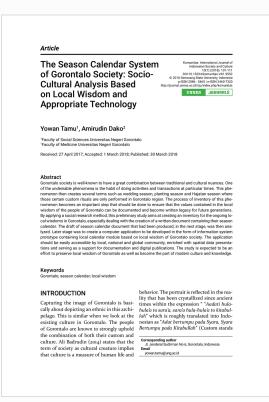
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# The Season Calendar System of Gorontalo Society: Socio-Cultural Analysis Based on Local Wisdom and Appropriate Technology

by Yowan Tamu, Amirudin Dako

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# Article

The Season Calendar System of Gorontalo Society: Socio-Cultural Analysis Based on Local Wisdom and Appropriate Technology

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UNNES JOURNALS

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## 1

#### Abstract

Gorontalo society is well-known to have a great combination between traditional and cultural nuances. One of the undeniable phenomena is the habit of doing activities and transactions at particular times. This phenomenon then creates several terms such as wedding season, planting season and Hajatan season where those certain custom rituals are only performed in Gorontalo region. The process of inventory of this phenomenon becomes an important step that should be done to ensure that the values contained in the local wisdom of the people of Gorontalo can be documented and become written legacy for future generations. By applying a social research method, this preliminary study aims at creating an inventory for the ongoing local wisdoms in Gorontalo, especially dealing with the creation of a written document containing their season calendar. The draft of season calendar document that had been produced, in the next stage, was then analyzed. Later stage was to create a computer application to be developed in the form of information system prototype containing local calendar module based on local wisdom of Gorontalo society. The application should be easily accessible by local, national and global community, enriched with spatial data presentations and serving as a support for documentation and digital publications. The study is expected to be an effort to preserve local wisdom of Gorontalo as well as become the part of modern culture and knowledge.

#### Keywords

Gorontalo; season calendar; local wisdom

# INTRODUCTION

Capturing the image of Gorontalo is basically about depicting an ethnic in this archipelago. This is similar when we look at the existing culture in Gorontalo. The people of Gorontalo are known to strongly uphold the combination of both their custom and culture. Ali Badrudin (2014) states that the term of society as cultural creature implies that culture is a measure of human life and behavior. The portrait is reflected in the reality that has been crystallized since ancient times within the expression " "Aadati hulahula'a to sara'a, sara'a hula-hula'a to kitabullah" which is roughly translated into Indonesian as "Adat bertumpu pada Syara, Syara Bertumpu pada Kitabullah" (Custom stands

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on Syara, Syara stands on Holy Book).

Each community/large family (Pohala'a), Gorontalo has different customs. Therefore, it is an absolute fact that Gorontalo is very rich with a wide variety of local wisdom. Some local wisdom that is still practiced includes the selection of good dates in the celebration of marriage, khitanan or pembeatan or ceremonies of traditional custom, building houses, sowing seeds and planting crops. Similarly, the determination of good dates is also practiced to make sale and purchase transactions, especially on goods/equipment that has a relatively high selling value, such as buying vehicles, jewelry or other investment goods such as land, buildings and other valuables.

One of the phenomena that undeniably exist is the habit of doing activities and transactions in particular months or seasons. Some people do it early in the beginning of a month. According to Jayusman (2015), the initial determination of the month is based on the success of rukyatul hilāl which must meet certain conditions. For example, the wedding procession is mostly done in certain months, i.e. in the month of Safar, month of Sha'ban, month of Dhu al-Hijjah according to the Hijri calendar. As for the ceremony held outside the mentioned months, it can be almost certain that those ceremonies are held by people outside the Gorontalo ethnic. This phenomenon then causes several terms such as wedding season, planting season and certain custom rituals seasons.

Unfortunately, the local wisdom is still not well documented. This is because among others, the tradition of speech is more developed within Gorontalo society. Hence, the local wisdoms that survive until now only come as the result of narrative approach from one generation to another generation.

At the community level in Gorontalo, some of local wisdom is still practiced, such as Huyula (Annas, 2013) and local community food culture (Fadhillah, 2013). Similarly, there is also the determination of planting season based on astrology of *Poliyama*/star (Dako, 2015); (Hamid, 2016). Early deter-

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mination of planting season based on local wisdom is also found in Buton area (Burhan, 2013). To simply define the growing season, an integrated Plant Calendar (*Katam*) application has been found available at http://katam.litbang.pertanian.go.id. However, the calendar system is more nationally-made and not based on the local wisdom of Gorontalo people.

The naming system of the months can be seen in the calendar system in both solar and lunar calendars. In the Christian (solar) calendar, the naming of such months as January (Janus or ianuarius) is defined by the god of the gate. February (February) translates into purification, the ancient pagan ritual celebrates Februa in this month, March (Mars, or martius) is defined as the god of war. April (Aphrilis, or Aphrodite or Aphros = Venus or Apreire) is defined as an opening, the time where planting season begins to bloom, May (Maia Maiestas) is defined as the oldest and prettiest daughter of the Atlas god, June (Juno (roman) is defined as hera (greek), daughter of Saturn, the wife of jupiter, the mother of mars, minerva and vulcan. July (Julius Caesar) is interpreted as the first ruling of Rome imperium (50 BC - 44 BC). Earlier, this month was called Quintilis which means five, or month to five. (Achmad Mulyadi, 2012)

This preliminary research is aims at creating an inventory for the ongoing local wisdoms in Gorontalo, especially dealing with the creation of a written document containing their season calendar. The next phase aims at analyze and conduct study for efforts to preserve local wisdom of Gorontalo in the form of analysis of information system development along with the support of documentation and digital publications. Therefore, it can contribute for modern culture and knowledge to be easily accessible by local, national and global community.

The research is also expected to be one of the efforts to preserve the culture and local wisdom of Gorontalo. The combination between the local wisdom with modern culture and knowledge can provide Gorontalo a unique characteristic and pride identity originating from the culture of local people who live in Hulonthalo.

# METHOD

The research was conducted in all regencies in the province of Gorontalo, libraries, government agencies and in the Computer Laboratory of Faculty of Engineering in State University of Gorontalo. The location of the data is given in Figure 1.

The research employed a qualitative method, by placing the researcher as the main instrument of research. This method was used in an effort to reveal the holistic and contextual symptoms as the focus of research. Qualitative method was useful to describe a reality and social condition in society. According to Nasution (in Sudjarwo, 2001: 25), researchers will describe and will find the local wisdom phenomenon of Gorontalo community culture in determining the seasonal calendar for the people of Gorontalo. The focus of this study was only to the calendar system on the planting season, the sailing/fishing season and wedding Hajatan (celebration) season.

This research was conducted in Gorontalo community with focus on all aspects related to local wisdom. The background of this research is that Gorontalo people understand and maintain their cultural identity in terms of the season calendar.

The entry steps to initiate this research were to choose who would be interviewed first. For this study, the first interviewees were Key Informants, then community leaders, and finally the local government. The reasons for choosing key informants as the first subjects interviewed because they were the focus of this study. The community leaders and local government were interviewed as a comparison of answers provided by the key informants. As according to Lofland and Lofland (1948) in Moleong, the main sources in gualitative research are words and actions, the rest are additional data and documents. The sources of data in this study included: 1) Local government, 2) Community leaders, 3) Local people, 4) Cultural, 5), Scholars / academics, and 6) Key informants. Therefore, in the data collecting, the researcher did the integrative data collection by looking at the data found in the field. Even so, in-depth interviews were also conducted to obtain accurate information related to the season calendar used by the people of Gorontalo in





#### Figure 1. Location for data collection

terms of planting, fishing and celebration. The results of interviews were then compared to the answers given by key informants, the answers given by community leaders and the local government served as the basis of conclusion to the system Gorontalo community season calendar.

And after further data collection, the researcher compared what was revealed by the key informants to the reality of seasonal calendar system in Gorontalo society by using interactive model analysis (Sastro Wantu, 2016) consisting of three components of analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion. In addition, the researcher compared what the community leaders had to say with the opinions of the local government, and the documents and cultural identity (identity / personality) of the Gorontalo people within the seasonal calendar system.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### The Division of Seasons

One local wisdom owned by Gorontalo people is that they still believe in season calendar system such as rainy, dry and transition seasons. The rainy season usually starts in "October / November" and lasts until the month of "February / March". The writing of 'month\_1 / month\_2' is intended to avoid the human nature of precedence that precedes the will of the Creator, God Almighty. The people of Gorontalo realize that everything on earth is still under the will of God Almighty. As stated by Gobyah and Geriya (in Niode et al, 2013), where Gobyah states that local wisdom (local intelligence) includes everything that has been a tradition in the region. Hence, local wisdom is considered as a fusion of the sacred values of God's word (God) and the various values that exist. Local wisdom is formed as a cultural superiority of local communities and geographical conditions in a broad sense. Although this value includes local dimension, the value contained within is considered very universal. According to Singgih Agastya (2014), a cultural category, the culture of fishermen also meets the seven elements of culture, including the knowledge and technology system.

And Geriya provides a conceptual view that local wisdom and local excellence are human wisdom that relies on a traditionally institutionalized philosophy of values, ethics, ways and behaviors. Hence, local wisdom is a value that is considered good and right so it can survive for a long time. In Gorontalo, people believe that the possibility of the beginning of the rainy season begins in October or November. After the rainy season, it is followed by a transitional season starting from February / March to June / July. The next season is the dry season that starts from June / July to October / November. To illustrate the 'uncertainty' of seasons change, the 'boundary' between the two seasons is deliberately disguised in order to tolerate the timing mistakes of the turn of the season. Therefore, the local wisdom about the division of seasonal calendar has been entrenched by Gorontalo society. Based on the above view, according to Haryati Soebadio quoted by Ayatrohaedi (1986), this local wisdom is also part of cultural identity and cultural personality of the nation that causes the nation to be able to absorb and manage the foreign culture of character and ability. Therefore, the local wisdom as a source of regional culture elements that have been tested have the following characteristics: (1) able to survive



Figure 2. The Division of Season by some of Gorontalo Society

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outside cultures; (2) have the ability to accommodate outside cultural elements; (3) has the ability to integrate elements of external culture into indigenous cultures; (4) has the ability to control; (5) can provide direction to cultural development. The mentioned characteristics have been culturally integrated within Gorontalo society in their everyday life including in terms of division of seasons (figure 2).

#### Fishing Season

The people of Gorontalo, especially those who have a livelihood as a fisherman, know four kinds of division of fishing seasons in the sea known as the slogan ' *sembo lo po hala liyo* (Season to go to the sea). The four fishing seasons are the shady season, the transition season, the east wind season and the west wind season. Each season has its own characteristics. The characteristics and other matters related to these four seasons are described below.

#### Shady Season

The shade begins in January to March. This season is characterized by very calm sea water conditions, bright color sea, no wind, high waves between o - 0,5 meters and relatively much rain.

In this season the fish catch is so abundant because the fishermen are free to go to sea without worrying about the waves and currents. With the lack of influence of wind and wave resistance so that almost all types of fish are relatively easier to catch. In some places it will be easier to catch squid, skipjack tuna, ray, *lolosi* and *biya*/shellfish or clams. At this time, the farmers usually start harvesting their plants.

#### Transition season

The transition season is a transition from the shady season to the east wind season, beginning in April to May. In this season, the catch begins to decline. Fish is dominated by catches of large fishing vessels. Small fishermen usually have lesser opportunity to go to sea because of the uncertain wind. Fishing activities are uncertain depending on the weather conditions of the weather, and even then, it is relatively changed rapidly. All the fishing, trawlers and arrows fishermen are very dependent on the existing weather conditions.

#### East Wind Season

The east wind season starts from June to September, marked by rain and wind, resulting in relatively high waves / currents ranging from 1 to 2 meters. The color of the sea water is bright but the ocean currents are relatively high. This is certainly quite difficult for fishermen to do their activities. However, fishermen still have a chance to go to sea. Fishermen who are drifting in the stream in this season are very rare. And some fishermen switch their professions to become farmers and began to cultivate their agricultural land. This season is marked by the high price of fish due to the significantly reduced fishing catches.

#### West Wind Season

The west wind season starts from October to December. This season is marked by the rain fall and the wind is very strong. The sea is choppy with 2 - 3 meters high of strong currents. Some fishermen describe the height of the waves as high as the 36-type house. Many fishermen are drifted in the current. This season is often called the widow wind season because many fishermen's wives lose their husbands due to the incidents of sea accidents that could lead to lost or died fishermen.

This season coincides with the rainy season and most farmers begin to plant. The color of the sea water is cloudy and flowing, so that the arrow fishermen cannot swim down. Due to the difficulty of fishing activities, fishermen generally look for mangrove wood to become firewood, catching biya / shellfish, repairing or patching trawls and other activities unrelated to the sea. For trawlers fishermen, this season greatly affects their activities. Throughout the west wind season, they can only sail for 14 days. The fish catch is relatively small and fish prices soar. The fishermen income decreases in one go, sometimes they cannot even fish at all.



Figure 3. Sea Fishing Season Calendar

Schematically, the calendar season of the seafaring or the calendar of fishing season is illustrated in Figure 3.

For some areas, for example, in the Paguyaman Pantai area of Boalemo Regency, the availability of certain types of fish catches for each month is mapped.

#### **Planting Season**

The main requirement of using plant calendar information is that the user needs to know the upcoming planting season (Musim Tanam-MT) (MT I or MT II or MT III), and the nature of the rainy season (wet or normal or dry). The groups of upcoming planting seasons can be set easily using time periods. MT I from September III / October I to January III / February I, MT II from February II / III to May III / June I, and from June II / III to September I / II. On the other hand, the nature of the rain can be known from BMKG which regularly outlines the monthly and seasonal rainfall forecasts every year (BMKG, 2012). The planting calendar atlas has not yet included the rainfall forecast information so that the user has not been able to directly determine the beginning of the planting season. (Runtunuwu, et al 2012)

The cultivation of plant and their ecosystems show that local wisdom is in a positive side with the maintenance of natural resource continuity. The land is not continuously exploited for production using agricultural incentives that are not environmentally-friendly, the ecosystem in it is not disturbed. Therefore, humans can consume crop food safely. This local wisdom can actually be a reflection of the maintenance of natural resources in the future, in the form of sustainable development; the development that produces well and is still wise to nature. ( Novita Ratna Satiti, et al 2016)

In Gorontalo itself, the planting sea-

son is defined as the specific time used as the stage of planting beginnings. The people of Gorontalo know 4 kinds of planting season (figure 4), which are classified based on the amount of rainfall intensity, namely"

- The main planting season (*Tauwa*) or nationwide known as the *rendengan* season happens during the rainy season 1 (*Musim Hujan*-MH1). This season runs from October to December. This season is marked by high rainfall. Therefore, farmers start planting corn, rice fields and other crops. In this season, usually *langsat* and *kemiri* tree start to be harvested. The recommended planting time is on 21 October - 8 November.
- 2. The rendengan season during the rainy season 2 (MH2), referred to as the afternoon *tualanga* season, runs from February to March. The recommended planting time is between 23 February to 16 March and 23 March to 8 April.
- 3. The planting season of *gadu* happens during the dry season 1, known as *hulita/pobole* season, which is from April to June. This season is the end of the rainy season. Farmers in this season usually plant relatively short-lived plants to exploit the remaining time of the rainy season. The recommended planting time is on 21 April s / d 6 May.
- 4. The Gadu planting season during the dry season 2 is known as the morning *tualanga* season, starting from July to September. In this season, very few people who do the planting because of relatively little rainfall. The recommended planting time is between 23 August to 16 September and between 23 September to 8 October.

In determining the time of planting, the social structure of the people of Gorontalo knows the figure of *panggoba*, the

## MUSIM TANAM



Figure 4. The Calendar of Planting Season

person who masters the science of astrology and able to read the signs of nature. Therefore, he is given the privilege to organize farming and becomes a resource person to address questions related to farming such as the determination of the planting season and how to keep the plants from pests and diseases. In the past, people did not know pesticides, insecticides and the like. With local knowledge of astrology (astronomy) as well as other capabilities of Panggoba, then the prediction of planting season can be done. Similarly, the planting maintenance period, handling pests and diseases can also be consulted directly with the Panggoba. Until now, in some areas of Gorontalo, the local knowledge and practice of steam is still ongoing and continues to be preserved. Usually, local knowledge owned by the

*Panggoba* is passed down from generation to generation until now.

In carrying out its duties, *Panggoba* and Gorontalo people will do the activities based on four stars that guide them in starting the farming (figure 5). The stars are *Totokiya* (Star of the Kings / Altair lies in Alshain, Altair and Tarazed), Tadata (Tutupito / Seven Stars, 7 stars on Aldebaran), Otoluwa (six stars or Twelingen cluster) and Maluo (Chicken Star or Kref, consists of 3 stars namely Procyion, Cirius and Canopus). The circulation of these 4 star guides is observed in the afternoon around 18:00 or morning at 6:00 local time.

Other references obtained from interviews with some *Panggoba* result in the details of the time to choose from starting a farming job like the following Table 1.

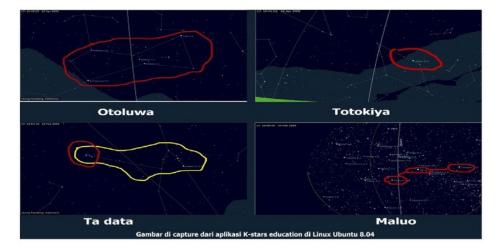


Figure 5. The Configuration of 4 main stars

Date	Activities	Description
23 September – 6 October	#	Planting Padi gogo
21 October – 8 November	*	Tauwa Season
23 November – 14 December	#	
23 December – 6 January	*	
23 January - 8 February	#	
23 February - 14 March	*	
23 March - 6 April	#	
23 April - 8 Mei	*	Pobole Season
23 Mei - 14 June	#	
23 June - 6 July	*	
23 July - 8 August	#	
23 August – 14 September	*	
Description:		
# Time to plant rice seedlings;		
* Time to plant paddy / corn		
in addition to the above table, the		
21 September - 6 October	Ambur seeds and pl	0 0
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23 November - 14 December	à Planting paddy se	0
23 December - 6 January	Planting paddy/cor	
23 January - 8 February	(Planting paddy see	
21 Februari - 14 March	Tanam Padi / Jagun	g
23 November - 14 December		
23 December - 6 January		
21 March - 6 April	planting seedling	
21 April - 6 Mei	Planting hulita / po	bole
23 May - 14 June		
23 June - 7 June		
23 July - 21 August		
23 July - 21 August		

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Table 1	The	time	toc	hoose	trom	starting a	a t	armino	10	h
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Other sources of literature are shown in Figure 6.

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Figure 6. Good Dates to Plant

In addition to paddy and corn as the main agricultural crops of Gorontalo people, the timing of planting other crops can refer to the table below with regard to fruit

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position within their trees. The season for the fruit is calculated from the circulation of the moon's phase observed in the sky. It is further explained that if the moon is one day old, the plants that should be planted are those which have the fruits deeply rooted in the soil or that have the bulbs, such as sweet potato, cassava, potatoes and the likes. If the moon is two days old, the plants must be those which have the fruit in the middle of the stem such as corn. For three days old moon, the planted plants should be those with the fruit on the tip, for example coconut, papaya and other similar plants. And the calendar system is continuously repeated for the next period. Next, establishing the date of planting with reference to the position of fruit is given in the following Table 2.

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<b>Table 2.</b> The date of planting with reference to the position of fruit					
Dates	Position				
1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31	Fruit under the soil (bulb)				
2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29	Fruit in between the stems (middle)				
3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30	Fruit on the tip of the tress (upper)				

#### Hajatan Season

The Hajatan (celebration for big events) of the people of Gorontalo is closely related to culture. This culture should be done because for the people of Gorontalo, culture is important for people's life. The culture concerns with religious values, customs and habits. Hajatan is interpreted as an activity that is rarely done, maybe even will only be done once in a lifetime, for example wedding. For the people of Gorontalo, this marriage culture or wedding is crucial. The wedding date is agreed by both parties based on Hijri calendar. According to Adeney, Bernard T., culture is a complex entity containing knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs, and other capabilities acquired by a person as a member of society (Tylor, EB: 1974). The people of Gorontalo are famous for the philosophy of life which is reflected in the reality that has been crystallized since ancient time, precisely in 1637 AD as stated within the expression "Aadati hula-hula'a to sara'a, sara'a hula-hula'a to kitabullah" which is translated to in the Indonesian as "Adat based on Syara, Syara Rely on Kitabullah" (The first originator of this slogan was a King of Gorontalo in 1637 AD named Olongia Popa and Eyato, as quoted by the author of the baate-baate in Gorontalo between another father of H. AW Lihu and the father of H. DK Usman).

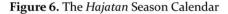
The determination of the celebration date for the Gorontalo people has its own symbol or meaning. According to Geertz, symbol is defined as a vehicle to convey a certain conception. Therefore, for Geertz, norms or religious values should be interpreted as a symbol that holds certain conceptions. In interpreting a cultural phenomenon that takes place in a society, Geertz highlights the need to pay more attention to the meaning rather than just human behaviors. Geertz suggests that people should look for understanding of meaning rather than just looking for causal relationships in view of cultural phenomena in a society.

Hence, according to Geertz, interpretation of culture will be essential if it is done through semiotics or interpretation of symbolic meaning. Culture as a system of meaning that gives meaning to human life and behavior is an essential aspect of human being that cannot be separated in human understanding. Indarwana (2012) states that culture is formed by human existence. Culture has a function in overcoming the nature and environment of human life which is to keep "the human existence as one of the creatures on earth. Max Weber believes that humans are creatures that get caught in their self-made network of interests and culture is the net (Geertz, 1973: 5). Geertz also elaborates the notion of culture as a pattern of meaning inherited historically and stored in symbols by which humans then communicate, behave and view life. Geertz's view is then becomes what people of Gorontalo adopt to implement the hajatan calendar. In the view of Geertz, symbol system is a system that has been available in real life of a society that can show how the people concern, see and think about their world and act based on the values. In the case of local wisdom for example, it can be seen how actually the existing symbols and meanings play role in society and shape the way of the local community; how Gorontalo people implement and understand the various wisdom that exist in the life of the community. In this case, symbols and meanings are something that needs to be captured and distributed to society as well as passed on to the next generation. Beside the Hijri calendar in the marriage culture, there are some interesting phenomenon for Hajatan at certain times such as building a house, or conducting a relatively large scale transaction, such

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	anyak ru-hara Ti	lulia, Baik, Beroleh nikmat, ada putus sa, Rejeki	Kesukaran, Tidak beroleh rejeki, Kematian	Maha baik, sentosa, sukacita	Maha baik, beroleh rejeki, sejuk	Terlalu jahat, perkelahian berbantah- bantahan	Terlalu jahat, bertikam, berkelahi, kehilangan	Maha baik, beroleh rejeki, harta, emas dan perak	Maha baik, beroleh harta, harta, emas dan perak	Jahat, terbakar, kehilangan	Sekalian orang kasihan	Amat baik, beroleh harta dan hamba sahaya

# PENANGGALAN HIJRIYAH



as buying a motorcycle/car, land or valuable goods. The *Hajatan* Season is usually based on the *Hijri* calendar as seen on Figure 6.

Besides paying attention to the above 'signs', Gorontalo people also determine the day and hour based on beliefs and empirical experiences of ancestral Gorontalo people.

### The Drafting of Season Calendar Document

Hendro Setyanto & Fahmi Fatwa RSH (2015) states that the calendar/dating system which is currently known as the calendar is part of a masterpiece of mankind in studying and learning the motion wthin nature (Sun, Moon and stars). Generally, the calendar system is used for the purpose of the living arrangement of human life. The existence of the calendar has helped humans to record the phenomenon and the big event that happened to them. According to Jayusman (2010), a lunar calendar is based on the lunar phase and not based on the exchange of the season; as in the solar calendar system (sun). Hence, the seasonal calendar document is an activity of compiling and recording the content of local wisdom gained during the research into a manuscript completed with a seasonal calendar chart that is a compilation and simplification of the known seasons for people of Gorontalo (figure 7).

At this stage, an initial assessment of prototype development of seasonal information system based on the local wisdom of the people of Gorontalo is also conducted. The results of the study find that recurrent seasonal values found in the local wisdom

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practice of the Gorontalo people are very likely to be developed into computer-based applications to complete the modern knowledge.

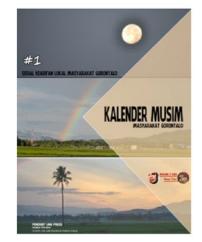


Figure 7 . The Manuscript of season calendar of Gorontalo people

# CONCLUSION

Some local wisdom, especially for seasonal activities, is continuously practiced in some areas of Gorontalo. Seasonal activities which are identified include fishing season, planting season and *hajatan* season. The identified areas which still perform local wisdom have been mapped. However, the local wisdom is not practiced by all the people in the region.

The pattern of activity or habit or annual season in the practice of local wisdom

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Gorontalo has subsequently been made in the form of documents calendar season practiced by the indigenous people of Gorontalo. This initial studies indicate that there is a chance of development application season calendar based on local wisdom of Gorontalo people which is further expected to contribute toward the knowledge of modern science.

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