

STUDY OF ETNOBOTANY IN KUPATAN CULTURE IN THE COMMUNITY OF SEMLARAN VILLAGE, MALO DISTRICT, BOJONEGORO REGENCY

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Abstract

Kupatan is a religious tradition carried out to commemorate Islamic holidays. This tradition is a form of human culture interaction with plants that is included in the study of ethnobotany. This research is an exploratory descriptive with data collection methods in the form of semi-structured interviews and literature review. The results of this study are that the kupatan tradition contains religious values, including forgiving each other and covering the shame of others which is symbolized by lepet. The plants used in this tradition include coconut leaves, rice, and sticky rice. Janur has a meaning as conscience, rice describes human lust, and sticky rice symbolizes the closeness of brotherhood. The procession begins with an opening by religious leaders and ends with eating ketupat together.

Keywords: Ethnobotany, Plant, Kupatan

Abstrak

Kupatan adalah tradisi keagamaan yang dilakukan untuk memperingati hari besar Islam. Tradisi ini merupakan salah satu bentuk interaksi manusia dengan tumbuhan yang mana termasuk pada kajian ilmu Etnobotani. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif eksploratif dengan metode pengumpulan data berupa wawancara semi terstruktur dan kajian pustaka. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah dalam tradisi kupatan mengandung nilai-nilai keagamaan, di antaranya saling memaafkan serta menutup aib orang lain yang dilambangkan dengan lepet. Tanaman yang digunakan dalam tradisi ini antara lain janur, beras, dan ketan. Janur memiliki makna sebagai hati nurani, beras menggambarkan hawa nafsu manusia, dan ketan melambangkan eratnya persaudaraan. Prosesi diawali dengan pembukaan oleh pemuka agama dan diakhiri dengan makan ketupat bersama.

Kata kunci: Etnobotani, Tumbuhan, Kupatan

Introduction

Indonesia is a country that has ethnic and cultural diversity. There are hundreds of tribes in the Indonesian nation, where these tribes have their own language and identity which is certainly different and has its own uniqueness. The existence of this diversity will certainly give birth to a culture that is in accordance with the characteristics of the tribe or in the area. Culture itself is a theological result which then becomes an individual habit and naturally becomes a community habit, or it can also be said that culture is positive and negative habits in a society which later becomes culture. Culture can also be interpreted as human interaction in responding to challenges in life which leads to the production of a habit in society. These habits will make a tradition that is passed down from generation to generation (Syatar et al., 2020).

Tradition according to language is a habit that develops in society, either it becomes a custom or is assimilated by traditional or religious rituals. In another sense, tradition is

something that has been done for a long time and has become part of the life of a community group (Marhani, 2018). As a cultural system, tradition is a comprehensive system consisting of ways, aspects, and giving meaning to ritual speech behavior (Redi Aryanta, 2019). Not a few traditions carried out by the community using plant elements in it. One of them is the kupatan tradition. Kupatan is a religious tradition carried out to commemorate Islamic holidays. This tradition involves the community in a joint effort to obtain safety and peace. The kupatan tradition is a form of human interaction with plants which is included in the study of the branch of ethnobotany. Ethnobotany studies how certain ethnic groups or tribes use plants in their lives (Elfrida et al., 2017). Ethnobotany is related to the traditional knowledge of a community group regarding biodiversity, conservation, and culture (Helmina & Hidayah, 2021).

Kupatan culture has long existed in Java and in some areas. This tradition is still preserved by the community until now, one of which is the community of Semlaran Village, Malo District, Bojonegoro Regency. This kupatan tradition is carried out one week after Eid al-Fitr.

In the kupatan tradition, several types of plants are used. So that in its implementation, there is an interaction between humans and plants. Because there is an interaction between the two, it is necessary to study ethnobotany in the kupatan tradition. This is also a novelty in this study, where previously there had been no research examining the application of ethnobotany in Kupatan culture.

Method

This research was conducted in Semlaran Village, Malo District, Bojonegoro Regency. The study was conducted in April 2022.

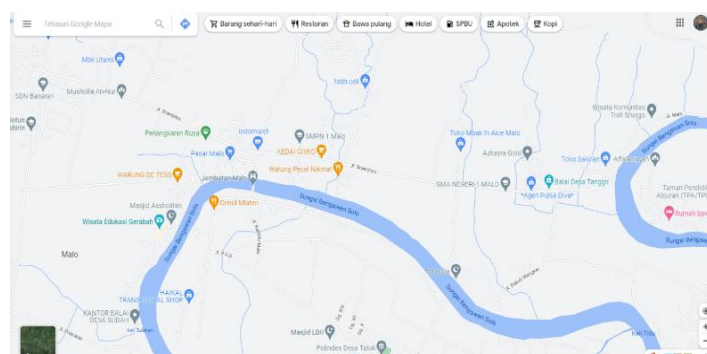


Figure 1. Google map of Semlaran Village, Malo District, Bojonegoro Regency

This type of research uses exploratory descriptive. While the method used is a semi-structured interview method. Data collection was carried out by interviewing a number of respondents, namely the Semlaran village community. In addition, the collection is also done by means of a literature review. Data analysis in this study used a qualitative descriptive analysis technique. This analysis is a content analysis based on respondents' knowledge data. Respondents who are determined include religious leaders and village communities who know about ethnobotany in Kupatan culture. Qualitative data was obtained from the results of community interviews to find out the types of plants, the purpose of using certain types of plants, and how to use the plants used as ingredients for making kupa and lepet, as well as the traditional kupatan procession. Furthermore, data sourced from respondents' answers are tabulated and grouped which is then analyzed descriptively according to its designation.

Result and Discussion

The Meaning of Kupatan Cultural Traditions

Kupatan culture contains meanings related to religious values carried out by the people of Semlaran Village. Based on the results of an interview with one of the religious leaders in Semlaran Village, the greatest meaning in this kupatan culture is to forgive each other. Kupatan itself comes from the Javanese language, namely *kupat*, which means admitting *lepat* which if translated into Indonesian is admitting a mistake. This is a symbolic form of the culture of the Semlaran Village community who forgive each other and are usually practiced by shaking hands. The handshake activity is a form of application of *ngaku lepat* which teaches the importance of respecting parents, being humble, asking for sincerity and forgiveness from others (Subagia, 2019).

Kupat also has another meaning, namely behavior *papat*. This *papat* behavior is defined as four actions which include *Eid*, *overburden*, *leburan*, and *laburan*. *Eid* means the end of the month of Ramadan or the month of fasting. *Luburan* means overflow or abundance of sustenance, so that people are invited to give alms, especially to the poor. One of them is to pay *zakat*. *Melted* means melted. The meaning of the melting is that sins and mistakes will melt away through the intermediary forgiving each other. As for *Laburan*, it means Labour. Labour itself is defined as lime which is commonly used as an ingredient for water purification and wall whitening (Utomo & Novakarti, 2021). The meaning of this pumpkin is so that everyone can maintain their own purity both physically and mentally (Arif & Melki, 2019).

Another meaning of *kupatan* is covering the disgrace of others. Keeping this disgrace is symbolized by *lepet*. When celebrating this *kupatan* culture, the people who are gathered must take care of the shame of others, because their arrival to join the celebration of the *kupatan* tradition is to forgive each other, not to expose each other to disgrace.

Ethnobotany in Kupatan Cultural Traditions

Ethnobotany is the study of botany related to community groups (Supriyati, Eka & Adhilatur, 2017). In this study, an ethnobotanical study was conducted to find out what plants are in the *kupatan* tradition. Based on the results of an interview with one of the people of Semlaran Village, the plants used in the *kupatan* tradition include *janur* (young coconut leaves), rice, and also sticky rice.

Young coconut leaves or so-called *janur* are used as a wrapper for *ketupat*. *Ketupat* is made from soaked rice, then wrapped in a sheath made of coconut leaves which are woven in a rectangular (diagonal) shape and then boiled. According to Subagia, (2019), the word *janur* comes from Arabic, namely *ja'a nur*, which means a bright light has come. *Janur* that wraps the *ketupat* holds the meaning that humans always expect the arrival of the light of guidance from Allah swt. It is hoped that humans will receive guidance and guidance so that they are on the path that is pleasing to Allah. *Janur* or young coconut wrapped in *ketupat* has the following classification:

Kingdom : *Plantae*
 Division : *Magnoliophyta*
 Class : *Liliopsida*
 Order : *Arecales*
 Family : *Arecaceae*
 Genus : *Cocos*
 Species : *Cocos nucifera* L (Suhardiyono, 1997).

While the classification of rice that is the stuffing of *ketupat* is:

Kingdom : *Plantae*
 Division : *Magnoliophyta*
 Class : *Liliopsida*
 Order : *Poales*

Family : *Gramineae (Poaceae)*
 Genus : *Oryza*
 Species : *Oryza sativa* L.

Janur in this kupatan is also interpreted as conscience, which comes from the length of janur, namely jatining nur. While rice describes human lust. Therefore, the community interprets ketupat as a symbol of human lust wrapped in a conscience. This is intended to be a reminder for humans to admit all mistakes and forgive each other. Then the white color of the content of the ketupat that is visible when it is split also symbolizes the purity of the heart after we apologize for mistakes made to others.

In addition to ketupat, in the kupatan tradition there is also a food called lepet. Lepet is a food made from sticky rice and also wrapped in coconut leaves. The sticky rice used has the following classification:

Kingdom : *Plantae*
 Division : *Spermatophyta*
 Sub division : *Angiosperms*
 Class : *Monocotyledoneae*
 Order : *Poales*
 Family : *Gramineae (Poaceae)*
 Genus : *Oryza*
 Species : *Oryza sativa* L. *var glutinosa*

Lepet by the people of Semlaran Village is interpreted as "monggo dipun silep ingkang rapet" which in Indonesian is interpreted as let's close the meeting. That is, after admitting to being wrong (lepat), then the other party just needs to forgive without bringing it up again so that there is no estrangement in the brotherhood. The use of sticky rice as an ingredient for making lepet symbolizes the closeness of brotherhood because of its sticky nature (Werdianingsih, 2022).

Methods of Making Ketupat and Lepet

Ketupat and lepet are foods in the kupatan tradition which are both wrapped in coconut leaves or young coconut leaves. Usually these leaves have a yellowish color. Janur is used as a wrapper for ketupat and lepet because of its flexibility so that it is easy to shape. There are various forms of woven ketupat, namely triangles, ketupat, and rhombuses (Rahmadi et al., 2019). However, in Semlaran Village, the majority of ketupat made in the Kupatan tradition are in the form of a rhombus.

The leaves used to wrap rice in making ketupat must be woven first. Before weaving, the leaves must be washed and separated from the sticks (leaves). A clean leaf is rolled three times in the left hand with the base of the leaf facing up. Then the other strand is rolled three times in the right hand in the opposite position, namely the base of the coconut palm down. The two reverse rolls are inserted for weaving. Weaving is done alternately. The ends of the right and left are bent and inserted into the frame to form a frame. The tip of the leaf is turned back and inserted into the leaf in the middle. Both ends of the leaves are woven to the bottom. After the framework is finished, it can be trimmed by pulling the ends to form a rhombus. Once neat, the woven coconut leaves can be used to wrap the rice so that it becomes a ketupat.

After making the woven ketupat, the next step is filling the rice on the mat. Rice to be used must be washed clean to avoid dirt or germs. Clean rice is inserted into the woven ketupat as much as one to two thirds of the volume of the woven. The rice stuffed into the rhombus should not be too little or too much. This is because too much rice will make the ketupat hard, while too little will make the ketupat too soft (Rianti et al., 2018). Janur which already contains rice is then boiled. Based on the results of the interview, the boiling process was carried out for approximately five hours. Because boiling takes a long time, the people of Semlaran Village choose to boil it on a traditional wood-fired stove. The cooked ketupat is then doused

with clean water to remove the mucus produced when boiling it, then drained by hanging it. When finished, the ketupat is ready to be consumed.

In addition to wrapping ketupat, the people of Semlaran Village also use coconut leaves to wrap lepet. In contrast to ketupat, making lepet is considered an easier and faster process. The leaves used only need to be washed clean without having to be separated from the sticks and also woven. The contents of the lepet are sticky rice. The sticky rice is washed and soaked for 30 minutes. After soaking, the sticky rice is drained and then mixed with grated coconut and salt (Werdianingsih, 2022). Then after everything is mixed, the sticky rice is inserted into the windings. The windings of the leaves are completely filled. Lepet is boiled in boiling water for two hours. Like ketupat, lepet is also hung after it is cooked so it doesn't stick to the wrapper.

The Kupatan Cultural Tradition Procession of the Semlaran Community

The people of Semlaran Village carry out a traditional kupatan celebration on the 7th day after Eid al-Fitr in the month of Shawwal. This tradition is carried out for the manifestation of gratitude after fasting for one full month of Ramadan as well as sunnah fasting in the month of Shawwal (Yuhana, 2016). Places to celebrate the Kupatan tradition include places of worship such as mosques and prayer rooms, because they are easily accessible places and as a gathering place for the Semlaran Village community. The implementation of the Kupatan tradition is followed by the Semlaran Village community of various ages, ranging from children, teenagers, to adults. This shows that since the age of children, the kupatan tradition which is held every year has been introduced so that it will remain entrenched.

The kupatan tradition is carried out after dawn by bringing ketupat, lepet, and chicken opor as a complement. The initial event was preceded by an opening by religious leaders followed by praying together. After the prayer was carried out, continued with the exchange of ketupat. This is done so that people do not bring back the ketupat that was brought. After that, the event ended with eating ketupat which was served with chicken opor. The remaining ketupat and lepet that have not been eaten are brought home by residents who are present in the tradition.

Conclusion

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that Kupatan culture contains religious values. The biggest meaning in this kupatan culture is to forgive each other and cover the shame of others. In this kupatan tradition, ethnobotanical studies are used in the form of coconut leaves as a ketupat wrapper which has its own Javanese meaning. Janur in this kupatan is interpreted as conscience, which comes from the length of janur, namely jatining nur. The kupatan tradition is preceded by an opening by religious leaders and then the exchange of ketupat. After that the event ended with eating ketupat together.

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