



PASAHAT DEMBAN IN BATAK TOBA COMMUNITY

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan pementasan, makna, fungsi, dan kearifan lokal tradisi *Pasahat demban*, tradisi masyarakat Batak Toba yang mengantarkan sirih dalam acara adat khusus. Teori kearifan lokal digunakan untuk menjelaskan permasalahan dalam tulisan ini. Metode yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif dari Matthew B. Miles. Hasil dari makalah ini adalah diskusi peserta dan nilai-nilai mereka, seperti kinerja. Selain itu, hasil tulisan ini membahas tentang makna dan fungsi *Pasahat demban* serta nilai kearifan yang dihadirkan dalam tradisi *Pasahat demban*.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain the performance, meaning, function, and local wisdom of the *Pasahat demban* tradition, the tradition of Batak Toba community, which deliver a set of betel in a special traditional event. The local wisdom theory is used to explain the problem in this paper. The method used is the qualitative descriptive method of Matthew B. Miles. The outcome of this paper is a discussion of participants and their values, such as performance. In addition, the results of this paper discuss the meaning and function of *Pasahat demban* and the wisdom value presented in the tradition of the *Pasahat demban*.

KATA KUNCI

Pasahat demban;
Batak Toba;
Kearifan lokal.

KEYWORDS

Pasahat demban;
Batak Toba;
Local wisdom.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a very wealthy country. This wealth is found in nature and tradition. Deep-rooted traditions will be the source of Indonesian character. In its simplest sense, a tradition or custom has existed for a long time and has generally been a part of the lives of a group of people from the same country, culture, time, or religion. Fundamental to tradition is the existence of information passed down from generation to generation, both in written and oral form because without this, tradition can disappear.

The role of oral tradition is a source of local wisdom and the role of cultural values and norms in overcoming social problems experienced by communities. This role also transmits local knowledge, information, cultural values, and cultural norms from one generation to another through an oral medium with particular patterns, formulas, and structures that differ from everyday language or communication.

The Batak Toba tribe is one of the tribes in Indonesia which still has strong traditions. One of them is *Pasahat Demban* tradition. *Pasahat Demban* is a tradition of delivering a set of betel performed on certain traditional occasions. Among the people, the areas inhabited by most of Batak Toba people still preserve the old traditions passed down to them.

Lusius Sinurat (2015) explains that "*mardemban*" is the consumption/chewing of demban (betel nut) mixed in proportions with areca nuts, limestone paste, gambier and tobacco. He also explained that the *demban* (betel nut)

tradition of the Toba Batak community of Samosir includes the four local wisdoms: the wisdom of mutual cooperation, the wisdom of unity, the wisdom of gratitude, and the wisdom of courtesy.

The topic "*Mardemban (Mardunbari)*" explains that *mardemban (mardaunbari)* consists of *demban* (betel leaf), *pining* (betel nut), *khapur* (limestone paste), gambier, *timbaho* (tobacco fiber). It is made with the right composition so that there will be no injuries or irritation of the mouth. The composition usually consists of 2 pieces of betel leaf - 2 pieces of gambier - 4 pieces of pine (areca nut) - limestone paste, and tobacco (Lusius Sinurat, 2015).

Sibarani (2004), oral tradition is a noble activity of the past, relevant to the present situation, and must be handed down in the future to prepare the future for future generations. Therefore, as cultural traditions, we should strive to scientifically investigate, explain and interpret the cultural heritage of our ancestors in the past (Lubis, 2019).

Oral traditions are characterized by (1) partly verbal and nonverbal oral habits, (2) events or actions as context, (3) observability and observation, (4) tradition, (5) being passed down from generation to generation, and passed down from generation to generation. (6) a process of transmission using oral media or word of mouth, (7) having versions or variations, (8) containing cultural values, (9) a source of cultural industry, and (10) jointly owned by a particular community (Sibarani, 2015; Lubis et al., 2022).

Tradition has three characteristics. First, tradition is a habit (knowledge) as well as a process of activity shared by the community. This understanding means that traditions have the meaning of continuity (stability), material, custom and verbal expression as common attributes transmitted for practice in specific groups of communities. We build community groups by strengthening our values and beliefs. When there is a process of preserving a tradition, it is when that tradition creates and reinforces a collective identity. Third, tradition is what a group knows and recognizes as its own tradition.

A disadvantage of participating in traditions to create and reaffirm identities is that the tradition itself must be recognized and acknowledged as meaningful by the group. As long as community groups claim and engage in this tradition as their own, they can share values and beliefs that are important to them (Lubis, 2016).

Tradition is a habit that develops in a good society, becomes a custom, or assimilates into a traditional or religious rite. Tradition also includes a variety of issues related to the way of life and lifestyle of the community to which it belongs. Examples: local wisdom, value systems, traditional knowledge, history, law, medicine, belief systems, arts, and traditional rituals such as marriage customs belonging to indigenous communities (Zulkarnain et al., 2021; Shaumiwati et al., 2020).

The *Pasahat Demban* tradition of "delivering betel" is a traditional activity in the Batak community, by conveying something with a series of *demban* consisting of betel leaves in a plate containing various components such as *hapur* (limestone paste), areca nut, gambier and tobacco leaves, money and additional others depending on the needs of the traditional activities being carried out.

In several villages of the Batak Community, the *Pasahat Demban* tradition of "betel nut delivery" is common and still practiced by the community members. However, not all community members are interested in carrying out this tradition, and only a few keep it because the cultural values of *Pasahat Demban* have been undermined. This tradition is usually rare in urban areas but is generally adopted by the Batak community.

METHODS

The research methodology used is a qualitative methodology using an interactive model by Miles et al. (2014). Use this method to describe and analyze research findings focusing on traditional, cultural, and social domains. The data sources



for this study are library studies and field studies (Lubis et al., 2018). The data was pulled from a variety of library data and traditions and interviews with experts, then technically analyzed and processed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This article describes a study on the *Pasahat Demban* tradition of “delivering betel nut” in the Batak Toba community, which includes various things, including weddings, death, and entering a new home.

Performances of Wedding Ceremony

1. *Mangalakkai*

In the Batak Toba community, if someone is going to get married before his/her older brother or sister gets married, he has to deliver a set of demban, called a *demban tiar*. It symbolizes asking for permission and blessing so that he can get married first. The older brother or sister has the right to permit the marriage. However, this is rarely criticized because the *demban tiar* that has been dedicated has the meaning of prayer for the older brother or sister may quickly find a mate and marry.

During the offering of the *demban tiar*, the younger brother should show the humility of sincere supplication by bowing down to his older brother or sister. In Batak Toba culture, begging with betel nut is more valuable and respectful than with or without betel nut (Abus et al., 2021).

2. *Manulangi Tulang*

Manulangi Tulang is one batak tradition for a nephew who had been a grown up to ask his uncle permission for getting married. If in that time, the uncle has daughter, then the daughter is the *pariban* of that nephew. Then, the uncle will offer his daughter to be the nephew's wife. In Batak Toba tradition, Uncle's daughter and the nephew have the same right in marrying each other. Therefore, if this nephew wants to get married, he needs to ask for permission from his uncle.

The meaning of *Manulangi tulang* is to show respect and obtain permission from the uncle for marriage, whether it is with the uncle's daughter or with other girl. If the nephew wants to marry another girl, he has to deliver *demban tiar* when doing the tradition of *manulangi tulang* and also bring his future wife to be approved. *Demban tiar* which the nephew needs to deliver is only consisted of betel leaf, limestone paste and areca nut, without gambier and tobacco.

3. *Marhata Sinamot*

Sinamot is money given or prepared by a man's family to give to a woman's family, which is usually used by the woman's family for wedding banquets. *Pinggane panungkunan* is usually prepared as the medium and symbol to start a customary conversation of *sinamot*. *Pinggane panungkunan* is a plate which is filled with rice, betel leaf, tango-tanggo (a piece of meat), and money. Each element in the plate has its meaning, such as: a) rice has the meaning of prosperity, b) Demban means success, c) Tango-tanggo (a piece of meat) means the blessings of food (Abus, Lubis, Saputra, et al., 2022).

Performances of Death Ceremony

1. *Manutup Batang*

In the past, in the Batak Toba community, especially in Sumbul Pegagan, when a parent died, a ceremony was held to put the *demban tiar* in a coffin before burial with material elements. And the husband's or wife's family, children, and all close relatives of the deceased parent provide *demban*. *Demban* is a sign of farewell to the dead, as there is already a distance and is in a different dimension. The deceased is believed to have been reconciled to the gods. And the bereaved are healthy in every way.

2. *Jiarah* (Pilgrimage)

During the pilgrimage, the Batak Toba people still provide betel nuts and place them in the tomb. They suggest that giving betel nut to the deceased always protects the deceased's family and pray that the gods accept the deceased.

3. *Mangongkal Holi*

Mangongkal Holi is one of the traditional rituals of the Batak Toba tribe. *Mangongkal* means to dig, and *holi* means bones, so it means to dig up bones. This ceremony is necessary for Batak Toba community, as it is a tribute to parents or ancestors by raising bones above the ground, such as hill. This funeral will not apply to everyone, but to the dead whose *tondi* spirit will be worshiped as the souls of their ancestors. Before placing the parent's bones in a pond or tombstone, all families hold the betel straight with their palms and bow. It means honoring your ancestors (Abus, Lubis, & Abus, 2022).

Performances of Birth Ceremony

1. *Partus Tu Sibaso* (giving birth with the help of *sibaso*)

In Batak Toba society, a *sibaso* or female shaman helps mothers give birth, and the mother who wants to give birth must give a *demban tiar* with money in return for the *sibaso* before giving birth. *Demban tiar* is given by the mother who gives birth and her husband.

2. *Martutu Aek*

For birth, there is a term known as *martutu aek*. In the past, a 7-day-old baby was taken to an *ulu pungan* or priest to be baptized or given a name. That ceremony is called *martutu aek*. Before going to *ulu pungan*, families bring betel nut or *demban* called *demban saur*. *Demban saur* is served in a cup with a little water, and there are also cups with pansy or kaffir lime and water.

3. Mamangkas Bere

When the first child is born, several months old, the child's parents take the child to the uncle's house to have the child's hair cut, and the mother carries the *demban saur* to the uncle. The community sees *Demban* as a symbol of respect and a way to bring them closer to *Ompung Mula Jadi Nabolon*/Almighty God to pray and follow all customs.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study explain the staging, meaning, function, and local wisdom of the *Pasahat demban* tradition, a tradition of the Toba Batak people who deliver betel leaves in special traditional events.



The result is a discussion of participants and their values, such as performance. Apart from that, the results of this paper discuss the meaning and function of *Pasahat Demban* and the value of wisdom presented in the *Pasahat Demban* tradition.

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