage because she and her partner came from the same clan, which is considered a violation of Batak customs. However, after much discussion and emotional outreach, her parents finally permitted the marriage, arguing that their relationship was not blood-related and that they both loved each other. Azizah explained that many parents are now beginning to soften their stance on customary rules, especially when they see their children taking a serious and responsible approach to their relationships. She added that many people in Bunut Village have also adopted more flexible views, no longer as rigid as before in judging marriages within the same clan. This shift is evident in the shift from previously rigid customary values to a more compromising approach, where love, compatibility, and responsibility are prioritized over customary prohibitions. Furthermore, the influence of education, media, and wider social interaction have also encouraged people to be more flexible in interpreting traditional rules. This shift in socio-religious values is evident in the increasingly lenient views on customary rules and the increasing dominance of personal and emotional considerations in decision-making. Including in marriage matters".*

Based on interviews with Indra Nasution and Azizah, residents of Bunut Village who engaged in inter-clan marriages, it can be concluded that there has been a significant shift in the local community's socio-religious values regarding the practice of inter-clan marriage. Previously, inter-clan marriages were considered a serious violation of customary and religious norms, and carried the risk of social sanctions and family rejection. However, now, the community, especially the younger generation and some older generations, is beginning to demonstrate a more open and flexible attitude. Previously rigid customary values are being replaced by considerations based on love, personal compatibility, and the validity of the marriage according to religion. This shift indicates that the Bunut Village community is currently in the process of balancing respect for tradition and adapting to increasingly complex and modern social realities.

The practice of inter-clan marriage, once strongly rejected, has now undergone a significant shift in socio-religious values. The community is beginning to open up space for compromise between custom and religion. Consequently, inter-clan marriages, previously considered a serious violation, are now being accepted with certain conditions, such as religious legitimacy or through customary symbols of resolution. The younger generation is the primary driver of this change, driven by education, media influence, and modern values such as love and freedom of choice. Although not yet fully accepted by all levels of society, this change signals a social transformation where customs are no longer viewed as absolute norms, but as part of a tradition that can be reexamined and adapted to changing times. Therefore, it is important to maintain a balance between preserving customs and accepting the ever-changing social reality to maintain social harmony amidst these dynamics. The interviews above indicate several shifts in socio-religious values in the practice of same-clan marriage, including:

- a) A shift from absolute customary norms to more flexible and open ones.
- b) A decrease in the intensity of customary sanctions, from total ostracism (payment of fines).
- c) A shift in societal orientation from adherence to customary prohibitions to prioritizing them.
- d) A change in parental attitudes, which were previously strict.
- e) A growing social acceptance of same-clan couples, including responsibility and good intentions.
- f) The dominance of education, information, social interaction, and new perspectives on tradition.
- g) The decline in the perception that same-surname marriage violates religious beliefs.
- h) Support for more contextual religious interpretations.

#### **Factors Driving the Shift in Socio-Religious Values in the Practice of Single-Clan Marriage in Bunut Village**

The change in socio-religious values regarding the practice of intermarriage in Bunut Village did not occur spontaneously, but was influenced by various interrelated factors. One of the main drivers is increasingly open interaction with the outside world, both through media, education, and population migration, which brought new values. Furthermore, changes in the younger generation's perspectives on customs and religion also played a role. The current generation tends to be more flexible and rational in interpreting the prohibition on intermarriage, which was previously considered sacred. Economic factors, education, and shifts in social structure also reinforced this change. In this context, Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory is relevant to examine how individuals and society influence each other in shaping a new social reality that is now more open to the practice of intermarriage.

An interview with Kamal Harun Nasution, a traditional leader in Bunut Village, explained that: (Kamal Harun Nasution, 2025)

*"One of these is education, as many young people from Bunut Village migrate to pursue higher education in big cities like Medan or Jakarta. When they return home, they bring with them a more open and modern mindset, so the prohibition on marriage within the same clan is no longer considered as sacred as it once was. Furthermore, the influx of more moderate religious understandings also plays a role, as religious teachings do not explicitly prohibit marriage within the same clan, as long as it does not violate Islamic law. The younger generation's mindset, which is now more rational and prioritizes love, compatibility, and comfort in relationships, also contributes to this shift. Furthermore, with the rapid flow of information through social media, young people are now more exposed to new views that sometimes conflict with local customs. Kamal also highlighted the weakening function of traditional institutions, which were once active in upholding traditional values, now exerting less influence due to a lack of regeneration and community support. He emphasized that although some residents still uphold their customs, many are beginning to abandon them in order to adapt to the demands of the times."*

In line with Azizah's statement, a Bunut Village resident who practiced inter-clan marriage explained that (Azizah, 2025)

*"The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of inter-clan marriage is largely influenced by personal experiences and the social conditions facing today's younger generation. In her view, the prohibition against inter-clan marriage is no longer considered absolute, especially if there is no close biological relationship. Azizah acknowledged that the decision to marry within the same clan is based more on mutual love and the desire to build a harmonious household, rather than simply defying tradition. She also feels that social pressure on inter-clan couples has decreased significantly compared to the past, as more people are beginning to understand that customs must adapt to changing times. According to her, extended families eventually accept these relationships after being convinced that there are no violations of Islamic law. Azizah added that rather than maintaining outdated customary prohibitions, it is better for people to focus on religious values, responsibility, and readiness to build a good household."*

As explained in an interview with Indra Nasution, a resident of Bunut Village who engaged in a marriage within the same clan, (Indra Nasution, 2025)

*“Factors influenced his decision to marry a partner from the same clan. First, strong feelings of love and compatibility were the main reasons. He believes that marriage isn’t about clan, but about comfort and readiness to live together. Second, he saw that there is no explicit prohibition in Islamic teachings prohibiting marriage within the same clan as long as there are no close blood relations. Third, his mindset was shaped by a more open educational and social environment, where many of his friends were less bound by rigid customary rules. Fourth, he felt that social pressure from society was decreasing, especially as the younger generation now values individual choice over simply following tradition. Fifth, the lack of active involvement from traditional leaders and parents in providing a strong understanding of the prohibition on marriage within the same clan also made him feel there was nothing truly to worry about in his decision.”*

Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that the shift in socio-religious values in the practice of same-clan marriage in Bunut Village is due to various interrelated factors, both structural and cultural. Education is a dominant factor, as many young people migrate and return with a more open mindset. More moderate religious views also contribute, as there is no explicit prohibition in Islam regarding marriage within the same clan as long as there are no close blood relations. Furthermore, personal experiences, the development of social media, the declining influence of traditional institutions and the loosening of social pressures have led the younger generation to question the relevance of traditional values. Both Azizah and Indra emphasized that compatibility, love, and responsibility are the primary foundations for building a household, not simply upholding traditional prohibitions. This reflects the social reality in Bunut Village being reconstructed by a younger generation that is more rational and adaptive to changing times. The following are the factors driving the shift in socio-religious values in the practice of same-clan marriage in Bunut Village, arranged point by point:

- a) Higher education: Many young people go to big cities to study and return with a more open mindset.
- b) Moderate religious understanding: There is no strict prohibition in Islamic teachings against marriage within the same clan if there is no close blood relationship.
- c) Feelings of love and compatibility: Emotional considerations are the primary basis for choosing a partner, rather than clan or custom.
- d) The influence of social media: Wide access to information via the internet makes the younger generation more open to new views.
- e) Open social environment: Interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds and values makes attitudes toward customs more flexible.
- f) Reduced social pressure: Society is no longer as strict as it once was in responding to marriage within the same clan, thus preventing major conflicts.
- g) Weakened role of traditional institutions and community leaders: Lack of socialization and regeneration has resulted in the loss of traditional values among the younger generation.

The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of marriage within the same clan in Bunut Village is the result of complex and interconnected social dynamics. Factors such as higher education, a more moderate understanding of religion, and the personal experiences of the younger generation are key drivers of this shift in attitudes toward custom. Coupled with the influence of social media, a more open social environment, and a decline in social pressure and the weakening of customary institutions, the practice of intermarriage is no longer considered a serious violation. This reality demonstrates that the people of Bunut Village are developing a new social construct that is more rational, flexible, and adaptive to changing times, where custom remains respected but is no longer seen as an absolute limitation in determining life choices.

## DISCUSSION

Based on interviews with traditional leaders, community leaders, and residents who have engaged in inter-clan marriages in Bunut Village, Torgamba District, it can be concluded that the shift in socio-religious values in the practice of inter-clan marriage reflects a transformation in the community's mindset regarding customary norms and religious teachings. The prohibition on inter-clan marriage, once considered absolute and sacred, has now been relaxed over time. Social sanctions such as ostracism have shifted to symbolic forms such as small fines. The younger generation is the primary actor in this change, driven by higher education, a more moderate understanding of religion, and exposure to global media and information. Aspects of love, compatibility, and responsibility are now primary factors in choosing a partner, replacing customary prohibitions that were once considered inviolable. This phenomenon can be analyzed using Selo Soemardjan's Theory of Social Change (2009), which states that social change is any change in societal

institutions that influences the values, norms, and behavioral patterns of society. In this context, the Bunut Village community is experiencing a profound shift in its social system, where traditional values are being redefined to align with the demands of the times. This finding aligns with several previous studies. Research by Sartika Simatupang (2013) showed that intermarriage among the Toba Batak people was once considered a major disgrace, potentially leading to ostracism and even loss of life. Meanwhile, Siti Khairani (2018) noted that some Mandailing people still maintain the prohibition on intermarriage, but many are beginning to accept it, citing considerations of love, religion, economics, and education. This research reinforces the conclusion that the practice of intermarriage among the Mandailing people, including in Bunut Village, is undergoing a social transformation influenced by internal societal dynamics and external influences. Custom is no longer the sole moral standard, but is instead compromised by religious values and modern rationality.

The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of intermarriage among the people in Bunut Village is the result of a complex interaction between internal societal dynamics and external influences. Younger generations who have attained higher education and experienced social interactions outside the region tend to have more rational views and are open to customary norms. They began to question the relevance of the ban on marriage within the same clan, especially since, according to Islam, the prohibition only applies to marriages between mahrams (mahrams), not those within the same clan. A more moderate understanding of religion has strengthened the belief that this practice does not conflict with sharia, as long as there is no direct blood relationship. Furthermore, emotional factors such as love, compatibility, and the mental readiness of a couple are now prioritized over absolute adherence to customary prohibitions.

In line with the theory (Amalina Hudani, 2020), social values in society are influenced by various factors such as family, friendships, social roles, cultural values, social status, and parenting styles. More open families and supportive friendships often provide space for individuals to think independently and reinterpret customary values. Similarly, exposure to media and modernization foster new mindsets that are more tolerant of differences. According to (Nuria Hikmah, 2019), marriage is also influenced by economic factors, education, culture, and social pressure. Challenging economic conditions and low levels of education encourage people to make pragmatic decisions, including regarding marriage. However, increased access to education and information has actually enabled the younger generation to assess traditions more critically.

From the perspective of customary existence, as explained (Muhibbul Subhi, et.al, 2024), customs are not fixed, but are susceptible to the influence of the natural environment, socio-cultural changes, and economic conditions. When economic conditions are difficult or when external cultural influences become stronger, the implementation of customs can change or even be abandoned. This is also confirmed by research (Muhammad Yusuf Rangkuti, 2021), which shows that the prohibition on marriage within the same clan in Batak Mandailing customs is beginning to shift because people no longer believe in absolute taboos. Factors such as love, religion, education, economics, and culture are the main reasons for violating this prohibition. This phenomenon indicates that society, especially the younger generation in Bunut Village, is forming a new social construct that prioritizes rationality, inclusive religious values, and adapting customs to the realities of modern life.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on research on the practice of intermarriage in Bunut Village, Torgamba District, it can be concluded that there has been a significant shift in socio-religious values within the local Batak Mandailing community. This shift is marked by a shift in views on the prohibition on intermarriage, which was previously considered a serious violation of religious customs and norms. Now, this prohibition is beginning to be interpreted more flexibly, especially by the younger generation who prioritize love, personal compatibility, and the validity of marriage according to religion. A decrease in the intensity of customary sanctions, changes in parental attitudes towards greater compromise, and increased social acceptance of intermarriage couples are clear indicators of this transformation. Factors such as higher education, media influence, openness to information, broad social interactions, and more contextual interpretations of religion have contributed to this shift in values. Thus, the people of Bunut Village are currently moving toward a more adaptive mindset, where customs and religion are no longer understood rigidly, but rather as social norms that can be adapted to the dynamics of the times to maintain social harmony and stability. The shift in socio-religious values in the practice of same-clan marriage in Bunut Village is influenced by various interrelated factors. Higher education, moderate religious understanding, and personal experience are the main drivers of change. The influence of social media and an open social environment also strengthen the flexibility of the younger generation's views on customs. Weakening social pressure and the

declining role of customs are increasingly opening up space for the option of same-clan marriage. This reality indicates the existence of a new social construct that is more rational and adaptive to changing times.

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