

The Visualization of Pamali in the Pulo Indigenous Hamlet of Garut Regency

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Abstract

Indonesia is known as a country with immense art and cultural diversity. Each region and indigenous group in Indonesia has its own distinct art and culture, such as that of Pulo indigenous hamlet in Cangkuang administrative village, Leles district, Garut regency. The Pulo indigenous hamlet is typical and unique since it only owns seven buildings that consist of six houses and a mosque. All buildings in Pulo indigenous hamlet are rich in local wisdom values held by its inhabitants from generation to generation. The study uses a descriptive analysis method that aims to comprehensively describe the visualization of *Pamali* in Pulo indigenous hamlet of Garut region. This study describes two out of five *Pamali* (taboo) values in Kampung Adat Pulo, namely first, it is not allowed to build a house with prism-shaped roof, instead, the roof must always be gable (*suhunan jolopong*), and second, it is not allowed to add or reduce both the number of the main buildings and the heads of the family.

Keywords: visualization, pamali, indigenous hamlet.

A. Introduction

Humans as cultural beings are inseparable from the concept of culture as a tool for their personal development in life. H.A.R. Tilaar (2002:37) explained that culture is typical human characteristic. Only humans that are cultured and civilized. Hari Poerwanto (2010: 87) said that human and culture are an undivided entity in which human is the patron of culture. In addition, HAR Tilaar (2002: 38) claimed that culture is a dynamic process that covers creating, controlling and processing human

values. Culture owned by each society cannot be extracted from values adopted by its society and are attached to it. Every region has its own distinct culture containing values implemented in its inhabitants' social life.

Euis Suhaenah, et al. (2017: 51) states that the ability to continue traditional practice basically is generating a strong culture. The strong culture is not only able to maintain and sustain its identity, but also to influence and enrich other cultures that interact with it. West Java is one of the provinces in Indonesia known to have diverse cultures such as language, customs, arts, ceremonies related to human life cycles, ceremonies related to nature, and also indigenous societies. One of indigenous societies in West Java inhabit Pulo indigenous hamlet in Garut Regency. The hamlet has varied natural resources, ritual traditions and traditional houses. However, the limited number of its population is its distinctive feature that differ it from other customary villages in West Java.

Pramaputra (Rohaeni, et al., 2013: 12) explains that Indigenous Societies are people who still set the order of their lives on traditions or customs that have been held from time to time or passed down from generation to generation. Pulo indigenous hamlet is easily reached from Bandung, the capital of West Java Province. It is 48 km from the center of Bandung Municipality, 15 km from the center of Garut Regency, and 2 km from the Leles District. It is accessible by any kinds of vehicles both private or public transportation.

Pulo indigenous hamlet has attracted both local and foreign visitors. They are interested in conducting studies, especially related to art and culture, due to some reasons such as its natural potential. Its location in the

middle of a lake that must be reached by rafts can be seen as tourist attraction.

Pulo indigenous hamlet is adjacent to the Cangkuang Temple site, Cultural Heritage Site Museum, and the grave of *Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad* (the founding figure of Pulo indigenous hamlet who had spread Islamic teachings). Visitors may enjoy natural landscapes such as lake and forest; religious sites like the grave of both the founder and messenger of Islamic teachings that is open for public visitors who are Moslem on Friday and Hindu on Saturday; and also cultural attractions such as Cultural Heritage Site Museum for educational insights. Both the site of the temple and the grave of Islamic leader reflect the unity in diversity where various religions and cultures can live together in harmony.



Fig 1. Access to Pulo Indigenous Hamlet
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)



Fig 2. Canguang Temple Adjacent to the Grave of *Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad* (the Founding Figure of Pulo Indigenous Hamlet)
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)



Fig. 3. Heritage Site Museum of Canguang Temple
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)

Both local and foreign visitors to Pulo indigenous hamlet are challenges for its indigenous people. On one hand, they have to maintain the local genius passed down the generations, but on the other hand they have to open themselves to visitors (both tourists and researchers) and their manners due to local government's demand to develop the place as a tourist destination generating revenues.

The difference in local genius possessed by the villagers of Pulo from other indigenous societies in West Java lies on the five values of *Pamali* (lit. means: taboo), namely; (1) Must not make pilgrimage on Wednesday; (2) Must not hit or beat a large bronze gong; (3) Must not make a house with prism-shaped roof, instead, the roof must always be gable (*suhunan jolopong*); (4) Must not add or reduce both the number of main buildings and the heads of the family, and (5) Must not nurture large four-legged livestock .



Fig 4. *Pamali* Values (Customary Prohibition of Pulo Indigenous People)
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)

From the five values of *Pamali* local wisdom, the writer focuses on two *Pamali* values only, namely the third and fourth *Pamali* values (Must not make a house with prism-shaped roof, instead, the roof must always be

gable (*suhunan jolopong*); Must not add or reduce both the number of main buildings and the heads of the families in the study entitled "*Visualization of Pamali in Pulo Indigenous Hamlet in Garut Regency*"

B. Methodology

The research concerning "*Visualization of Pamali in Pulo Indigenous Hamlet in Garut Regency*" uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analytical methods. This method is employed to describe the visualization of *Pamali* in Pulo indigenous hamlet in Garut Regency comprehensively and analytically.

A qualitative approach is used in the study as John W. Creswell (2010: 4) suggested that qualitative researches are methods to explore and understand meanings that are assumed by a number of individuals or groups of people as being derived from social or human problems.

Suharsimi Arikunto (2003: 309) claimed that "A descriptive research is a research that aims to gather information about the status of an existing symptom, namely the state of symptoms as it was at the time of study". Burhan Bungin (2007: 66) explained that qualitative analysis is used to understand a fact, not to explain it. Descriptive analytical method is adopted to understand the phenomena that are related to the facts of the research.

C. Results and Discussion

The results of this study were obtained from in-depth observations and interviews with the people of Pulo indigenous hamlet who still live there or those who have moved to another area but keep their livelihoods around Pulo indigenous hamlet.

Pulo indigenous hamlet has its own uniqueness and distinctiveness that make it different from other customary villages in West Java. The distinct features can be seen from the number of its physical buildings, which only seven buildings. Six houses and one mosque with a population of only 23 people belonging to six families in 2019. It shows that the number of buildings and the population of Kampung Adat Pulo are limited when being compared to other customary villages.



Fig 5. The Complex of Traditional Houses in Pulo hamlet
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)



Fig 6. *Kuncen* (caretaker) 's house in Pulo indigenous hamlet
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)



Fig 7. Traditional Houses in Pulo Indigenous Hamlet
(Doc: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)



Fig. 8. A Mosque in Pulo Indigenous Hamlet
(Source: Nia Emilda and Ai Juju Rohaeni, 2019)

As mentioned in the introduction section, Pulo indigenous people maintain five values of local wisdom *Pamali*. However, in this study, the authors focuses on the third and fourth values of *Pamali*, that are: it is forbidden to make a house with prism-shaped roof, instead, the roof must always be gable (*suhunan jolopong* or *pelana*); forbidden to add or reduce

both the number of main buildings and the number of family leaders in the study of visualization of the two values of *Pamali*.

The Pamali values held and adhered to by the Pulo Indigenous Hamlet people up to present day originated in the historical events in the life of the Pulo Indigenous Hamlet's founder, *Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad*.

1. Forbidden to make a house with a prism-shaped roof, its roof must always be gable.

All roofs of both *Kuncen* (caretaker)'s house and residents' house and a mosque in Pulo indigenous hamlet are gable. The buildings must not take hip roof or prism-shaped roof because in the past, the prohibition of using prism-shaped roof came up after Mbah Dalem's son passed away in his circumcision celebration.

During the celebration of Mbah Dalem's son circumcision, its procession was using a stretcher with prism-shaped and hip roof. Since that incident, all residents were prohibited from using hip roof or prism-shaped roof for their houses and mosque because it would bring back the memory of the incident that made the entire inhabitants of Pulo hamlet mourned.

If people visit Pulo indigenous hamlet they will see the same roof shape, eventhough there are changes in its roofing material: five houses belonging to the residents have used tile roof, while the *Kuncen*'s house still uses the fibre roof. In terms of visualization, the roof still follow the local wisdom that requires all buildings use gable roof.

Suwardi Alamsyah P. (2011: 111) explains that "... changes occur in the roof of the house, which originally used roofing materials from reeds (*kiray* or *alang-alang*) and palm fiber (*ijuk*), and bamboo arrangement

(*talahab*), now uses tiles. There is only a house that still uses palm fiber and *talahab* as its roofing material... "

The people of Pulo indigenous hamlet believe that if they violate local wisdom values of *Pamali*, a disaster or calamity will befall them.

2. Forbidden to add or reduce the number of main buildings and family leaders.

Similar to the visualization of the third value of *Pamali*, the fourth value of *Pamali* (must not add or reduce the number of main buildings and the number of family leaders) is also related to the history of the founding figure of the Pulo indigenous hamlet (*Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad*).

The visualization of the main buildings in Pulo indigenous hamlet symbolizes the number of descendants owned by *Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad*. *Mbah Dalem Arief Muhammad* had six daughters and one son. Six houses symbolize his six daughters, and a mosque symbolizes his only boy who died during his circumcision celebration. Until now, the number of main buildings cannot be reduced or added, and the number of family leaders is still only six. If there is any descendant of each family get married, he or she is immediately demanded to leave the hamlet.

Dewi Ratih (2015: 122) explains that it is a customary stipulation that the number of houses and heads of households each must be six with an arrangement of three houses on the left and three houses on the right facing each other plus one mosque as a place of worship. Nani Sriwardani and Savitri (2019: 285) explain that House in Kampung Pulo does not only function as a shelter, but also as a family formation in which cultural inheritance occurs through practicing traditional rites, developing cultural values, and so on.

The visualization of the two values of *Pamali* local wisdom are visual cultural values that have been maintained by the people of Pulo

indigenous hamlet and transmitted across generations. Therefore, the values of *Pamali* local wisdom are not only attached to the behavior of the community, but also attached to the physical form of the buildings in Kampung Adat Pulo which distinguish Pulo from other indigenous hamlets.

D. Conclusion

There are five *Pamali* local wisdom values held by Pulo indigenous people. In this study the researchers limit the scope of the research by focusing to only the visualization of the third and the fourth values of Pamali. It is about prohibition of making a house with prism-shaped or hip roof and reducing the number of buildings and family leaders. The visualization of the two values of *Pamali* local wisdom can be seen clearly if we visit the Pulo indigenous hamlet in Garut Regency.

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