

## THE MORAL VALUE OF TRADITIONAL FARMING ON *NE'* *BALUNGKUR* FOLKLORE

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore Dayak Kanayatn community's perception of moral value in doing traditional farming based on *Ne Balungkur* folklore. The credence is reviewed through the process of reimbursement fields, planting seeds, and harvesting. The researchers applied descriptive qualitative to analyze the data. The data of this study was obtained by interviewing a couple of traditional farmers and a public figure of the Dayak Kanayatn community. The researchers discovered numerous moral values that can be used as inspiration in daily life during the stages of the farming method.

**Keywords:** *moral value, traditional farming, folklore*

### RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Since ancient times, most of the Dayaknese have depended on farming for their livelihood. In the frame of Dayak culture, farming is seen as a way to fulfill their needs, especially the need for food. Moreover, it is also a means of cultural preservation. Therefore, the Dayaknese tends to live in hilly areas. Meanwhile, their rice fields are usually located on the border of their village. This type of farming is commonly known as *berladang* (Indonesian) where the rain is replacing the irrigation system. This farming method is different from *bersawah* (Indonesian) which requires an irrigation system. Living in hilly areas give more privileges to the Dayaknese including their availability for them to cultivate their paddy field and community recognition of land ownership which is usually marked by the presence of hard-trunked tree such as rambutan, durian, *sarikatn*/ local lansium tengkawang/ Bornean tallow nut, etc.

The designation term of paddy field in Dayak is *mototn*. There, in their *mototn*, they grow main crops such *palawakng* (local rice) and *poe* (sticky rice grown in small quantities). As a variety, they also plant vegetables such *ansab* (bitter mustard), *paranggi* (local pumpkin, cucumber, etc). The Dayak Kanayatn considers that paddy is a sacred plant. Farming is serious of planting and cultivating series. It both reflects the social agreement and divine belief at the same time. Before opening the fields, under coordination with the chief of the community called *Timanggong*, they will decide where to plant. *Timanggong* is the highest level of the Dayak Kanayatn customary institution which has authority in a *binua* (a customary area consisting of five to seven villages. In carrying out the cultivation of the agricultural land, they will do it very carefully. First, they make a partition between the fields and forest which is 1-2 meters away. This barrier was made to keep the fire from spreading to the forest or former fields planted with rubber that is still productive. There are several ceremonies carried out in a series of fields including, the *Baburukng* (the traditional ceremony of asking for permission for

preparing the fields from *Jubata* (God), *Balabuih* (a process of dropping and growing paddy seeds), *Ngamalo lubakng tugal* (the ceremony of asking for protection from God, and *Naik Dango* (harvest festival).

In this study, the researchers are interested to explore the inspirational values that are lived by the Dayak Kanayatn society based on *Ne Balungkur* folklore. The value represents conscious goals with which individuals and society cope (Schwartz, 1994). *Ne' Balungkur* upholds social/community life, ethical teachings/customs, brotherhood, and living respecting each other. This is in harmony with Radner (2001) folklore is considered an integrated discipline of reciprocal theory and action. This is the reflection of traditional knowledge which is drawn into practice (Bronner, 2012). In addition, his belief in God Almighty, as the Giver of life, is exemplary. What is also interesting is that *gotong royong* / *Balale'* which is a hereditary tradition in farming is still being carried out today by the Kanayatn Dayak community.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Dayaks have their style of farming. For centuries, Dayaks have relied to varying degrees on agriculture (Alcorn & Royo, Antoinette G, 2000). The typical culture of Dayak cultivation is by clearing land. There are five different varieties of rice, depending on the size of the plot of land that had been cleared (Semiarto & Shinto, 2018). Farming in Dayak's culture means a system of shifting cultivation from one plot of land to another where it is done by slashing, cutting, and burning the land without destroying the forest and its surrounding environment to clear the land (Siahaya, Hutauruk, Aponno, Hatulesila, & Mardhanie, 2016). This act of clearing land is stipulated in Customary or Adat Law and those who destruct and pollute the environment intentionally and unintentionally will be subject to sanctions to the doer (Syamsudin, Hakim, Harahap, & Afandhi, 2018). Moreover, Purwanto & Haryono, (2019) state Dayak people implemented 10 stages in farming they are (1) inspecting the land, (2) determining the land area, (3) cleaning or purifying farming tools, (4) slashing, (5) cutting the trees, (6) burning the land, (7) planting, (8) weeding, (9) harvesting, and (10) performing thanksgiving ceremony (*begawai*).

## RESEARCH METHOD

The writing of this paper uses the descriptive qualitative method. According to Larsen, Mangrio, & Persson (2021), descriptive qualitative is a method that emphasizes the interpretation of participants' experiences. The activities of writing this paper include data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and finally, a conclusion is formulated that refers to the data analysis. Conducting interviews was considered beneficial in analyzing and triangulating the data. It involved a couple of traditional farmers and a public figure of the Dayak Kanayatn community. Furthermore, the researchers applied several steps to analyze the data they are transcribing data, compiling data, clustering the stages of farming, triangulating data, and elaborating data

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researchers elaborate on the data that have been collected through interviews. The findings show there are thirteen main stages of traditional farming of Dayak Kanayatn and some of the stages have moral values based on the interview conducted.

1. Ngawah

- The first step in farming is *ngawah*. At this stage, a traditional procession of cutting down some woods is carried out as a sign of farming. *Ngawah* is executed by the elders of the village from morning until afternoon. In addition, the local community also believes that during the *ngawah* process, the nature will help them determine the right location for farming
2. Nabas  
Nabas is the work of chopping, cutting small trees in a forest to turn them into a field. All adults in the extended family are involved to take part in doing nabas. Farm owners are responsible for directing, advising, and dividing farm duties according to their gender.
  3. Nabankng  
*Nabankng* refers to the activity of cutting large-sized wood in the field. This activity is led by someone called *Tuha aleatn*. *Tuha aleatn* is a person who is responsible to organize and direct the workers until the *nabankng* process is over. The tools used by the workers during *nabankng* were *iso'* (machetes), *batu asahatn* (stones for sharpening machetes), *baliukng* (pickaxes), and axes. While the tools used by women are *iso' pangkait* and *rancakng*. *Pangkait* is used to help the workers cut grass or tree branches. Meanwhile, *rancakng* is a place to carry *parang iso'*, potions offered to *Jubata*, and to bring firewoods. The next process is to clean and make boundaries between the fields to be burned according to the four cardinal directions. This part of the process is accomplished by men because they know better the boundaries of other people's fields.
  4. Nunu  
*Nunu* is an activity of burning wild plants. It is accomplished at *Pantar Janyahakng* (3 pm) because at that time the stems, grass, and wood branches were dry and easily burned. In this process, the farmers believe that *Jubata* is in the *mototn* (field) from morning to afternoon and in the afternoon *Jubata* moves to another place. Considering that *nunu* is a tough job, it is done by men.
  5. Nugal and Manih  
*Nugal* is the process of planting rice seeds. The type of rice seeds planted by farmers is *palawakng* seeds. This kind of seed cannot bear fruit if it is planted in a paddy field. Another characteristic of this rice is that it has a fragrant aroma and tastes different from ordinary rice. In this part, the men must make a *tugal* hole and the women put the rice seeds into the hole (*manih*). All rice seeds must be done for one day. If the seeds have not been fully planted, the rice seeds cannot be brought home.
  6. Ngamalo  
*Ngamalo lubakng* is a traditional ceremony that aims to make *Mototn's* land strong and *palawakng* rice grow well. The farmers pray to *Jubata* (God) to protect *mototn* from *baho* (pests). All family members attended this activity. *Ngamalo lubakng* is led by *panyangahatn* a person from male parents who know the origin of mountains, descendants, tall trees, rivers, sacred people, and the meaning of the *ngamalo lubakng* ceremony. The equipment that must be prepared for this activity includes *kalangkakng* (old grass and rice leaves), and *poe'* (glutinous rice).
  7. Balala  
Balala is a ceremony that does not allow the local community to go to the field, kill animals, touch leaves, make noise, whistle, and speak impolitely. They believe that the ceremony will protect their village from disasters.
  8. Matahatn  
Matahan is the first step of harvesting. *Matahatn* is a stage that only takes rice in small quantities intending to notify *Jubata* that the rice is ready to be harvested. In carrying out *matahatn*, the community is free to choose the time between morning, afternoon, or evening.

The tools used in this activity are *iso'* (machete), *batu asahatn* (sharpening stone), *katam*, and *ransukng*.

#### 9. Bahanyi

Bahanyi is the second step of harvesting after Matahan is accomplished. *Bahanyi* is taking the harvest as a whole. There are two techniques that the local community use to harvest namely *aleatn* and *maluang*. Aleant is a rice harvesting technique carried out by a group of people whereas maluank is a second harvesting technique when aleant is not finished. The tools used by men for *bahanyi* are *iso'*, *batu asahat'n*, *inge*, *rampant*, and *toyo*. While the equipment used by women is *katam*, *inge'*, and *ransukng*. When the *palawakng* rice has been harvested, the *palawakng* rice is immediately brought to the house.

#### 10. Ngirit and Nampi

*Ngirit* is a way to separate *palawakng* rice from the stalk by stepping on it with your feet. While *nampi'* is a technique of separating clean and empty rice by using *nyero'*. After the *palawakng* rice has been cleaned, it is brought to *langko* (a place to store rice)

#### 11. Nyamur

*Nyamur* is a term used by the Dayak Kanayatn community to describe the word drying. Before *palawakng* rice is consumed or sold, it is better to dry it first. The activity of drying rice is carried out from 9 am to 12 noon.

## CONCLUSION

Until now, the Dayak Kanayatn people still preserve the culture of farming with a series of traditional ceremonies. Some of the processions in the ceremony have moral values that are still believed by the local community to this day. It can be seen from the findings above. The results revealed there are thirteen stages in traditional farming of Dayak Kanayatn and five of the stages have moral values that are implemented in their daily life namely *ngawah*, *nunu*, *ngamalo*, *balala'*, and *matahatn*.

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