



**RITUAL COMMUNICATION *TEPUNG TAWAR* IN TRADITIONAL
BATAK WEDDING IN KAMPUNG PAJAK VILLAGE NORTH
LABUHANBATU REGENCY (ISLAMIC COMMUNICATION
PERSPECTIVE)**

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Abstract :

Wedding receptions in Indonesia have a lot of diversity in every ethnic group. Various cultures and traditions color each region from various parts of the Province. The diversity of customs, cultures and traditions is basically a wealth for the Indonesian people and should also be preserved by every generation. In this research, several discussions regarding the history and interesting facts about the Tap Flour Ritual Tradition in Batak Traditional Marriages in Kampung Tax Village, North Labuhanbatu Regency, will be revealed. The aim of this research is to extract several points of communication contained in this tradition. Thus, it has become the duty of the government to participate in and preserve every positive tradition passed down by the ancestors of the archipelago

Keywords: culture, communication ritual, tradition

Introduction

In the cultures of the Batak community located in the village of Kampung pajak, North Labuhanbatu Regency, tepung tawaris is a hereditary tradition that has existed for a long time. Talking about tradition cannot be separated from the term culture because tradition is part of culture. From the perspective of the Indonesian language, the word "*buddhayah*", the plural of Sanskrit "*buddha*" with the meaning "mind or intellect, derived from the compound word "*budi daya*", is "the power of the mind". They also distinguish between "culture" and "culture".

As for the anthropological figures have put forward a systematic explanation is also scientific about the definition of culture in relation to the discussion of culture. In 1871, Edward B. Tylor put forward a cultural defense that is considered the oldest. As for his opinion, according to Sugeng Pujileksono, Tylor, who put forward his explanation that culture is "a complex whole that includes art, knowledge, morals, laws, customs, as well as various habits and abilities obtained by humans which are part of society".

The term "culture" has been used almost every day, it shows that culture is very close to our environment. The term "culture" or "culture" is also considered primary because it is part of the term "multicultural education". Multicultural education is defined by our culture.

It is very difficult to understand the meaning of multicultural education if we do not know what it means. For example, multicultural education with the meaning of studying the various heritage and cultural traditions if the culture is defined as a heritage and tradition in one social group. However, if it is defined to be a way of life for social groups to be able to live together and adapt to their regions, the purpose of multicultural education is to be able to learn about various social groups and different ways that aim to live in a pluralist society.

The word "culture" in English comes from the Latin *colere*, which means to "work, cultivate", mainly in Land Management or farming. This suggests that culture is a human activity. Perspective of cultural anthropology, the classification of artifact finds known as "*Pithecanthropus Erectus*" and "*Homo Soloensis*" as human or not based on the skill of the artifact while alive to create cultural objects.

For example, *Pithecanthropus Erectus* (ape man with erect head) has existed in the Bengawan Solo River, Sangiran, Solo has been considered a "human" by some experts because it has to do with the discovery of an ax near *Pithecanthropus Pekinensis*, which has the same characteristics as the findings in Solo and is considered a period of his life.

A community is a group of people who live together and create a culture. Therefore, there is no society that does not have a culture, and vice versa, that is, there is no culture that does not have a supporting community as a container. Culture and society interact with each other.

Culture helps people live a variety of these lives. Roucek also Warren stated his explanation that culture is not only an art in life but also in various objects created by humans. According to them, culture is also defined as a method or way of life (*ways of life*), which includes how to plan, think, and act, as well as any real work that can be useful, correct, and can also be done by members of society at the same time.

According to some definitions, culture can be defined as the fruit of work, taste, also human creation which consists of Ideas, Ideas, norms, and human activities in order to fulfill their needs. Every society has the culture mentioned earlier. The difference lies in the fact that the culture of certain societies is more perfect than the culture of other societies, both of which develop in order to meet the needs of different societies.

While tradition according to Gegana is a habit that is commonly done from the past which is a part of human life in society, from One Country, Time, culture, or similar religion.¹ A tradition must be passed down from generation to generation to prevent the extinction of the tradition. In other words, tradition is also a social heritage that still exists today (the present or the future) and is tied to the past.

According to Putri in Islamic tradition it can be interpreted as *urf*. The term *urf* is something that has become a tradition among the people and they do deeds and words that are common among them, including '*urf amali* and *qauly*.'² In other words, *urf* is what is felt and applied by humans, either through words, deeds or leaving something. It can be interpreted that *urf* is something that is known and

¹ Gegana, "Pandangan Urf Terhadap Tradisi Mitu Dalam Pesta Pernikahan Adat Batak.," *El-Izdiwaj: Indonesian Journal of Civil and Islamic Family Law*, 2022.

² Putri D.N, "Konsep Urf Sebagai Sumber Hukum Dalam Islam," *Elmashlahah*, 2020.

done to many people, although the form of action or treatment or something that is left behind.

Speaking of islam, every muslim has been taught to have good relations with each other. Good relationships can certainly be built through instant interaction and have a good background in communication. Communication in islam can be interpreted as a good tool to continue to establish inner bonds between one individual and another.

Enjelina, the traditional culture of tepuk tepung tawar is a culture that originated in the Malay region and continues to exist today.³ Patting unsalted flour is a tradition to celebrate gratitude when the expected desire has been fulfilled. This tradition is most often performed at weddings, circumcisions and other forms of Thanksgiving. At the wedding, the tradition of white flour pat tawar can be symbolized as a kind of family blessing for the newlyweds with the hope of an antidote to bad and become a harmonious family in the future.

Tepuk tepung tawar is one of the traditions that have long been practiced by Indonesian people, including in traditional Batak wedding culture. The process of routinely mashing flour has a long history and is performed in various traditional ceremonies in Indonesia. The origin of the tradition of white flour pat itself is not known with certainty, but this tradition is also thought to have existed in prehistoric times in Indonesia. Tap flour may have existed in the days of animism and dynamism, when people believed that everything has a spirit and magical power.

At the time of The Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Indonesia, the tradition of tepuk tepung tawar was also made for various religious ceremonies. In fact, white flour pat is used as a symbol of self-purification and purification of the soul before performing religious ceremonies. During the Dutch colonial period, the tradition of white flour pat was considered a primitive tradition and contrary to Western customs. However, Indonesians still consider this tradition as part of their culture

³ Selvia Frety Yunia Enjelina, "Kosmologi Dalam Budaya Tradisi Tepuk Tepung Tawar Melayu Provinsi Riau," *Gorga : Jurnal Seni Rupa* 11 (2022).

and Customs. In the context of traditional Batak weddings, a simple batter of flour is considered a symbol of friendship and unity between the two sides of the family united by marriage. This tradition is also seen as an effort to make the marriage run smoothly and full of happiness.

Pajriati and Rohmah mention that, as for the values of the tradition, they are as follows:⁴

1. Moral values, where this tradition teaches to always have ethics and manners that are reflected in the process of its implementation.
2. Social values, where this tradition as a means of gathering relatives so that social interaction can occur.
3. Religious values, in the process of this tradition there is a reading of prayers and prayers chanting prayers and aims to express gratitude for the achievement of good things such as marriage.
4. The value of unity, namely the unity of the family is also unity in nature during the traditional process of patting fresh flour.
5. The value of solidarity, this value can be seen during the procession *buradat* and *munityatkan kroju*.
6. The value of art, which is reflected in the process of this tradition there is a performance of the art of silek dance accompanied by *gondang brogong* or tambourine accompaniment and *burdah* during the wedding ceremony.
7. Aesthetic value, where in this procession the raw flour pat material is colored in 5 colors and the bride's *dress uses Johor scissors clothes*.

Based on the above exposure, the problems in this study are: first, people in other villages are still many who do not know the meanings of communication in the traditions contained in the traditional Batak marriage ceremony so that many

⁴ Nurli Pajriati and Rina Ari Rohmah, "Nilai-Nilai Tradisi Pada Upacara Tepuk Tepung Tawar Perkawinan Adat Melayu Di Desa Rambah Hilir Timur Study Of The Procedure For The Tepuk Tepung Tawar Ceremony In Malayu Marriage Customs In The Desa Rambah Hilir Timur," *Bakoba: Journal Of Social Science Education*, 2022.

people who hold marriages only consent events and do not hold traditional marriage processions. However, in fact it is very important to carry out traditional Batak marriage with a procession of tepuk Tepung Tawar because in the tradition of saturatedK tepung Tawar there are meanings of communication in the tradition that becomes a view of community life.

Literature Review

Communication with culture is a different thing, but both have a relationship that is so close and so important to be understood. From communication, humans can create culture. According to Koentjaningrat, he said the form of culture is all systems of ideas, actions and values of human work in aspects of human life that belong to humans by being studied.⁵

Razali communication is the process of providing information between individuals with systems or behavior.⁶ The purpose of communication is to understand information at the same time. In the opinion of Edwin neuman communication is a way of interaction between several people with the aim of being able to unite interpersonal as well as intrapersonal. According To Hariyanto D. as for paramdimatic communication, it is a form of conveying individual information to other individuals who have the purpose of informing, changing behavior or opinions, both orally and using media such as email, telephone, and others.⁷

According To Anang F, communication can be seen in the process of communication on two perspectives, namely psychological as well as mechanical.⁸ In the world of marketing, communication becomes a tool used to persuade someone. Anna N. Etal, states that the psychological perspective on the communication process should be shown that communication is a social psychological activity involving communicators, communicants, symbols, the

⁵ Koentjaningrat, *Pengantar Antropologi Pokok Etnografi II* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2002).

⁶ Razali G, *Pengantar Ilmu Komunikasi, Hakikat Dan Unsur-Unsur Komunikasi. Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Informasi & Transaksi Elektronik.*, 2020.

⁷ Hariyanto D, *Buku Ajar Pengantar Ilmu Komunikasi* (UMSIDA Press, 2022).

⁸ Anang Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran* (Qiara Media, 2022).

content of the message, perception, nature of the relationship, the process of decoding and encoding.⁹

The mechanical perspective shows that the communication process is a mechanical activity by the communicator, which has been very dependent on the situation and context. Reflection on communication is useful in order to gain a broader understanding of the communication process that is so complex and not simple.

Lubis R.A. the nature of communication involves several important aspects in communicating, one of which is a two-way process.¹⁰ This communication pattern has the function of exchanging information between communicators and communicants. In essence, communicators and communicants are involved in actively listening to conversations, providing *feedback*, and understanding different views.

According to Koentjaraningrat, Ritual is an activity or series of activities regulated by a custom or law that is stated in a community life in question.¹¹ Ritual is a spiritual belief and belief that is done by having a desired goal and hope. Ritual is one of the ways that make a custom into a habit of being holy. Rituals create myths, social and religious customs. Rituals can be performed in private or group, the form can be dance, drama and prayer. Rituals initially had a social nature then an economic nature and then developed into a sacred ordinance of a religion.

Eric W. Rothenbuhler, describes several characteristics in the ritual itself in the form of ritual as action, ritual as consciousness and willingness, ritual is not just recreation, ritual as an expression of social relations, ritual as the effectiveness of symbols, communication without information, and ritual as sacred.¹²

Riswandi, revealed, ritual communication is the meaning of the message that can be interpreted from the process of religious activity and belief systems embraced

⁹ Anisah N.P, "Psikologi Komunikasi," *Jurnal Ilmu KOMputer, Ekonomi Dan Manajemen*, 2022.

¹⁰ Lubis R.A, "Pengaruh Pola Komunikasi Dan Interaksi Kader Terhadap Kemajuan Roda Organisasi Medan Bernalar," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Manajemen Dan Kewirausahaan*, 2022.

¹¹ Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar Antropologi Pokok Etnografi II*.

¹² Eric W Rothenbuhler, *Ritual Communication: From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony* (Sage Publications, 1998).

by a group of people.¹³ In the process can occur the meaning of certain symbols that indicate the process of ritual communication. In the process of ritual communication, there is often competition with formal religious beliefs that then participate in coloring the process. This activity is a traditional activity that exists in a culture whose activities are carried out by a group of people or a particular community as an effort to maintain and maintain what is already owned and obtained and expect safety, convenience and in all other respects. Dedy Mulyana, revealed that ritual communication is communication that is used to realize jati diri human identity as individuals, members of society, and element salam of the universe.¹⁴ The person yang performing ritual communication emphasizes his commitment to his tribe, family, nation, or tradisireligious tradition. Some forms of ritual communication antara include Silaman, marriage, prayer (prayer, pembacaan scripture reading suci, mass), upacara pengibaran flag raising ceremony, and others.

The will conveyed in ritual communication is hidden and can be confusing/ambiguous depending on whether the symbols and asosiasi communication associations yang used are not those chosen by the participant, but are provided by the culture yang in question. The purpose of using symbols in ritual communication is to represent ideas and values yang related to a celebration or ceremony of worship and communion.

Ibn Hammad, 2006 said that there are several characteristics of ritual communication to be able to understand it, among others:¹⁵

- a. Ritual communication has a lot to do with the act of sharing, of gathering, of being friends of a community that shares a common goal and belief.
- b. Communication formed also can not be directly to convey the message but to represent or bring back beliefs with the community.
- c. The pattern of communication that is formed is like a sacred and sacred ceremony, where everyone gathers and performs activities together.

¹³ Riswandi, *Ilmu Komunikasi* (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2009).

¹⁴ Dedi Mulyana, *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi. Contoh-Contoh Penelitian Kualitatif Dengan Pendekatan Parktis* (Bandung: Rosdakarya, 2007).

¹⁵ Ibnu Hamad, *Communication as Discourse* (Jakarta, 2006).

- d. Between the message and the media is difficult to separate, because the media itself may be the message.
- e. The use of symbols is intended to signify values related to the virtues of the celebrations and ceremonies carried out.

Research Methods

This study uses qualitative methods through descriptive language style by combining two models of data retrieval namely library research and field study.¹⁶ In Literature Research, researchers use several selected journals in which they contain criteria for the material to be discussed in the article. Most theoretical research is more inclined to use library research in data retrieval as a study material in research. This is because in some cases, relevant theories can be found in various literature which contain ideas of figures or experts who are believed to have adequate knowledge.

Results and Discussions

The tradition of tepuk Tepung Tawar which is often held during the general wedding reception is carried out by the Batak people in the village of Kampung pajak, North Labuhanbatu Regency as a form of preservation of traditions that are usually carried out by ancestors. This tradition is recorded as part of the local wisdom of the Batak community, especially for those who live in the North LabuhanBatu area. Local wisdom tap plain flour is usually done after the wedding ceremony and carried out simultaneously when carrying out the reception procession. Not only classified as ordinary local wisdom, the tradition

¹⁶ Abdul F Nasution, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Medan: Harfa Creative, 2023).

of white flour pat is also a ritual carried out to obtain blessings and prosperity for the bride and groom.

In the North Labuhan Batu community, the ritual usually begins by presenting a couple of brides who will serve as the object of the ritual. After the two Mempelai present, the committee and then prepare the tools and materials as a medium used during the ritual process of Pat plain flour. The tools and materials in the form of turmeric rice, white rice and beretih. After that, the three ingredients are sprinkled over the head and then the right and left shoulder of the bride.

In general, this tradition has been carried out for a long time by the ancestors of the North Labuhan Batu masyarakat which is then passed down from generation to generation. At first, the tradition of Tepuk Tepung Tawar was only carried out by ethnic Malays. However, along with the development of the times, this tradition is not only carried out by the Malay community but has been widely applied by people other than Malays such as ethnic, Batak and Javanese.

In North Labuhan Batu, tepung tawar has been applied by the Batak community since the last few decades. Almost every wedding reception held never miss tepung tawar before entering the fun event session. Technically, the original white flour tradition is only owned by the Malay community, but as the times develop, each ethnic group in the Labuhan Batu area begins to carry out white flour rituals in various types.

The Ritual of Tepuk Tepung Tawar in Traditional Batak Wedding in Kampung Pajak Village, North Labuhan Batu Regency

The wedding party is not crowded if it is not accompanied by the implementation of traditions and culture from each region where the event is held. Culture and traditions in marriage in Indonesia, especially in Batak society which is still thick with tradition and traditional culture usually prioritizes local culture handed down by the ancestors. At the wedding, each region has its own characteristics to fill the event with a variety of local wisdom that developed in the area. In the Batak and Malay communities in Labuhan Batu, North Sumatra,

the tradition carried out at the wedding reception is the ritual of Tepuk Tepung Tawar.

Tepung Tawaris a ritual process that is carried out to make a request to Allah SWT through the media provided traditionally prayer requests in the ritual are offered by asking for good things that will be obtained by the bride and groom in living the wedding days ahead. The prayers that are usually offered such as a request for safety, integrity and intimacy in building a household, are given good offspring and can continue together until death. Usually for the delivery of prayer sessions led by religious leaders who live in the area where the wedding ceremony. In the Batak community where nota ben is Muslim, the tepung tawar ritual is usually accompanied by the reading of marhaban performed by several people alternately. The reading of marhaban is done by holding an assembly to obtain a sacred moment.

In addition to the reading of marhaban, the next procession of tepung tawaris the reading of marriage advice which in this session was delivered by religious leaders and there were T leaders to give a piece of advice on marriage which will be applied in married life. The religious leaders referred to here is the Imam of the mosque or the Koran teacher who teaches religious knowledge in the village where the tepung tawar ritual is held. The advice given in general is a command to always take care of yourself such as always paying attention to attitude, speech, language, and always trying to do good and stay away from all kinds of vices, especially those that can damage harmony in the household. If after marriage both spouses will migrate, then it is advisable to always maintain the good name of themselves and their families and strive to always establish friendly relations with relatives who are still alive in order to facilitate the way of life of both.

Not only carried out at the wedding reception process, the white flour ritual was also widely applied to Celebration events such as circumcision, aqiqah, Thanksgiving and others who invited the local community to enliven the event. The ritual of tepung tawar when viewed from the historical perspective, it has long existed and was first carried out by Hindu people who inhabit the archipelago,

namely ancient North Sumatra. In ancient Hindu society, tepung tawar ritual process is carried out to expect blessings from the Holy God who is raised by The Hindu community by hoping to get a lot of good in life, always be on the path of Virtue and avoid all kinds of reinforcements, disasters and calamities that can occur at any time without being predictable to the naked eye. Time passed with a series of events that are in it shows at the present time, recorded very few Hindus who still inhabit the region of North Sumatra.

Over time, Islam began to spread to the region of North Sumatra, where this region is recorded as the oldest region in the archipelago visited by Muslims. The tradition of white flour gradually which originally contained typical Hindu rituals slowly turned to activities in which more prayers led to Islamic nuances. In modern times, the implementation of tepung tawar began to mix with Islamic music arts such as hadrah, tambourine, kompang or Nasyid music.

The Meaning of The Symbol of Communication Ritual Tepuk Tepung Tawar in Traditional Batak Wedding in Kampung Pajak Village, North Labuhan Batu Regency

Culture as a reflection of the character of a nation is certainly impossible if inamnya there are no philosophical values that explain the essential meaning of a culture. In the body of Batak society, almost every culture can be used as a medium to describe how the nature of the Batak people in general. Nilai-the value of norma contained in a culture can be studied through the symbols that are plastered in plain sight of a culture that is applied by a group of people. In the tradition of Batak people's fresh flour, there are several meanings presented through various symbols that exist when ritual traditions are in progress. This symbol then becomes the philosophical aspect of the tawar flour ritual which is rich in meaning when studied in more depth.

Here are some common meanings of the symbols in the flour ritual:

- a) **Spiritual cleansing:** plain flour is often used to spiritually cleanse a person or place of negative energy, sin, or bad influences. This symbol depicts purification and purification.

- b) **Reception of guests or people who come:** in some cultures, unsalted flour can be used as a welcome sign to guests or visitors who come to the house or a special occasion. It reflects friendliness and warmth.
- c) **Giving blessings:** white flour is often considered a symbol of blessing or grace. In some ceremonies, unsalted flour may be given to a person as a sign that they are receiving a blessing or protection from spiritual powers
- d) **Geometric symbols:** plain flour is often applied in the form of geometric symbols or certain patterns. For example, circles or triangles can be used to describe balance, harmony, or certain aspects of the universe.
- e) **Sacrifice and loyalty:** in some cultures, white flour can be used as a symbol of sacrifice and loyalty to certain gods or spiritual entities. The act of giving unsalted flour is a way of showing devotion and loyalty to religious beliefs.
- f) **Symbol of life and fertility:** in some ceremonies, unsalted flour can also symbolize life and fertility. For example, unsalted flour is often used in wedding ceremonies as a symbol for a new and abundant life.
- g) **Connection between the physical and Spiritual worlds:** unsalted flour is often used as a bridge or tool to connect the physical world with the spiritual world. This could involve communicating with deities or ancestral spirits, or honoring certain spiritual entities.
- h) **Symbol of an act of worship:** in many religions, plain flour is part of a larger act of worship or ritual. This symbol depicts obedience and devotion to religious teachings.

It is further understood that the meaning of the symbols in the white flour ritual can vary significantly between cultures, religions, and traditions. Therefore, to understand the deeper meaning of these symbols, it is important to examine the cultural and religious context in which the ritual is performed.

Islamic Communication Perspective On Plain Flour

In Islam, the tradition of tepung tawar or "salam-salaman" (greetings) also has certain meanings and values that reflect the principles of communication and Ethics in the religion. Here are some perspectives of Islamic communication on plain flour:

1. **Salam and politeness:** Salam is an act of greeting and salutation that is highly recommended in Islam. It reflects the values of courtesy and respect between individuals. In Islamic culture, greetings are a good way to start or end a meeting, as well as show politeness to fellow Muslims.
2. **Social relations:** the tradition of white flour also reflects the importance of maintaining good social relations in Islam. It is an opportunity to strengthen social ties, share happiness, and show compassion to fellow Muslims.
3. **Loyalty and trust: bargaining is an act that reflects loyalty and trust between individuals.** In Islam, establishing good relations with fellow Muslims and maintaining trust are highly valued values.
4. **Forgiveness and Reconciliation:** in some cases, unsalted flour can be used as a way to restore damaged relationships. It reflects the values of forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace taught in Islam.
5. **Good communication:** the plain flour tradition teaches the importance of good communication between individuals. In addition to giving greetings, this also includes speaking politely, listening well, and keeping a good word.
6. **Appreciation of simplicity:** unsalted flour is often done simply, using bare hands or using a small amount of flour. It reflects an appreciation for simplicity in Islam and emphasizes that sincere and heartfelt communication does not necessarily entail wealth or luxury.
7. **Appreciation of the solidarity of Muslims:** unsalted flour is an act that strengthens the sense of solidarity within Muslims. It reminds Muslims of their unity and togetherness in a common religious belief.

8. **Reminder of death and the hereafter:** in some contexts, plain flour can also serve as a reminder of death and the hereafter in Islam. It reflects the understanding that life in this world is temporary, and the afterlife is a more important final goal.

It is important to remember that these values may be applied differently in different Muslim cultures and communities, but in general, the tradition of white flour in Islam reflects affectionate, respectful and courteous communication between individuals. In Malay culture, the ritual tradition of tepung tawar displays more diverse aspects that are the main characteristics of the Malay masyarakat which is the original tribe of the Northern Sumatra as well as the oldest tribe in Indonesia. In Batak society, the ritual of tepung tawar leads to a culture that is usually the character of the Batak people such as respect for relatives and others.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the above research, it has been concluded as follows:

1. The tradition of tepuk tepung tawar held at the wedding reception is generally carried out by the Batak community in Kampung pajak village, north Labuhanbatu Regency as a form of preservation of traditions that are usually carried out by ancestors.
2. Tawar flour is a ritual process that is carried out to make a request to Allah SWT through the media provided traditionally prayer requests in rituals are offered by asking for good things that will be obtained by a couple in living the wedding days ahead.
3. In the tradition of tepuk tepung tawar Batak community, there are several meanings presented through several symbols that exist when the ritual tradition is underway, namely: a. spiritual cleansing, b. reception, c.

- blessings, d. geometric symbols, e. sacrifice and loyalty, f. symbol of life and fertility, g. the connection between the physical and spiritual worlds.
4. The tradition of patting in islam reflects affectionate, respectful, and polite communication between individuals

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