

# Toponymy of Bondaraya Village, Gorontalo Province: A Local Wisdom Study

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**Abstract**—The present article delves into exploring the naming of a place (or toponymy) to unravel the potentials related to the history and legend of Bondaraya village as an effort to provide enrichment and education to the community. It further maps out and elaborates the naming processes of places that derive from the legend, the discourse, and the historical background, with which it outlines a recommendation for the government to develop policies regarding the promotion of cultural tourism objects and local wisdom education in Gorontalo Province. The study employed a qualitative design with an anthropolinguistic approach. It aimed to explore the local wisdom of the Bondaraya village community in the form of their culture and tradition through the lens of toponymy. The data were collected by in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussion. Further, the data were analyzed in a descriptive manner. The result shows that the toponymy within Bondaraya village accentuates the local wisdom, which is the identity of the village. The study finds out that the naming of places in this village is closely related to some of the local wisdom elements in the area, i.e., the musical art (oral literature) and societal system. In conclusion, the toponymy of Bondaraya village is closely related to the local wisdom within the community.

**Index Terms**—Bondaraya village, local wisdom, toponymy, cultural tourism, Gorontalo province

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned for its diversity due to the abundance of islands, regions, and people. The diversity is apparent in the language, customary system, culture, tradition, and local wisdom used by different regions. Cultural diversity is seen as an asset for a community and thus is a vital object to be preserved and maintained by all of the members. In the face of relentless modernization and the evolving trends of contemporary living, cultural entities that persist retain their significance as intangible heritage and essential elements of ancestral civilization. Indonesia, as a nation, epitomizes this rich diversity, with numerous and distinct cultures existing across its various regions. However, instead of worsening the dispute, this remarkable diversity serves as a cohesive force, fostering unity and a profound sense of fraternity within the nation (Collins, 2014).

Cultural diversity becomes evident through the presence of traditions established by the local populace, reflecting their indigenous wisdom (Fitrawahyudi & Fadli, 2021). Such indigenous wisdom constitutes a sociocultural framework comprising knowledge, norms, regulations, and community expertise, tailored to harmoniously cater to communal living requirements, and it has been transmitted across successive generations. Jumriani et al. (2021) posit that local wisdom represents an intrinsic trait of a community within a given region, serving as both a constructive identity and a protective mechanism against detrimental elements of external cultures. The maturation and evolution of this local wisdom are intrinsically linked to the collective actions and endeavors undertaken by the community. Consequently, the true essence of local wisdom in a particular area may elude cursory observation, necessitating profound scrutiny and active engagement with the community to truly grasp its significance.

Local wisdom embodies a type of wisdom ingrained within a community residing in a specific location (Lim & Cacciafoco, 2023). Notably, the village of Bondaraya exemplifies the discernible manifestation of such local wisdom. The importance of local wisdom resides in its function of adaptation to the surrounding environment, whereby the community incorporates and enhances their wisdom through the acquisition of knowledge, conceptual ideas, cultural values, practices, and tools derived from abstracting their experiences in environmental management. This profound

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comprehension of the local milieu frequently serves as a dependable guide for the community in cultivating sustainable livelihoods within their residential setting. Distinctive historical developments of a region can be discerned through the narrative fabric of folklore tales. The historical genesis of a location typically serves as a primary source and fundamental perspective when assigning its nomenclature. While a brief discussion on the village's nomenclature has been provided earlier, it is essential to recognize that behind this naming process lies a profound significance that informs the rationale for bestowing the place with its chosen name (Sudaryat et al., 2009). Consequently, a correlation can be observed between the act of naming a place and the inherent meaning attributed to its name, particularly influenced by the prevailing local wisdom that thrives within the community of that local.

The foregoing elucidation elucidates a discernible correlation between indigenous wisdom and the inhabitants of a specific geographical region. This interconnection is multifaceted, encompassing factors such as the contextual alignment of toponyms with the community's attributes and the locally nurtured wisdom. These elements collectively attest to the interplay between the name of an area (toponym), the community residing within it, and the indigenous wisdom fostered and propagated by the community itself (Kim & Pietrow, 2023). That said, the naming process of a place is inseparable from the underlying culture of the society (Robert, 2015). Culture and language exhibit an inherent interconnection, as language constitutes an integral component of culture. The naming of places (toponymy) that is intertwined with language inevitably bears the imprint of the local community's culture and the geographical context from which the name originates. In essence, toponymy represents a manifestation of human culture itself (Camalia, 2015). Building on this notion, Saerheim (2014) conducted research in Norway and deduced that place names are intricately tailored to align with prevailing local cultural traditions.

Toponymy constitutes an interdisciplinary field that intertwines the investigation of language and culture (Baruadi et al., 2023). This symbiotic relationship is evident during the process of identifying and ascertaining the names of places. The linguistic analysis delves into the interpretation and significance of place names, particularly when they are rooted in the local language. Concurrently, cultural studies explore the intricate interplay between these linguistic designations and the cultural context they reflect and embody. The interconnection between these two components finds its origins in a scholarly domain called anthropolinguistic studies. Anthropolinguistics constitutes a specialized branch within linguistics that delves into the intricate dynamics between language and culture within societies, encompassing both highly developed cultured societies and those without written forms of communication (Dasuki et al., 2022). Leidner (2008) assert that toponymy, as an academic discipline, centers its investigations on the exploration of the etymology and characteristics of place names.

The act of naming a place is subject to its own systematic inquiry, warranting due consideration and a distinct approach to comprehensively and extensively understand the underlying significance of place nomenclature. The domain of toponymy encompasses the systematic design and categorization of place names pertaining to countries, regions, cities, or geographical demarcations, thereby facilitating a unified framework for each spatial element (Alasli, 2019). Geographical names, commonly known as place names or toponyms, hold a prevalence of usage compared to other terms (Gammeltoft, 2016). In Indonesia, these designations are often referred to as topographical names (Nfn et al., 2019). The process of naming is influenced by various factors, including the origin, significance, regional attributes, area design, language evolution, and societal practices (Alasli, 2019; Panecki, 2023; Skoulikaris, 2023).

Toponyms are intricately connected with the physical characteristics and geographical landscapes of a location (Liu et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023; Tavares & Rodrigues-Pereira, 2023). This relationship extends to the inhabitants of the area and the cultural developments within the region. The significance of a toponym encompasses a comprehensive scope beyond its physical aspects, encompassing its geographical context, origin, and socio-cultural elements (Purev et al., 2023). Additionally, the people's religious beliefs and the values embedded within the communal cultural framework manifest in the form of symbols reflected in the naming conventions and behaviors of the society (Kosasih, 2010). Toponyms have the potential to make contributions not only to the realm of physical science but also to various other disciplines (Berg & Vuolteenaho, 2009). The process of naming a place is intrinsically linked to the local wisdom fostered by the community residing there. As per Lauder, a corpus-based analysis of toponymy offers an empirical approach to exploring a place's image in accordance with news agendas, focusing on the frequency of its occurrence and the manner in which the place is portrayed (Lauder & Lauder, 2018). The study of toponymy comprises three key dimensions: (1) the embodiment aspect, (2) the social aspect, and (3) the cultural aspect. These aspects play crucial roles and serve as influential factors that shape the process of place naming by the community (Sudaryat in Hestiyana, 2022). The embodiment aspect establishes a correlation with the environmental characteristics of the location. The social aspect underscores the interconnection between the lives of the people associated with that place (Pinna, 2023), encompassing considerations of their positions, occupations, and professions. Lastly, the cultural aspect highlights the link between place names and the cultural identity of the people inhabiting that specific region (Hestiyana, 2022).

Toponymy assumes a significant role as a distinctive marker or supplementary tool in defining a particular identity (Valkó et al., 2023). The derivation of toponyms can be pursued through three avenues involving searches for written, spoken, and observational sources (Erika et al., 2018; Lema, 2010). Written sources encompass references from books, maps, and relevant internet resources. Oral sources are derived from individuals, while observational sources entail on-site visits to locations associated with the toponyms in question (Erika, 2018). The extensive range of sources and principles guiding the nomenclature of a place gives rise to a plethora of names, which can be systematically analyzed

during discussions related to toponymy. The referenced studies align with the perspective put forth by Anam et al. (2022), positing AnthropoLinguistics as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry, exploring the interconnections between language and the intricate aspects of human existence, encompassing culture. In essence, AnthropoLinguistics serves as a multidisciplinary study that investigates the intricate interplay between language and various dimensions of human life, including cultural aspects. Notwithstanding the stable origins of toponyms within a particular geographical region, Turaevich (2021) affirms that these designations undergo dynamic changes in their structure, meaning, and propagation over time owing to the impact of distinct historical events. Wars, population migrations, and interactions between ethnic groups have significantly influenced the evolution of toponymy. Each historical epoch has been characterized by a distinct array of geographical names. The emergence of place names is intricately tied to the socio-cultural contexts and languages of the people who have either inhabited or currently inhabit specific territories. This implies that this research is an investigation subject to evolution over time, in terms of form, content, and dissemination, contingent upon specific historical events. Wars, population migrations, and ethnic interactions have indelibly influenced toponymy. Each historical epoch is distinctively marked by a unique collection of geographical names. Place names emerge within specific historical contexts, closely tied to the social fabric and language of the inhabitants or dwellers of a particular region.

Drawing from the preceding elucidation, this research endeavors to investigate the etymology of the toponym of Bondaraya village, situated within the South Suwawa sub-district of Bone Bolango district, Gorontalo province. Bondaraya village finds its geographic location within the precincts of South Suwawa District, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. The historical background of its establishment, toponymy, distinctive culture, and customary practices inherent in Gorontalo contribute to the distinctiveness of Bondaraya Village. Consequently, it becomes imperative to undertake an in-depth examination encompassing historical reconstruction, cultural exploration, and the study of local wisdom and toponyms, which are intricately linked to the historical narratives, myths, and legends of this locale. Such research endeavors are critical in safeguarding the existence of villages and preserving the invaluable repertoire of cultural tourism inherent in these regions. In his study conducted in Norway, Saerheim (2014) arrived at the conclusion that the process of naming places is influenced by the accommodation of local cultural traditions and historical factors (Romero, 2022).

This research will center its investigation on the three dimensions encompassing the study of toponymy and local wisdom in Bondaraya village. By tracing and exploring these aspects, the interrelation between the three facets examined in this study will become apparent. The process of naming is rooted in oral traditions originating from folklore myths that have been transmitted across generations by our ancestors. This oral tradition has endured for centuries, and its examination plays a crucial role in unraveling the toponymic characteristics of a region (Alderman, 2022). The term "name" denotes a word employed to designate or identify individuals, places, objects, animals, and other entities within this realm. The unique attributes of every entity, item, action, and occurrence in our world give rise to diverse and intricate names, reflecting the complexity of human existence. Employing a folklore approach, stories are regarded as social phenomena. Consequently, the content it encompasses pertains to social dimensions and is intrinsically tied to the cultural fabric of the society (Baruadi et al., 2018). As per Dananjaja's perspective, folklore constitutes an integral component of a collective culture, disseminated and transmitted across generations within various groups, typically in diverse renditions encompassing spoken narratives, exemplifications through gestures, or mnemonic aids (Baruadi & Eraku, 2023).

The designation of a place holds a multifaceted and extensive meaning, surpassing mere physical attributes like geographical conditions to encompass its historical origins, social conditions, and shared cultural aspects. These place names function as symbolic representations, influencing both the naming practices and behavioral norms within a specific community. The existing symbols serve a deliberate purpose, aiding in the creation or comprehension of these names by community members, and are rooted in concepts that hold contextual significance within a particular period. Ruspandi and Mulyadi (2014) provide an overview of the foundations of toponymy, encompassing its origins from physical, social, and cultural dimensions. The physical aspects comprise a) biological elements, b) hydrological elements, and c) geomorphological elements. The social aspects encompass a) specific locations, b) past activities, c) aspirations, d) names derived from historical structures, and e) names associated with significant figures. Lastly, the cultural aspect revolves around legends and folklore. Toponymy demonstrates the potential to support documentation efforts and act as a potent instrument in captivating public interest, thereby enabling the efficient dissemination of this knowledge to a broader audience, including the younger generation (Ruspandi & Mulyadi, 2014). The map of Bondaraya Village in Suwawa Selatan District is displayed below.

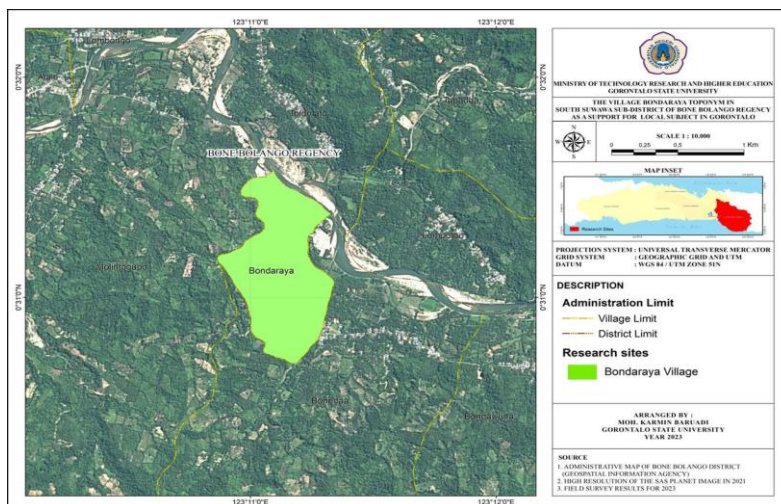


Figure 1. Map of Bondaraya Village, Bone Bolango Regency

## II. METHOD

In this study, an anthropolinguistic approach was employed to thoroughly describe and interpret the prevailing conditions or relationships, evolving opinions, ongoing processes, effects, and trends that are observable within the research context. The research methodology encompassed the following steps: Firstly, conducting a thorough literature review delving into theories and concepts pertaining to anthropolinguistic studies. Subsequently, data collection commenced, sourcing information from diverse oral and written sources concerning village toponyms and local wisdom in Bondaraya Village. After data collection, the data reduction phase ensued, involving the elimination of irrelevant data. The compiled data were then subjected to comprehensive analysis. Lastly, the research concluded with the formulation of findings and conclusions. The data utilized in this paper were drawn from written sources, encompassing books or manuscripts owned by the community, as well as oral data obtained through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The research involved a total of 50 informants, comprising village officials, community leaders, traditional leaders, and members of the community. For data analysis, descriptive analysis was employed as the primary method.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bondaraya Village is situated in the South Suwawa sub-district, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. It emerged as a separate entity following the subdivision of Boneda'a Village, which was the original main village. Boneda'a Village was partitioned into several other villages, including Bondaraya Village and Bondawuno Village. The establishment of Bondaraya Village was the result of relentless efforts by several community leaders and the younger generation, who ardently championed and defended their core responsibilities and functions. Consequently, the official approval and inauguration of Bondaraya Village's division from Boneda'a Village occurred on Monday, April 3, 2008, under the direct auspices of the then-serving Regent of Bone Bolango, Ismet Mile.

Subsequent to the Village's inauguration, a significant event took place, namely the investiture of Mr. Idris Camaru as the Official Head of the Bondaraya Preparatory Village, a prominent community figure with a prior career as a retired National Police officer. Following this momentous occasion, on March 9, 2008, the Village Government Agency (BPD) organization and the Community Empowerment Institute (LPM) were established in adherence to the requirements set forth by the Regional Regulation of Bone Bolango Regency. Within a few days thereafter, on March 12, 2008, the Village apparatus took shape, consisting of the Village Secretary, Heads of Affairs, and Heads of Dusun (sub-village/hamlet). In the historical account, the naming and approval of the village's name were the outcome of meetings and consultations among community leaders and religious figures, i.e., Mr. Sanif Djilihawa and Mr. Idris Camaru.

### A. Toponymy of Bondaraya Village

As per the account of the former village head, Mr. Idris Camaru, who assumed the position of village head, the establishment of Bondaraya Village stemmed from a communal consensus to expand during that period. Mr. Mohamad Alim, a respected community leader, stated that the inhabitants spanning from Hamlet one to Hamlet two collectively agreed on the division. Following the approval of the division application by the District Government, the village established a committee to seek an appropriate village name. Subsequently, the name "Bondaraya Village" was selected, derived from the Suwawa language where "Bonda" signifies "Suwawa," and "Raya" translates to "broad." Thus, the name "Bondaraya Village" conveys the connotation of a "broad language" in the Suwawa vernacular.

The naming of Bondaraya Village is evidently associated with the underlying social aspect. The findings from interviews with all informants reveal that toponymy in Bondaraya Village falls within the realm of the social aspect, as the name "Bondaraya Village" holds a broad language connotation. The societal aspect of place naming pertains to social interactions, the function as a site for social gatherings, and the preservation of traditions, customs, and community identity. This toponymy endows the village with a social foundation for its designation, as reflected in the linguistic structure and the meaning conveyed through the village's name. The analysis of the toponym is as follows:

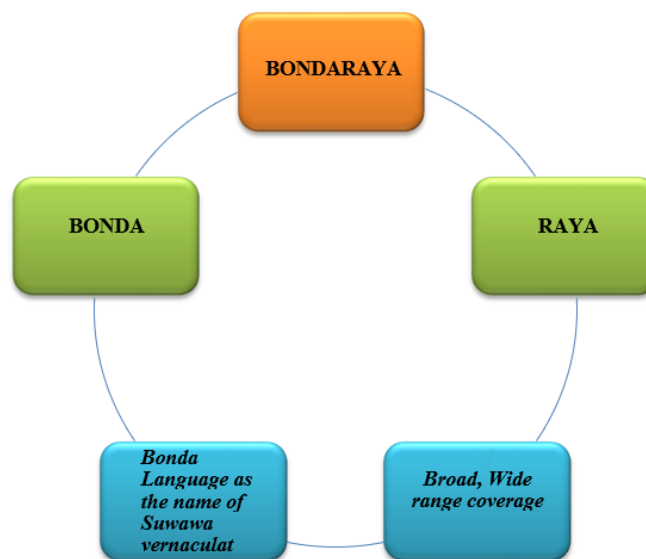


Figure 2. Analysis Model of Bondaraya Village

The toponymy of Bondaraya Village can be categorized within the social aspect, as evident from its naming conventions. The village name, "Bondaraya," is derived from the Bonda language, a language commonly utilized by the community residing in Bondaraya Village for daily communication. In this context, "Bonda" serves as an identity and a reflection of the location and circumstances of the predominant language users in the village. Moreover, "Raya" in the naming context signifies an extensive or widespread measure, encompassing all that is pertinent or essential to the village and its community. Thus, the toponymy of Bondaraya Village, or "Bonda" (lo'o-lo'opo) village, is deeply rooted in the regional language spoken in the community and is affiliated with the social aspect, specifically involving the scope of social interactions among the people.

*B. Local Wisdom of Bondaraya Village*

Drawing from the outcomes of village naming research (Toponymy) conducted in Bondaraya Village, it becomes evident that there is a correlation with certain aspects of local wisdom. This local wisdom plays a significant role in facilitating a deeper understanding of a region's economy, culture, geography, and religion (Liu & Rybakov, 2023). Additionally, the toponymy derived from local wisdom serves as a safeguard for the preservation of the culture itself (Wang et al., 2023). Specifically, the local wisdom encompasses Art, exemplified through oral literary songs and the social system. The association between toponymic studies and local wisdom is particularly profound within the community of Bondaraya Village, situated in the South Suwawa District, Bone Bolango Regency.

*(a). Legedo Oral Literature as Local Wisdom*

The Bonda language serves as the primary means of communication among the residents of Bondaraya Village. Further, the village inhabitants possess an oral literary tradition in the form of songs, referred to as "legedo". This oral literature embodies the local wisdom of the community and has endured over time despite its dwindling presence among the Suwawa people. Such toponym could be elaborated by referring to the historical background (Afanasyeva, 2023). Legedo, a form of oral literature in the shape of songs, holds significant cultural importance in Bondaraya Village. Traditionally, it was sung on various occasions such as celebrations, lulling children to sleep, during solitary tasks, religious activities, traditional events, weddings, agricultural work in rice fields and gardens, on rafts, and in the kitchen. However, presently, legedo's prevalence has declined, facing challenges from modern entertainment, which is more captivating and easily accessible. The absence of platforms for expression, limited presence in formal education, and waning interest among the younger generation are some of the factors contributing to its diminishing presence in the community. This situation, as articulated by a traditional leader Mr. A. R. Maksum., implies that the preservation and revitalization of legedo among the younger generation is encountering difficulties. This assertion finds support in the accounts provided by some of the legedo singers themselves. Factors such as lack of self-confidence, feelings of

embarrassment, Western cultural influence, and unfamiliarity with the local Suwawa language have hindered the proper transmission of *legedo* within the community. Mr. Nani Tuloli has conveyed that the declining interest in *legedo*, particularly among the younger generation, can be attributed to the prevalence of national and Western songs that they readily access through television and radio.

The scarcity of oral literature in society is intricately tied to the proficiency of individuals in the local language, which plays a crucial role in preserving and passing down this literary tradition. Regrettably, the younger generation of Suwawa is no longer adept in the Suwawa language, and even many of the older generation have lost their fluency in it as well. Consequently, this situation significantly hinders the survival and continuation of oral literature, particularly *legedo*, which holds profound cultural significance as a form of local wisdom within the community. The preservation and prevalence of oral literature are intricately linked to the proficiency of native speakers in the regional language. A substantial presence of native speakers ensures that oral literature remains readily accessible within society. The current state of the Suwawa language has raised concerns among various language experts and institutions. It is evident that a language shift has taken place among the Suwawa people, possibly stemming from a lack of awareness regarding the significance of their local language. The diminishing sense of cultural pride and inadequate cultural knowledge have further contributed to the decline of the Suwawa regional language. Unfortunately, the Suwawa language is often perceived merely as a utilitarian communication tool, overlooking its broader functions. Similar to the functions outlined by Baruadi (2013) for the Gorontalo language, the functions of the Suwawa language can be inferred, emphasizing the importance of preserving its cultural and linguistic heritage. Baruadi expounded on the multifaceted functions of language, delineating three primary roles it plays within a community. Firstly, language serves as an essential means of communication among its speakers, facilitating effective interaction and exchange of ideas. Secondly, it assumes a foundational role in upholding and fostering the development of the community's cultural heritage, acting as a key pillar in preserving traditions, values, and customs. Lastly, language serves as a powerful symbol of identity for the people of Gorontalo, embodying their unique collective heritage and contributing to a distinct sense of belonging and unity. According to Baruadi (2013), the third function holds the utmost significance. Neglecting the local language as an identity can lead to indifference towards its preservation. If such apathy prevails among the language's speakers, it becomes inevitable that the regional language is at risk of disappearing in the near future. Consequently, the imperative arises to delve into and safeguard the local wisdom of the *Legedo* oral literature community.

(b). *Dikili as Local Wisdom*

*Dikili* is a cultural tradition and local wisdom practiced by the people of Gorontalo, characterized by its literature infused with an Islamic spirit. To promote the dissemination of Islam, an annual celebration dedicated to reading and chanting *diikili* or *modiikili* is observed. This event traditionally takes place in mosques, specifically on the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The ceremony is conducted in a traditional manner and attended by dignitaries, commonly referred to as state officials in customary language. Subsequently, the event culminates with all-night remembrance activities, featuring the hauntingly melodious voices of the *hulu* chanters. The procedures involved in pronouncing and reading the script in Kili adhere to well-defined customs. The Gorontalo community, in general, follows a structured framework where everything is governed by established regulations. This adherence to customs reflects Gorontalo's commitment to civilization, encapsulated in the motto *Aadati ma dili-dilito bolo mopo'aito, aadati ma hunti-huntinga bolo mopodembingo, aadati ma hutu-hutu bolo mopohutu*, which signifies those customs have been patterned and merely need to be interconnected, customs have been delineated and only require attachment, and customs already exist, necessitating their execution (Baruadi, 2013). According to Mr. AR Maksum, a traditional leader, the Gorontalo traditional ceremonial system is outlined as follows: *Aadati; didu boli- didu boli, didu toma-tomalia limongoli, didu boli-boliya, aadati lo hunggiya to tilayo to huliya, dipo ta lo boboliya, hipakuwa lo tadiya, adati lo lahuwa, to tilayo to ta'uwa, dipo ta lo bobohuwa, hi tadiya, hipakuwa*. Translation: The procedures involved in pronouncing and reading the script in Kili adhere to well-defined customs. The Gorontalo community, in general, follows a structured framework where everything is governed by established regulations. This adherence to customs reflects Gorontalo's commitment to civilization, encapsulated in the motto *Aadati ma dili-dilito bolo mopo'aito, aadati ma hunti-huntinga bolo mopodembingo, aadati ma hutu-hutu bolo mopohutu*, which signifies those customs have been patterned and merely need to be interconnected, customs have been delineated and only require attachment, and customs already exist, necessitating their execution (Baruadi, 2013). According to Mr. AR Maksum, a traditional leader, the Gorontalo traditional ceremonial system is outlined as follows:

*Dikili* is a distinctive and reverent procession that exalts Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. According to Qadi (a local religious leader) Mr. Hi. Abdurrahman Podungge, the *modikili* procession commences with the recitation of remembrances, blessings, and praises to Allah in honor of the Prophet's "birthday" and continues until noon. Throughout the night, designated priests, clerics, and *syara'* officials chant *diikili*, taking occasional breaks to sip tea or coffee to maintain their stamina and performance. This practice exemplifies the reverence and devotion of Muslims in Gorontalo towards Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., who serves as a paragon of virtue in every aspect of life. It reflects the profound love they hold for him. Even among those who do not actively participate in the chanting of *dikili*, efforts are made to remain awake and prepare nourishing meals for the chanters of *diikili* (*hulu*) who may require a brief rest. A plate of chicken porridge, along with a cup of tea or coffee, and assorted snacks are considered sufficient to reinvigorate their spirits, which may wane due to

drowsiness. The people of Bondaraya Village continue to uphold the principles of local wisdom during the *Dikili* celebration. Employing interdisciplinary methodologies and viewpoints from linguistics and archaeology allows for a comprehensive understanding of how socio-historical contexts of locations are intertwined with cultural conceptualizations. (Baumanova & Tramutoli, 2022)

(c). *Molo'opu Societal System as Local Wisdom*

In Bondaraya Village, the social system prominently features the practice of granting titles known as *Molo'opu*. According to a traditional leader, Mr. Yamin Husain, the *Molo'opu* ceremony aims to escort newly appointed officials from their homes to their designated official residences, following established customs. The *Molo'opu* ceremony is conducted for various officials, including village heads, sub-district heads, district heads/mayors, and governors, as they assume their respective positions. Additionally, there is also the *Mopotolung* custom, which involves escorting an official who has concluded their term in a certain position, from their official residence to a private house. Meanwhile, the *modepito* procession is carried out for any state officials who do not hold a customary title.

The *Molo'opu* custom holds significant historical and cultural importance in Gorontalo as it reflects the local wisdom and customs with deep historical roots. These customs are closely intertwined with the development of Islam in the region. In Gorontalo's culture, Islam has become an integral part of shaping the behavior and traditions of its people. In fact, Gorontalo culture is often seen as closely synonymous with Islam. Prior to the influence of Islam, the customs and culture of the local people in Gorontalo were shaped by naturalistic philosophy, where cultural values and norms originated from natural phenomena. During the reign of Eyato, who became the king of the unified regions of Duluwo Limo lo Pohala'a and Gorontalo-Limboto, Islam was formally established as the religion of the kingdom. The *Molo'opu* traditional ceremony played a crucial role in this process, signifying a customary pick-up event for government guests visiting the Gorontalo area and government officials of Gorontalo. This ceremony involved escorting government officials from their residences to their official houses, known as *Yiladia*, symbolizing the commencement of their official duties.

The execution of the *Molo'opu* Ceremony involves various preparatory stages, which include scheduling the specific day and date for the traditional ceremony, assigning responsibilities for conducting the *Molo'opu* ritual, identifying the necessary equipment, selecting the appropriate *tuja'i* poems to be used, defining the procedural guidelines for the ceremony, and establishing the budget and its funding source. As explained by the Suwawa traditional leader, A.R. Maksun, the sequential stages of implementing the *Molo'opu* traditional ceremony, conducted both at the residences and official residences, are as follows:

- Mopolengge* (Gesturing the official to stand up)
- Mopodiambango* (Cueing the official to take a forward step)
- Mopoluwalo* (Cueing the official to step out of the house)
- Mopotalenggo* (Cueing the official to walk)
- Mopohulo'o* (Cueing the official to sit down)
- Molo'opu* (Fetching and welcoming the official)
- Mopolengge* (Gesturing the official to stand up)
- Mopoluwalo* (Cueing the official to step out of the house)
- Mopoalahu* (Gesturing the official to step down the stairs)
- Mopodiambango* (Cueing the official to take a forward step)
- Mopota'e tou taeya* (Gesturing the official to enter into the car)

The various stages of the *molo'opu* ceremony, along with the *tuja'i* aspect, demonstrate the profound aspirations of the ancestors (*tiombu*) towards the leaders of the nation. These leaders were entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing and guiding their people toward a prosperous life while ensuring the protection and love for their homeland. The term *Tiombu* also signifies a role model, symbolizing that every leader's success, both physically and mentally, relies on adhering to the advice passed down by their parents, which leads to virtuous conduct. These guidelines inherited from ancestral wisdom are expected to serve as a compass for leaders, guiding them towards a better life and enabling them to bring pride to themselves, their families, and their communities, regardless of their social status or religious affiliation.

In essence, a nation's leader embodies the essence of life and serves as a beacon of hope for their populace. This profound symbol of hope is exemplified in the phrase *donggo ito taa ilohuntuwa*, which translates to "on my lord a pedestal of hope". The deep veneration of ancestors and the reverence for the Divine are evident in the toponymy, or place naming, of a tribe, as they draw inspiration from their ancestral heritage and spiritual beliefs (Uzoagba, 2022).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The findings of the research indicate that local wisdom, which serves as a distinctive characteristic of a particular community, can serve as a foundational element in the process of toponymy, or place naming. The study finds out that the naming of places in this village is closely related to some of the local wisdom elements in the area. Bondaraya Village possesses three notable aspects of local wisdom: Art, represented by oral literary songs known as *legedo*, and the social system. The people of this village have a rich tradition of oral literature in the form of *legedo* songs, which

have long been regarded as an integral part of the local wisdom among the Suwawa community, although their prevalence has diminished over time. Another form of local wisdom in the community is *dikili* as the traditional literature that accentuates Islamic influence in the community. On top of that, one of the distinct features of the societal system in Bondaraya village is the tradition of bestowal of customary title (*molo'opu*). The *molo'opu* tradition is a part of the tradition of Gorontalo community that entails the history and the local wisdom. In conclusion, the toponymy of Bondaraya village is closely related to the local wisdom within the community.

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