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Meaning and Social Function in the Film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*

Putri Adelina Br Situmorang

Batak Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Science, Universitas Sumatera Utara, 20155, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: pudelsitumorang@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the meaning and social function represented in the Indonesian comedy film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* by exploring the interaction between Batak local wisdom and contemporary family life. The study aims to identify the central meanings conveyed through the film and to analyze its social functions using Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism theory. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed through content analysis of the film's narrative, characters, dialogues, and cultural representations. The findings reveal that the film portrays the tension between traditional Batak values and modern perspectives on marriage, gender, family, and personal identity. Fourteen major thematic ideas were identified, highlighting issues such as lineage expectations, intergenerational conflict, marital communication, emotional resilience, gender inequality, and cultural adaptation. The film functions not only as entertainment but also as a medium for cultural education, social criticism, and the preservation of local wisdom. Through humor and relatable family conflicts, it encourages audiences to reflect on the importance of balancing respect for tradition with individual autonomy and changing social realities. Furthermore, the film demonstrates that open communication, empathy, and mutual understanding are essential for resolving conflicts within extended families. This study concludes that *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* successfully transforms Batak cultural values into a contemporary cinematic narrative that promotes cultural continuity while encouraging critical reflection on tradition in modern Indonesian society.

Keywords: Social function; Meaning; *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji makna dan fungsi sosial yang direpresentasikan dalam Film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* dengan mengeksplorasi interaksi antara kearifan lokal Batak dan kehidupan keluarga kontemporer. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi makna utama yang disampaikan melalui film tersebut serta menganalisis fungsi sosialnya menggunakan teori fungsionalisme Bronislaw Malinowski. Pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif diterapkan melalui analisis konten terhadap narasi, karakter, dialog, dan representasi budaya dalam film. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film ini menggambarkan ketegangan antara nilai-nilai tradisional Batak dan perspektif modern mengenai pernikahan, gender, keluarga, dan identitas pribadi. Empat belas gagasan tematis utama berhasil diidentifikasi, yang menyoroti isu-isu seperti ekspektasi garis keturunan, konflik antargenerasi, komunikasi dalam pernikahan, ketahanan emosional, ketimpangan gender, dan adaptasi budaya. Film ini berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai sarana pendidikan budaya, kritik sosial, dan pelestarian kearifan lokal. Melalui humor dan konflik keluarga yang relevan dengan kehidupan sehari-hari, film ini mengajak penonton untuk merenungkan pentingnya menyeimbangkan penghormatan terhadap tradisi dengan otonomi individu serta realitas sosial yang terus berubah. Lebih lanjut, film ini menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi terbuka, empati, dan saling pengertian merupakan hal yang esensial dalam menyelesaikan konflik di dalam keluarga besar. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* berhasil mentransformasikan nilai-nilai budaya Batak menjadi narasi sinematik kontemporer yang mendorong keberlanjutan budaya sekaligus memicu refleksi kritis terhadap tradisi dalam masyarakat Indonesia modern.

Kata kunci: Fungsi sosial; Arti; Film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*



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1. Introduction

Film has long been recognized as one of the most influential forms of popular culture because it not only entertains audiences but also reflects, constructs, and transmits cultural values across generations. As an audiovisual medium, film possesses a unique ability to combine narrative, visual imagery, dialogue, music, and symbolism into meaningful representations of social reality. In multicultural countries such as Indonesia, films become important cultural texts through which local traditions, customs, and philosophies are introduced to wider audiences. Beyond their commercial value, films contribute to cultural preservation by documenting indigenous knowledge and presenting it in forms that are accessible to younger generations living in an increasingly globalized world. Recent studies emphasize that Indonesian cinema has become an important platform for promoting local wisdom while simultaneously strengthening national identity amid rapid cultural transformation [1].

The development of Indonesian cinema in recent years demonstrates a growing tendency to integrate regional cultures into mainstream storytelling. Rather than presenting traditional culture as a historical artifact, contemporary filmmakers increasingly reinterpret local customs through narratives that resonate with modern audiences. This approach enables traditional values to remain relevant despite social change. Consequently, films become spaces where cultural identity is continuously negotiated between inherited traditions and contemporary lifestyles. Through this process, cinema functions not merely as entertainment but also as a cultural discourse that encourages audiences to reconsider the significance of local wisdom in present-day society [2].

One of the most notable examples of this cultural representation is the 2024 Indonesian comedy film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*. The film successfully combines humor, family drama, and cultural values by portraying the complexities of Batak family life. Unlike conventional family comedies that primarily seek entertainment, this film presents conflicts rooted in Batak traditions, particularly those concerning kinship, marriage, and family expectations. The commercial success of the film indicates that audiences continue to appreciate stories deeply embedded in local culture, especially when they are presented through relatable characters and humorous situations [3]. Its popularity also reflects the increasing public interest in films that celebrate Indonesian cultural diversity while addressing contemporary social issues.

The uniqueness of *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* lies in its authentic depiction of Batak local wisdom without romanticizing or rejecting traditional values. The narrative incorporates important cultural concepts such as *Dalihan Na Tolu*, the Batak kinship system, alongside philosophical principles including *hagabeon* (the blessing of descendants), *hamoraon* (prosperity), and *hasangapon* (honor). These concepts are portrayed not merely as cultural symbols but as living values that shape interpersonal relationships and family decisions [4]. At the same time, the film critically examines how these traditional principles interact with modern family life, revealing tensions between collective cultural obligations and individual aspirations.

The central conflict between the daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law represents a broader social phenomenon experienced by many contemporary Indonesian families. The pressure to produce a male heir, the intervention of extended family members in household affairs, and rigid gender expectations illustrate how cultural traditions may generate psychological and emotional burdens when interpreted inflexibly [5]. These issues extend beyond Batak society and resonate with wider discussions regarding generational conflict, women's autonomy, family authority, and changing social norms. Through comedy, the film transforms these sensitive issues into accessible narratives that encourage audiences to reflect on their own cultural experiences without feeling alienated or judged.

To understand these representations more systematically, this study adopts the theory of local wisdom. Local wisdom into two broad categories: wisdom for welfare and wisdom for peacefulness [6]. Wisdom for welfare encompasses values that promote prosperity, including hard work, discipline, education, health, cooperation, gender fairness, creativity, and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, wisdom for peacefulness includes politeness, honesty, social solidarity, harmony, peaceful conflict resolution, mutual respect, and positive thinking. This theoretical framework provides a comprehensive basis for identifying and categorizing the cultural values represented in the film. Rather than viewing local wisdom as a collection of static traditions, it highlights its practical functions in maintaining social cohesion and improving community well-being [7].

This research employs Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism theory to examine the meanings and social functions embedded within the film. According to Malinowski, every cultural practice exists because it fulfills particular human needs, whether biological, psychological, social, or spiritual [8]. Cultural expressions, including narratives presented in films, therefore serve functional purposes rather than existing solely for aesthetic value. Applying this perspective allows the study to investigate how the themes, conflicts, characters, and cultural practices depicted in *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* contribute to maintaining family relationships, preserving cultural identity, resolving social tensions, and negotiating changing societal expectations. Functionalism also enables a deeper understanding of how humor itself functions as a mechanism for reducing conflict and facilitating communication within complex family relationships.

The relevance of this study extends beyond film criticism. In today's digital era, globalization has accelerated cultural exchanges while simultaneously threatening the continuity of local traditions. Younger generations are increasingly exposed to global popular culture, often resulting in diminished familiarity with indigenous customs and philosophies [9]. Consequently, cultural preservation requires innovative approaches capable of presenting traditional knowledge in forms that remain attractive and meaningful. Films such as *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* demonstrate that local wisdom can be reinterpreted through contemporary narratives without sacrificing its philosophical essence. This transformation illustrates how popular media can function simultaneously as an instrument of cultural preservation and cultural adaptation.

Furthermore, this study contributes to broader academic discussions concerning the relationship between media, culture, and identity formation in Indonesia. Previous research has largely focused on cultural representation in Indonesian films or on Batak local wisdom independently. However, limited attention has been devoted to examining how local wisdom simultaneously conveys meaning and fulfills social functions within cinematic narratives. By integrating the concept of local wisdom with Malinowski's functionalism, this study provides a more comprehensive analytical perspective that connects cultural representation with its practical significance in everyday life [10].

Based on these considerations, this research aims to examine the meanings and social functions represented in *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*. Specifically, it seeks to identify how Batak local wisdom is portrayed throughout the narrative, analyze the cultural values reflected in the relationships and conflicts among the characters, classify these values of welfare and peacefulness, and explain their social functions using Malinowski's functionalist perspective [11]. Ultimately, the study is expected to enrich interdisciplinary scholarship in film studies, cultural studies, and anthropology while offering valuable insights into the role of Indonesian cinema in preserving, negotiating, and revitalizing local wisdom within contemporary society.

2. Literature Review

The study of meaning and social function in films has become an important area of interdisciplinary research because cinema functions not only as entertainment but also as a cultural text that reflects, constructs, and negotiates social values. In multicultural societies such as Indonesia, films frequently serve as media for representing local traditions, social identities, and cultural wisdom while simultaneously responding to the challenges of modernization and globalization [12]. Consequently, examining *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* through theories of local wisdom and functionalism provides a comprehensive understanding of how cultural meanings are produced and communicated to contemporary audiences.

Film scholars generally argue that films are systems of signs in which dialogues, visual symbols, settings, costumes, and character interactions work together to produce meaning. Meaning in a film is therefore not limited to explicit narratives but also emerges through cultural symbols embedded in everyday practices. Cultural films often portray traditions, family structures, customs, and belief systems that reflect the worldview of particular communities. These representations enable audiences to understand the cultural identity of ethnic groups while encouraging reflection on the relevance of traditional values in modern society. In Indonesia, films with strong regional identities increasingly function as instruments for preserving local heritage while making it accessible to younger generations who may have limited exposure to traditional customs [13].

One of the central concepts in this study is local wisdom. Local wisdom refers to the collective knowledge, values, beliefs, and practices developed by a community through long historical experience in responding to environmental, social, and cultural challenges. Rather than being static, local wisdom evolves according to changing circumstances while maintaining its essential philosophical principles. It functions as a guide for human behavior, social interaction, conflict resolution, environmental management, and community

solidarity. In Indonesian society, local wisdom is manifested in customary laws, kinship systems, oral traditions, rituals, proverbs, and social norms that regulate relationships among individuals and communities [14].

Among Indonesian scholars, Robert Sibarani provides one of the most comprehensive frameworks for understanding local wisdom. According to Sibarani, local wisdom can be categorized into two broad dimensions: wisdom for prosperity and wisdom for peacefulness. Wisdom for prosperity includes cultural values that promote hard work, education, discipline, mutual cooperation, creativity, environmental sustainability, gender fairness, and economic welfare. These values encourage individuals to improve their quality of life while maintaining collective responsibility toward society. Meanwhile, wisdom for peacefulness consists of values such as honesty, politeness, mutual respect, social solidarity, conflict resolution, tolerance, empathy, and positive thinking. These principles contribute to harmonious relationships within families and communities by minimizing social conflicts and strengthening interpersonal trust [15].

This classification is particularly relevant to the analysis of *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* because the film portrays numerous cultural practices that simultaneously pursue family welfare and social harmony. Expectations concerning marriage, descendants, kinship obligations, and respect for elders are presented as cultural mechanisms intended to preserve family continuity and social stability. However, the film also illustrates how these values may become problematic when interpreted rigidly without considering contemporary realities. Therefore, Sibarani's framework provides an analytical lens for distinguishing between cultural values that continue to function positively and those requiring reinterpretation within modern contexts [16].

Another important theoretical foundation of this research is Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism. Malinowski argues that every element of culture exists because it performs specific functions in satisfying human needs. Cultural institutions, traditions, rituals, beliefs, and social norms are maintained because they contribute to biological, psychological, economic, or social survival. From this perspective, cultural practices should not merely be viewed as historical relics but as functional mechanisms that help communities organize social life and maintain collective order [17].

Malinowski further explains that culture fulfills both basic biological needs and derived social needs. Basic needs include reproduction, nutrition, safety, shelter, and physical well-being, whereas derived needs involve education, social control, cooperation, economic organization, and cultural transmission. Consequently, customs surrounding marriage, family relationships, inheritance, and kinship are maintained because they regulate essential aspects of human life. In the context of film analysis, functionalism enables researchers to identify why particular cultural values continue to appear in narratives and what social purposes they serve within the represented community [18].

Applying Malinowski's perspective to *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* reveals that the Batak kinship system, particularly the concept of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, functions as an organizing principle for family relationships. *Dalihan Na Tolu* establishes reciprocal responsibilities among relatives, promotes respect for elders, and preserves social cohesion within extended families. Likewise, the cultural ideals of *hagabeon* (having descendants), *hamoraon* (prosperity), and *hasangapon* (honor) function as moral goals that encourage responsibility toward family continuity and community reputation. These values explain why the pressure to produce male descendants occupies a central position in the film's narrative [19].

The Batak cultural philosophy itself has been widely recognized as one of Indonesia's strongest kinship traditions. Family identity is closely associated with clan lineage (*marga*), making descendants an important symbol of continuity and social recognition. Respect for parents and elders, collective decision-making, mutual assistance among relatives, and adherence to customary ceremonies are integral aspects of Batak social organization. These traditions reinforce social solidarity while preserving cultural identity across generations. Nevertheless, modernization has introduced new perspectives emphasizing individual autonomy, gender equality, and personal fulfillment. As a result, younger generations often negotiate between maintaining traditional obligations and pursuing contemporary lifestyles [20].

Recent cultural studies have demonstrated that this negotiation between tradition and modernity has become a recurring theme in Indonesian cinema. Rather than portraying traditional culture as either entirely positive or completely obsolete, contemporary films frequently depict it as dynamic and adaptable. Comedy, in particular, has proven effective in presenting sensitive cultural issues because humor reduces social tension while encouraging critical reflection. Through laughter, audiences become more receptive to discussions concerning family expectations, generational conflict, gender inequality, and cultural transformation [21].

The representation of women in family-centered films also receives considerable scholarly attention. Feminist film criticism argues that women are often positioned as primary bearers of cultural expectations, particularly concerning marriage, reproduction, and caregiving responsibilities. In many patriarchal societies, infertility or delayed childbirth is disproportionately associated with women despite being a shared responsibility between spouses. Films that critically examine these assumptions contribute to broader discussions about gender justice, equality, and changing family dynamics. In *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*, Minar's experiences illustrate how traditional expectations may place excessive emotional burdens on daughters-in-law while simultaneously highlighting the importance of supportive marital communication [22].

Furthermore, studies on family communication emphasize that successful marriages depend on openness, empathy, negotiation, and mutual understanding rather than rigid adherence to traditional authority. Effective communication enables couples to navigate external pressures from extended families without damaging their emotional relationship. The film reinforces this perspective by portraying communication between Minar and Sahat as a source of resilience amid conflicts with parents and relatives. Humor also functions as an adaptive coping strategy, transforming emotionally difficult situations into opportunities for reconciliation and reflection [23].

Overall, the existing literature demonstrates that films constitute powerful cultural texts capable of preserving local wisdom while stimulating critical dialogue about social change. Sibarani's theory of local wisdom explains the cultural values represented in the narrative, whereas Malinowski's functionalism clarifies the social purposes those values fulfill within the community. Combined with studies on Batak culture, family communication, gender relations, and cinematic representation, these theoretical perspectives provide a solid conceptual foundation for analyzing the meanings and social functions presented in *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*. The literature also indicates that local wisdom should not be understood as a fixed cultural inheritance but as a living system of values continuously interpreted, negotiated, and transformed according to the needs of contemporary society.

3. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the meaning and social function represented in the Indonesian film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* (2024). A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth interpretation of cultural values, social interactions, and symbolic meanings embedded in audiovisual narratives. The study focused on how Batak local wisdom is represented through the film's characters, dialogues, conflicts, settings, and narrative structure.

The primary source of data was the film *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting*. The data consisted of scenes, conversations, character interactions, and visual representations that reflected Batak cultural values, family relationships, and traditional customs. Relevant books, journal articles, and previous studies on local wisdom, film studies, and cultural representation were used as secondary sources to support the analysis [24].

Data were collected through repeated observation of the film and documentation of significant dialogues and scenes. Important sequences were identified, transcribed, categorized, and coded according to their thematic relevance. The researcher paid particular attention to cultural expressions related to kinship, gender roles, family obligations, communication, conflict resolution, and traditional Batak values such as *Dalihan Na Tolu*, *hagabeon*, *hamoraon*, and *hasangapon*.

The data were analyzed using Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism theory, which explains that every cultural element serves particular social functions in fulfilling the needs of individuals and society. Through this framework, the researcher interpreted the meanings conveyed in the film and examined how cultural practices function to maintain social relationships, preserve traditions, negotiate intergenerational conflicts, and promote social harmony [25]. The analysis also considered how the film balances traditional values with contemporary realities through humor and everyday family experiences. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher employed data triangulation by comparing interpretations derived from the film with relevant theoretical literature and previous scholarly studies on Indonesian local wisdom, Batak culture, and cultural representation in film.

4. Result and Discussion

The findings reveal that *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* presents local wisdom not merely as a cultural identity but also as a dynamic system of values that continuously negotiates with contemporary social

realities. Through the interaction among Minar, Sahat, Mamak Mertua, and the extended Batak family, the film illustrates how cultural traditions continue to shape family relationships, gender expectations, communication patterns, and the meaning of marriage in modern Indonesian society. Using Bronislaw Malinowski's functionalism, the discussion demonstrates that every cultural practice represented in the film performs particular social functions that maintain social cohesion while simultaneously revealing tensions that emerge when traditional values encounter changing lifestyles.

The first important finding concerns the representation of Batak local wisdom as the central narrative foundation of the film. The storyline revolves around the Batak kinship system, especially the importance of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, which regulates interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, obligations, and social responsibilities within the extended family. Rather than presenting these customs as rigid cultural symbols, the film portrays them as living traditions that continue to influence everyday decision-making. Respect toward parents, loyalty to family lineage, and obedience to customary expectations become recurring themes throughout the narrative. These cultural values provide moral guidance for every character while simultaneously generating conflicts when personal aspirations differ from collective expectations.

One of the strongest cultural representations is the philosophy of *hagabeon*, the belief that having descendants, particularly sons, ensures the continuity of the family lineage (*marga*). Throughout the film, Minar experiences constant pressure from her mother-in-law to produce a male child. This expectation is portrayed not as individual cruelty but as a collective cultural belief inherited through generations. From Malinowski's perspective, the expectation functions to preserve social continuity and family identity. However, the film also demonstrates that cultural practices may produce psychological burdens when interpreted without considering contemporary realities. Consequently, the audience is encouraged to understand both the social purpose and the emotional consequences of maintaining such traditions.

The findings further indicate that family solidarity represents one of the most dominant forms of local wisdom. Despite frequent conflicts and misunderstandings, every family member continues to provide emotional, moral, and practical support during difficult situations. Financial limitations that force the young couple to live with their parents become an opportunity to demonstrate collective responsibility within the extended family. This reflects Robert Sibarani's concept of local wisdom for prosperity, particularly cooperation, mutual assistance, and shared responsibility. Family members contribute according to their capacities, illustrating that prosperity within Batak culture extends beyond economic wealth to include social security and collective well-being.

Communication emerges as another significant cultural value represented in the film. Although disagreements frequently occur between Minar and her mother-in-law, the narrative consistently emphasizes dialogue rather than permanent conflict. Misunderstandings are gradually resolved through discussion, patience, empathy, and compromise. According to Malinowski, communication functions to preserve social integration by reducing tension and restoring harmonious relationships. The film therefore suggests that maintaining interpersonal communication is essential for balancing individual interests with collective family expectations. Rather than rejecting tradition outright, the younger generation negotiates cultural values through respectful interaction.

Another notable finding concerns the negotiation between tradition and modernity. The younger generation represented by Minar and Sahat does not reject Batak traditions entirely. Instead, they reinterpret traditional values according to present social conditions. They continue respecting elders and maintaining family relationships while simultaneously advocating for greater privacy, personal autonomy, and shared decision-making within marriage. This adaptation demonstrates that local wisdom is neither static nor obsolete. Instead, cultural values evolve continuously in response to changing economic conditions, educational backgrounds, and contemporary social norms. Such flexibility supports Sibarani's argument that local wisdom remains relevant when communities reinterpret its essential meanings without abandoning its philosophical foundations.

The representation of gender roles also constitutes a major finding of this study. The film critically portrays the unequal burden experienced by women within patriarchal family structures. Minar becomes the primary target of blame regarding fertility issues despite reproduction being a shared responsibility between husband and wife. This representation exposes how traditional gender expectations may produce discrimination against women. Nevertheless, the film avoids portraying men as dominant oppressors. Sahat consistently supports his wife emotionally, challenges unfair accusations, and attempts to mediate conflicts between his wife and his mother. His character symbolizes the emergence of more egalitarian gender relationships while remaining respectful toward traditional family values.

This portrayal illustrates the coexistence of cultural continuity and social transformation. Instead of rejecting Batak customs, the narrative encourages audiences to distinguish between essential cultural values and practices that require reinterpretation. Respect for parents, family solidarity, honesty, and mutual cooperation remain valuable cultural principles, whereas rigid gender expectations and excessive interference in married life are questioned. Consequently, the film promotes constructive cultural criticism rather than cultural rejection.

Humor functions as one of the film's most effective narrative strategies. Nearly every conflict is accompanied by comedic situations that reduce emotional tension while maintaining audience engagement. Humor performs several social functions. First, it serves as psychological relief for characters experiencing stress and anxiety. Second, it allows sensitive cultural issues to be discussed without provoking hostility. Third, humor creates opportunities for audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds to appreciate Batak traditions without stereotyping them. From a functionalist perspective, humor contributes to social adaptation by enabling individuals to confront conflicts in emotionally manageable ways. Therefore, comedy becomes an important cultural mechanism that strengthens resilience within family relationships.

The findings also demonstrate that the film serves as an educational medium for cultural preservation. The use of Batak language expressions, kinship terminology, traditional customs, and cultural philosophies introduces audiences to important aspects of Batak identity. Unlike documentary films that often provide explicit explanations, *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* integrates cultural knowledge naturally into everyday conversations and family interactions. This narrative strategy enables viewers to learn cultural values through entertainment, increasing the accessibility of local wisdom among younger audiences who may have limited exposure to traditional practices.

Another important discussion concerns the social function of conflict itself. Rather than depicting conflict as destructive, the film represents disagreement as a necessary stage in strengthening interpersonal relationships. Continuous interaction between Minar, Sahat, and Mamak Mertua eventually produces greater mutual understanding. According to Malinowski, conflict frequently contributes to social equilibrium because it encourages communities to redefine norms and adjust relationships according to changing circumstances. In this context, family disputes become opportunities for negotiation, learning, forgiveness, and emotional growth rather than permanent division.

The analysis also identifies the emergence of the "sandwich generation" phenomenon as an important contemporary issue represented in the film. Young married couples experience simultaneous responsibilities toward parents, spouses, economic survival, and future children. Financial dependence on parents reduces personal independence while increasing family intervention in private matters. The film realistically portrays how economic conditions significantly influence family dynamics. This demonstrates that cultural expectations cannot be separated from broader socioeconomic realities. Therefore, many family conflicts presented in the narrative result not only from cultural beliefs but also from structural economic limitations.

Based on Robert Sibarani's framework, the identified local wisdom can be categorized into two broad dimensions. The first category, wisdom for prosperity, includes hard work, family cooperation, collective responsibility, educational awareness, perseverance, and mutual assistance. These values contribute directly to family resilience and long-term social welfare. The second category, wisdom for peacefulness, includes respect for elders, politeness, empathy, honesty, tolerance, conflict resolution through dialogue, and maintaining harmonious social relationships. The balanced representation of these two categories indicates that Batak local wisdom seeks not only material prosperity but also social harmony within family and community life.

Overall, the findings suggest that *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* successfully balances cultural preservation with critical reflection. The film neither idealizes nor rejects Batak traditions. Instead, it presents local wisdom as a flexible cultural resource capable of responding to contemporary social challenges. Through authentic characterization, realistic family conflicts, and effective comedic storytelling, the film encourages audiences to appreciate the philosophical richness of Batak culture while recognizing the importance of adapting traditional values to modern social conditions. Consequently, the film functions simultaneously as entertainment, cultural education, social criticism, and a medium for intergenerational dialogue, demonstrating that local wisdom remains highly relevant for addressing contemporary family life in Indonesia.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* effectively represents the meaning and social function of Batak local wisdom through a balanced portrayal of tradition and modern family life. Using Malinowski's functionalism, the film demonstrates that cultural values serve practical social functions by maintaining family cohesion, preserving cultural identity, and guiding interpersonal relationships. At the same time, it critically reflects on the challenges of rigid traditions, particularly those related to gender expectations, family pressure, and generational conflict. The characters illustrate that mutual respect, open communication, empathy, and compromise are essential for achieving harmony between cultural heritage and individual aspirations. Furthermore, the film highlights the role of comedy as an effective medium for conveying cultural criticism without diminishing respect for tradition. Therefore, *Catatan Harian Menantu Sinting* is not only an entertaining film but also an important cultural text that contributes to preserving, interpreting, and revitalizing Indonesian local wisdom for contemporary society.

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