

## ***RUWAH EID TRADITION (STUDY OF LOCAL WISDOM AS A STRATEGY FOR UNIFYING MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES IN WEST BANGKA)***

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b> Received: January 02, 2025 Accepted: June 10, 2025 Published: June 27, 2025</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Tradition; Local Wisdom; Multicultural Societies</p> <p><b>Corresponding Author:</b> <b>Tiara Ramadhani</b> Email: <i>Tiaramadhani30@yahoo.co.id</i></p>	<p>One of the traditions in Bangka Belitung that is still carried out and preserved is the ruwahan tradition, which is celebrated once a year, approaching the month of Ramadan. This study is interesting considering there have been many shifts in traditions and cultures in society in the modern era. However, the ruwahan tradition is still carried out and preserved by the community by upholding local wisdom. This ruwahan tradition is carried out by older people, but teenagers and children also enliven this tradition. Another uniqueness of this ruwahan tradition is that it can bring people from various regions together to socialize and enliven it. The excitement of the Ruwahan tradition exceeds the traditions of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. This study chose the locus in West Bangka Regency because the tradition is still preserved and carried out. Many people flock to West Bangka to enliven the ruwahan tradition. The data collection techniques that researchers will use are interviews, observations, and documentation, with the research subjects being the local community, community leaders, traditional leaders, and people outside the local community of West Bangka Regency.</p>

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tradition is knowledge obtained by people from their ancestors, used as teaching material, and implemented to this day. Tradition is also part of culture, a phenomenon that fulfills human needs. Culture is usually born from habits, which make someone live an orderly life and become the basis for relationships between certain people.

A society will continue implementing and maintaining existing traditions because of its predecessors, because habits that have existed for a long time and were carried out by predecessors will continue to be followed. People feel afraid that these traditions are not being maintained or carried out. This tradition of remembering ancestors is a cultural product that provides guidance or role models and is interesting for anyone to live by.

The Bangka Belitung Islands Province is an area famous for its Malay tribe. Many traditions and customs are currently characteristic of the people of Bangka Belitung. The West Bangka region itself is divided into many areas with their traditions and customs, consisting of the Prophet's birthday, ruwahan, cerek nerang, dusun bujang, torch parade, Qur'an prayer, rebut prayer, and many other traditions that are still carried out by the community. The community carries out these traditions annually to maintain and preserve the traditions carried out by their

predecessors.

One of the traditions in Bangka Belitung that is still carried out and preserved is the ruwahan tradition, which is celebrated once a year when the month of Ramadan approaches. Local people carry out the Ruwahan tradition in the month of Ruwah or Syakban, namely before Ramadhan, residents come to the mosque or prayer room to pray together for family members and relatives who have died. Residents come to the mosque or prayer room bringing food, including ketupat and side dishes, to eat together after the group prayer event. In the Ruwahan tradition, local people who celebrate also provide food and drinks, such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, where anyone can come to stay in touch.

In a society, cultural values function as a system of behavior and guidelines for human behavior, such as customary law, rules of courtesy, and customs. So, everyday life will influence human behavior and actions in a society with a culture that dominates interaction patterns. So, a study of tradition as a community culture cannot be separated from the community as the supporter of the tradition and the cultural patterns that apply in the supporting community.

The supporting communities for this tradition are local communities (indigenous communities) and immigrant communities who live in the village. It is a tradition that is no longer carried out by the local community, but is a tradition of all elements of society in the town. Even though there is no obligation for the immigrant community to carry out this tradition, because they have become part of the local community and respect the traditions that have been carried out for generations, the ruwahan tradition has become a tradition that the community must carry out.

This study is interesting to carry out, considering there have been many shifts in tradition and culture in society in the modern era. However, the ruwahan tradition is still implemented and preserved by the community by upholding local wisdom. This ruwahan tradition is carried out by older people, but teenagers and children also enliven this tradition. Another unique thing about this ruwahan tradition is that it can unite people from various regions, so they can stay in touch and enliven it. The excitement of the Ruwahan tradition exceeds that of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. It shows whether the ruwahan tradition can be a unifying strategy for a multicultural society in West Bangka. This phenomenon is interesting to study, amidst the multicultural society of Bangka Belitung.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a type of exploratory descriptive research with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research aims to describe the nature of something that occurs when the research is carried out and examine the causes of specific symptoms. Exploratory descriptive research seeks to describe the state of a phenomenon, and to produce generalizations derived from an inductive process about the group, process, activity, or situation being studied (Mudjiyanto, 2018;). This research is described in an exploratory manner with the logic of generalization, namely, whether the Ruwahan Tradition, which is local wisdom, can be a unifying strategy for a multicultural society in West Bangka Regency.

The type of data used by researchers in this research is qualitative data. Qualitative data can only be measured indirectly, usually in verbal words rather than numbers (Jang, 2015). What is included in the qualitative data in this research is a general description of the research object, including a general description of the ruwahan tradition and an explanation of the ruwahan tradition carried out by the community in West Bangka Regency. The data collection techniques that the researcher will use are interviews, observation, and documentation, with the

research subjects being local people who carry out the ruwahan tradition, local community shops, local traditional leaders, and people outside the local community. The collected data will be analyzed according to a qualitative approach, where three lines of analysis activities will be carried out simultaneously and flexibly, namely data reduction, data presentation, analysis, and concluding/verification (Miles and Huberman, 2014).

Qualitative research is identified with the role of humans as instruments. Researchers play a role in observing existing data sources. The appropriate research instrument is humans because humans are tools that can interact with informants or other objects, or it can be said that only humans can understand the reality in the field. The instruments referred to in this case are questionnaires, interview instruments, observation sheets, and others that researchers use to collect data. (Moleong, 2011). In this regard, what is used as an indicator parameter for analysis in the ruwahan tradition as a study of local wisdom is: the type of tradition, the function of tradition, and the concept of tradition as local wisdom.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study aims to describe the ruwahan tradition: a study of local wisdom as a unifying strategy for multicultural communities in West Bangka Regency by using the parameters of analysis indicators in the ruwahan tradition as a study of local wisdom, namely: types of traditions, functions of traditions, and concepts of traditions as local wisdom.

Technically, the word tradition has a hidden meaning regarding the relationship between the past and the present. It refers to something inherited from the past that still exists and functions in the present. This tradition shows how members of a society behave both in secular life and in the supernatural or religious. The word ruwah comes from Arabic, namely arwah, and then changed to ruwahan. Ruwahan intends to pray and do dhikr together, and then the reward is sent to people who have died. Ruwahan is done collectively; sometimes a family does ruwahan, but nowadays people do ruwahan collectively so that citizens or communities who want to participate in the event can do so. This ruwahan tradition must be preserved because it contains many good values for life together in society. The meaning of ruwahan is a good tradition in that there is tahlilan, alms, praying together, and socializing. The ruwahan tradition carried out by the Community in West Bangka Regency, which is still preserved from generation to generation without changing the meaning and essence of the tradition, basically functions as a symbol of collective identity that attracts and strengthens the loyalty of a group, uniting members of the community in the area.

The Ruwah tradition in Bangka Belitung has become a cultural tradition. This Ruwah is celebrated to mark the arrival of the holy month of Ramadan. Ruwah is celebrated in the middle of the month of Syaban. In the Ruwah tradition, people usually make pilgrimages and clean the graves of their respective families. In certain areas in Bangka Belitung, the Ruwah event is as lively as Eid. People gather at the graves and make pilgrimages to the graves together. Because not all areas maintain this tradition, they communicate with their neighbors and prepare dishes and food to welcome guests (usually those from outside the area).

The Ruwah tradition is routinely carried out by the community once a year, which begins with cleaning family graves, such as pulling out grass that grows, so that it is clean and does not damage the graves. After cleaning the graves, it usually continues with praying for dead ancestors. Local wisdom in the Ruwahan Tradition. Local wisdom in the Ruwahan tradition can be seen from the following aspects:

- a) Spiritual and Social Values
- b) Preservation of Culture and Identity
- c) Respect for Nature and Life
- d) Cultural Acculturation
- e) Respect for History and Ancestors

### **Lebaran Ruwah Tradition (Local Wisdom Study as a Strategy to Unite a Multicultural Society in West Bangka Regency)**

#### **1. The Meaning of Lebaran Ruwah as Local Wisdom**

Local wisdom in Lebaran Ruwah can be seen from how this tradition generally strengthens family ties, neighbors, and society. Through togetherness in carrying out rituals, society not only interacts socially, but also shares spiritual meanings.

#### **2. As a Strategy to Unite Society**

The Lebaran Ruwah tradition is also often a gathering place for extended families who have not met for a long time. This moment is used to renew relationships between family members and maintain harmony in social life, thereby reducing conflict and increasing social cohesion.

#### **3. Spiritual Values and Relationship with Nature**

This tradition also reflects the harmony between humans and nature. Pilgrimage activities include cleaning ancestral graves, cleaning the cemetery environment, giving food alms, showing gratitude and respect for ancestors, and maintaining a good relationship with nature.

#### **4. Shifting Values and Challenges of Modernization**

The Lebaran Ruwah tradition may have changed in the modern context due to globalization, urbanization, and contemporary lifestyles. However, as local wisdom, this tradition is a protective fortress that maintains local cultural identity amidst change.

#### **5. The Role of Tradition in Resolving Social Conflict**

The Lebaran Ruwah tradition functions as a mechanism for social reconciliation, where differences, conflicts, or societal tensions can be reduced through cooperation and togetherness. Joint activities, such as prayer and almsgiving, create a space for informal yet effective social dialogue in uniting different groups. This tradition can also strengthen community identity, creating a strong sense of belonging and making people feel part of a greater unity.

#### **6. Regional Context and Diversity**

Lebaran Ruwah has variations in practice in various regions, but maintaining unity amidst diversity and its essence as a means of uniting society remains strong. This tradition shows how local wisdom can adapt to diverse cultures and religions in Indonesia, thus becoming a real example of the diversity in Indonesian society. This tradition shows how local wisdom plays an essential role as a bridge between local culture and religion.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Lebaran Ruwah tradition, which functions as a strategy to unite society, can be seen from several aspects. Lebaran Ruwah, a tradition carried out during Sya'ban (Ruwah), has strong cultural and spiritual values, especially in Javanese society. This tradition is usually marked by village cleaning activities, nyadran (grave pilgrimage), joint prayers, and kenduri (celebration). This tradition reflects respect for ancestors and strengthens community members'

social ties through cooperation and togetherness activities. In the context of local wisdom, Lebaran Ruwah contains values of solidarity, togetherness, and respect for customs and culture passed down from generation to generation. As a strategy to unite society, Lebaran Ruwah has an essential role in maintaining social harmony amidst diversity. This tradition can unite various elements of society across ages, social status, and religious backgrounds, creating a sense of mutual respect and togetherness. In the dynamics of globalization and modernization, preserving traditions like this is key to maintaining local identity and a tool to strengthen social integration. Lebaran Ruwah shows that local wisdom can bridge diverse communities and maintain harmony when living together.

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