

## Understanding Culture, Da'Wah Appeal, and Social Implications: An Insight into The Sahur-Sahur Tradition in Mempawah, West Kalimantan

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### Abstract

This study highlights the sahur-sahur tradition in Mempawah, which serves not only as a form of cultural heritage. The study aims to explore the sahur-sahur tradition beyond its understanding of culture, examining its appeal in da'wah and its positive implications on the social environment. Conducted through a descriptive-exploratory approach supported by oral history, the study gathers data from literature reviews, observations, and in-depth interviews with key figures, including custodian of the Amantubillah Palace, religious leaders, community figures, and administrators of Galaherang Kreasindo in Mempawah. The findings reveal that the sahur-sahur tradition encompasses religious, communal, and cultural dimensions, creating a rich cultural heritage. This tradition also carries a unique da'wah appeal, having evolved into a sahur festival that features diverse activities, such as sermons, religious studies, and artistic performances. Its social implications are evident in fostering community solidarity, promoting cultural tourism and stimulating creativity.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyoroti tradisi sahur-sahur di Mempawah yang tidak hanya sekedar sebatas praktik ritual keagamaan, tetapi juga sebagai warisan budaya. Dari sini, penelitian ini bertujuan mengungkap persoalan tradisi sahur-sahur yang tidak hanya membahas seputar pemaknaan budaya yang ada di dalamnya, tetapi juga pesona dakwah dan dampak positifnya dalam lingkungan sosial. Penelitian ini diulas secara deskriptif eksploratif yang dibantu oleh sejarah lisan (oral history) dengan mengumpulkan data dari literatur review, observasi, dan wawancara mendalam dengan lisan asli (the origin oral interview) kepada Tokoh Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah, Tokoh Agama, Tokoh Masyarakat, dan Pengurus Galaherang Kreasindo di Mempawah. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tradisi sahur-sahur memuat dimensi keagamaan, kebersamaan, dan kebudayaan serta menciptakan warisan budaya yang ekspresif. Tradisi ini memuat pesona dakwah tersendiri karena bergeser menjadi festival sahur yang di dalamnya terdapat beragam kegiatan dari ceramah, pengajian, dan pertunjukan seni. Implikasi sosialnya meningkatkan solidaritas masyarakat, pengembangan pariwisata budaya, dan stimulan kreativitas.

### Keywords

Cultural; Appeal; Social Implications; sahur-sahur Tradition; Mempawah

### Introduction

The relationship between Islam and traditions in Indonesia has led to a rich variety of acculturated expressions. This is due to Islam's alignment with local cultural values and its openness to indigenous



practices.<sup>1</sup> Through this receptivity, Islam has developed diverse expressions that infuse local customs with Islamic characteristics,<sup>2</sup> even influencing a broader, global context.<sup>3</sup> This interconnectedness has allowed Indonesia to cultivate unique forms of local wisdom with Islamic nuances that vary by region, such as in the *sahur* tradition.

Typically, *sahur* is the pre-dawn meal preceding the *subuh* prayer during fasting. However, in Indonesia, the practice extends beyond this religious function. In some areas, *sahur* is infused with local cultural elements, such as the *arakan sahur* tradition originating from Kuala Tungkal in Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency, Jambi Province, which has been consistently observed every Saturday night during Ramadan for approximately 20 years—Similar traditions, under various names, can be found in other regions as well.<sup>4</sup> Despite this, scholarly research on *sahur* traditions in Indonesia remains scarce. These traditions are particularly distinctive in Indonesia due to their unique blend of Islamic and local cultural practices. Thus, further in-depth studies on *sahur* traditions across Indonesia, such as the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, are needed.

In the context of this research, Mempawah Regency in West Kalimantan is recognized for its unique traditions and culture. One of the traditions that the people of Mempawah maintain and preserve, as noted M. Daud Ibrahim, a prominent religious figure in the area, is the *sahur-sahur* tradition, which is part of the Ramadan observance. According to Zulkarnain, the Adat Leader of Amantubillah Palace, the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah encompasses more than just the act of eating before dawn; it carries profound cultural significance and has evolved into a *sahur* festival with the support of the Mempawah Regency government since 2002. This indicates that both Islamic values and local traditions are preserved through the *sahur-sahur* practice by the community of Mempawah. Therefore, a deeper understanding of this tradition is essential, as its practice transcends mere religious ritual to represent a cultural heritage rich in meaning, *da'wah* appeal, and positive social implications, thereby warranting further examination of all three aspects.

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<sup>1</sup> Hasani Ahmad Said, Lebba Kaorre Pongsibanne, and Lina Shobariya, "Islamic Relations, Local Traditions (Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and the Ethnic Baduy) and Their Effects on Religious Life Patterns in Indonesia," *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (2020): 41–53, [idpublications.org](https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v1i1.1-35).

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Ali, "Muslim Diversity: Local Tradition in Java and Sulawesi, Indonesia," *IJMS: Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1–35, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v1i1.1-35>; Mohammad Hidayaturrahman, "Integration of Islam and Local Culture: Tandhe' in Madura," *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 42, no. 1 (2018): 189–206, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v42i1.477>; Ali Akhbar Abaib Mas Rabbani Lubis, "Relasi Hukum Islam Dan Adat Dalam Tradisi Pamogih Pada Perkawinan Masyarakat Muslim Bindowoso," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konsitusi* 3, no. 2 (2020): 45–63, <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v3i2.4014>; Japarudin, *Islam Dan Budaya Lokal Dalam Tradisi Tabut* (Yogyakarta: Samudra Biru, 2021); M. Irfan Riyadi, Anwar Mujahidin, and Muh. Tasrif, "Conflict and Harmony Between Islam and Local Culture in Reyog Ponorogo Art Preservation," *El-Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam* 18, no. 2 (2016): 145–62, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v18i2.3498>.

<sup>3</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Global and Local in Indonesian Islam," *Southeast Asian Studies (Kyoto)* 37, no. 2 (1999): 158–75; Leif Manger, *Muslim Diversity: Local Islam in Global Contexts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Leonard A. Stone, "The Islamic Crescent: Islam, Culture and Globalization," *The European Journal of Social Science Research* 15, no. 2 (2002): 121–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1335116102200001269>.

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Hariadi et al., "Nilai-Nilai Moral Terkandung Dalam Tradisi Arakan Sahur Di Kabupaten Tanjung Jabung Barat," *Jurnal Ilmiah Religiosity Entity Humanity* 5, no. 1 (2023): 83–96, <https://doi.org/10.37364/jireh.v5i1.133>.

Research on the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah is still lacking; however, several studies have explored the relationship between Islam and local traditions in Mempawah in different contexts. These include studies on the *ngopur tontonan* tradition and *temunih*, which pertains to welcoming newborns and burying the umbilical cord among the Madurese community in Mempawah.<sup>5</sup> Other studies have examined the *robo-robo* tradition, which aims to provide protection<sup>6</sup> and the terms and meanings in the Malay language used in *mengaji* activities in Mempawah.<sup>7</sup> This indicates that an in-depth study has yet to address the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah. Consequently, research on the *sahur-sahur* tradition is essential to explore its understanding of cultural, *da'wah* appeal, and social implications in greater detail.

This study focuses on the in-depth meaning of *sahur-sahur* tradition, and the *da'wah* appeal manifested in the *sahur* festival, and its social implications in Mempawah. To facilitate this research, oral history is an analytical tool for understanding significant events. It is important to note that oral history is a research method involving interviews (original oral interviews, recording, and interpretation of materials) about noteworthy events. These are then discussed fluidly and analyzed concerning specific themes to assess their meaning, significance, and understanding.<sup>8</sup> The data collected includes literature reviews, observations, and interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with key figures, including the Adat Leaders of Amantubillah Palace, religious leaders, and community leaders. This underscores that oral history can aid in gaining a deeper understanding of the *sahur-sahur* tradition, its cultural meanings, the significance of its *da'wah* appeal in the *sahur* festival, and the interpretation of its social implications in Mempawah, West Kalimantan. The collected data indicates that this tradition's cultural meanings, *da'wah* appeal, and social implications encompass aspects of religious ritual and values of togetherness, tolerance, and social solidarity.

This paper is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses the history and development of the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah, revealing its contrasting cultural significance. The second section examines the *da'wah* appeal within the *sahur-sahur* tradition and festivals, providing important insights into the processes involved in their organization. The third section addresses the social implications and changes associated with this tradition, demonstrating that the *sahur-sahur* practice is not merely a religious ritual but also enriches both Islamic and cultural contexts over time.

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<sup>5</sup> Misdi, Arkanudin, and Ignasia Debbey Batuallo, "Tradisi Ngopur Tontonan Dan Temunih Masyarakat Madura Sungai Pinyuh Mempawah Kalimantan Barat," *Genaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora* 7, no. 1 (2024): 61–72, <https://doi.org/10.373229/genaya.v7i1.2802>.

<sup>6</sup> U. Nafiah and M.I.P. Koesoemadinata, "The Value of Robo-Robo Tradition as Design Inspiration in Public Space in the New Normal Era," in *Sustainable Development in Creative Industries: Embracing Digital for Humanities*, ed. Dyah Ayu Wiwid Sintowoko et al. (New York: Routledge, 2023), 154–58, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ipkk.v2i1.1318>.

<sup>7</sup> Farninda Aditya, "Istilah Dan Makna Aktivitas Mengaji Dalam Masyarakat Melayu Mempawah," *Jurnal Pendidikan, Kebudayaan Dan Keislaman* 2, no. 1 (2023): 19–35, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ipkk.v2i1.1318>.

<sup>8</sup> Lyan Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London, New York: Routledge, 2010).

### Meaning of The *Sahur-Sahur* Tradition

The *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah Regency is rooted in establishing the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at the Amantubillah Palace (*Keraton*) in 1905. According to Zulkarnaen, this mosque became the focal point of religious and social activities for the surrounding community, serving as the venue for the *sahur-sahur* tradition, which has since evolved into a highly valued cultural heritage. He further explains that the significance of this tradition originates from the religious values taught at the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque, with the community viewing *sahur-sahur* as a religious obligation, a form of worship aimed at drawing closer to God.<sup>9</sup> The gathering of people for *sahur* involves not only sharing meals but also sharing stories, laughter, and joy. This tradition fosters an atmosphere of warmth and solidarity among residents.<sup>10</sup> Thus, it is understood that the *sahur* activity serves as a moment for reflections and strengthening of faith, creating a profound sense of spirituality. In addition to its religious dimensions, the *sahur-sahur* tradition at the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque is also regarded as an expression of gratitude and togetherness.

Figure 1. *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at the Amantubillah Palace (*Keraton*)



Sources: researcher's dokumentation

The *sahur-sahur* tradition at the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque also serves to preserve and revitalize local values. This is because the influence of Islam is generally rooted in efforts to achieve harmony with evolving traditions.<sup>11</sup> It is not an exaggeration to state that through the *sahur-sahur* tradition, the community strives to maintain local wisdom, such as serving traditional regional foods and organizing cultural events.<sup>12</sup> This demonstrates that the *sahur-sahur* tradition is a religious ritual and an essential aspect of their cultural identity.

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<sup>9</sup> Zulkarnain, "Interview with Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah Mempawah" (December 27, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> M. Daud Ibrahim, "Interview with Religious Leader of Mempawah" (December, 2023).

<sup>11</sup> L. F. Barker, "Islam and Local Traditions: Syncretic Ideas and Practices," *Indonesian and the Malay World* 32, no. 92 (2004): 5–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363981042000263435>.

<sup>12</sup> Yuni Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah" (December 27, 2023).

Subsequently, this tradition evolved into the *sahur* festival. This shift occurred in 2002, initiated by the Galaherang Kreasindo organization with the support of the Mempawah government and the involvement of the community.<sup>13</sup> This means that the festival encompasses not only religious aspects but also cultural arts and *da'wah* appeal. The significance of the *sahur* festival includes an appreciation for local creativity, the development of arts and culture, and the dissemination of inclusive *da'wah* messages. This aligns with the spirit of Islam, which emphasizes a more moderate mindset (*fikrah*), the movement (*harakah*) towards realizing religious moderation, and activities (*amaliyah*) that uphold local traditions that do not contradict Islamic principles.<sup>14</sup> In this context, the *sahur-sahur* tradition at the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at the Amantubillah Palace serves as an essential pillar in understanding local wisdom and religious values that shape the identity of the Mempawah community. This understanding encompasses religion, togetherness, and culture, creating a rich and valuable cultural heritage for the local community.

The *sahur-sahur* tradition, rooted in the establishment of *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at the Amantubillah Palace, holds profound significance for the people of Mempawah Regency. This tradition's form and consistency carry meanings and connections to the surrounding community.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, understanding the *sahur-sahur* tradition involves aspects of religion, togetherness, and harmonious culture, creating a cultural heritage that serves as a distinctive identity for the local community. The following are explanations of these aspects:

First, the *sahur-sahur* tradition is a religious obligation and a form of worship with high spiritual significance. The *sahur* activity at *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque is considered a moment for drawing closer to God, reflecting, and strengthening one's faith. This meaning fosters a deep spiritual connection between individuals and the religious values imparted at the mosque.<sup>16</sup> Second, togetherness, *sahur-sahur* tradition in *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque embodies a sense of community and gratitude. The gathering of people for *sahur* involves not only sharing meals but also sharing stories, laughter, and joy. This tradition creates an atmosphere of warmth and solidarity, strengthening residents' social bonds.<sup>17</sup> Third, the cultural aspect, this tradition is seen as an effort to preserve and invigorate local cultural values. The community endeavors to maintain local wisdom through regional dishes and cultural events. This meaning illustrates that *sahur* is not merely a religious ritual but also a manifestation of the cultural

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<sup>13</sup> Widiensyah and Gusti Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization" (December 28, 2023).

<sup>14</sup> Mudjahirin Thohir, "Islam and Local Wisdom: The Study of 'Islam Nusantara' in the Cultural Perspective," in *The 7th International Conference on Energy, Environment, Epidemiology and Informations System (ICENIS)* (Semarang: E2S Web of Conferences, 2022), 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.051/e3sconf/202235904004>.

<sup>15</sup> William H. Sewell Jr, "The Concept(s) of Culture," in *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, ed. Gabrielle M. Spiegel (New York, London: Routledge, 2005), 139–52.

<sup>16</sup> Ibrahim, "Interview with Religious Leader of Mempawah."

<sup>17</sup> Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah."

identity in which they take pride.<sup>18</sup> Fourth, the evolution into *sahur* festival, this tradition has developed into a *sahur* festival that encompasses aspects of art, culture, and the allure of religious outreach. The meaning of the *sahur* festival includes appreciation for local creativity, promoting arts and culture, and disseminating inclusive religious messages. The *sahur* festival transcends a religious ritual and serves as a form of artistic and cultural expression that enriches the community's life.<sup>19</sup>

This interpretation suggests that the *sahur-sahur* tradition in *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at the Amantubillah Palace is not merely a religious practice but also a manifestation of local wisdom, community cohesion, and culture. This is because religion is not only related to beliefs but also intricately linked to identity and symbols within the community, resulting in several social constructions of religion among the Malay people, including 1) tradition-oriented religious practices, or vice versa; 2) solidarity, 3) religious-based legal norms; and 4) pride in the existence of their tradition.<sup>20</sup> In this context, the *sahur-sahur* tradition acts as a binding force that connects the people of Mempawah to their cultural and religious roots, fostering a unique and highly valued identity.

Furthermore, findings from Zulkarnain, M. Daud Ibrahim, Yuni Setiawan, and the management of Galaherang Kreasindo reveal additional meanings associated with the *sahur-sahur* tradition, including the following:

First, perception and personal values in the *sahur* tradition suggest that individuals in Mempawah Regency perceive *sahur* as a profound experience that holds personal significance. The tradition is often linked to spiritual values, togetherness, and family solidarity. Second, the *sahur* tradition's *sahur* effects have been found to affect the community's emotional and psychological well-being positively. Participation in this tradition fosters happiness and tranquility and enhances mental wellness. Third, public image and community reputation, the *sahur* tradition consistently cultivates a positive image and strong reputation for the people of Mempawah Regency. The broader community identifies this tradition as a symbol of harmony, togetherness, and local cultural richness. Fourth, family roles and social structure highlight that the *sahur-sahur* tradition is crucial in reinforcing family dynamics and social structure in Mempawah Regency. *Sahur* serves as an essential moment for family unity and strengthens social bonds among residents. Fifth, interaction dynamics among community members, such as interactions among community members during the *sahur-sahur* tradition, generally foster positive relationships. This activity allows residents to connect, share experiences, and build solidarity within the community. Sixth, historical context and local symbolism, the significance of this

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<sup>18</sup> Zulkarnain, "Interview with Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah Mempawah."

<sup>19</sup> Widiensyah and Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization."

<sup>20</sup> Hasse Jubba et al., "Social Construction of Islamic Local Tradition in Malay Community, Indonesia," *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic and Social Studies* 9, no. 2 (2023): 139–52, <https://doi.org/10.20983/islamrealitas.v9i2.7551>.

tradition is closely tied to its historical context and local symbolism. The findings highlight distinctive historical elements, such as the establishment of *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque at Amantubillah Palace, an integral part of the *sahur-sahur* tradition's symbolism.

This study reveals the significance of the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah, West Kalimantan, where this tradition is not merely a routine religious activity but also encompasses personal values, family togetherness, and cultural identity. Its positive implications are reflected in enhanced mental well-being, social harmony, and a positive image for Mempawah Regency. Through contextual and historical understanding, this tradition is viewed not only as a monthly practice but also as a means of preserving local values and historical symbolism. Despite these positive findings, the study emphasizes the need for preservation and adaptation to social changes that may influence the meaning and implementation of this tradition in the future. Therefore, the community and relevant stakeholders must actively participate in maintaining, developing, and responding to dynamic changes to safeguard valuable local wisdom and cultural heritage.

### **The Appeal of Da'Wah in The Sahur Festival**

The dynamics of communication in *da'wah* during the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency have proven to convey da'wah messages to the community effectively. Inclusive *da'wah* is essential in Indonesia's pluralistic society.<sup>21</sup> This demonstrates that inclusive *da'wah* through the *Sahur* Festival can significantly enhance religious understanding among participants, increase religious knowledge, and strengthen spiritual bonds. The festival features a variety of activities, such as lectures, religious teachings, and artistic performances, facilitating maximum participation from diverse segments of society.<sup>22</sup> The charm of *da'wah* at the festival is evident in the active involvement of the community, fostering a spirit of togetherness that enriches the Ramadan experience. Furthermore, the *Sahur* Festival also serves as a platform for community empowerment through *da'wah* initiatives to create a positive impact and uplift residents.

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<sup>21</sup> Iskandar, Nurhakki Anshar, and Afidatul Asmar, "Inclusive Da'wa on Indonesian People: The Role of People in the View Of Auguste Comte," *Jurnal Ilmu Da'wa* 42, no. 1 (2022): 65–77, <https://doi.org/10.2158/jid.42.1.11093>.

<sup>22</sup> Zulkarnain, "Interview with Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah Mempawah."

Figure 2. *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency



Sources: Researcher's Documentation

The Sahur Festival in Mempawah Regency underscores the role of da'wah as a vehicle for community empowerment. According to M. Daud Ibrahim, da'wah initiatives that encompass social, economic, and educational dimensions empower communities to actively engage in development efforts.<sup>23</sup> These da'wah messages emphasize spiritual dimensions and promote active participation in inclusive social activities that benefit the community as a whole.<sup>24</sup>

This illustrates that the Sahur Festival functions as a platform for interfaith dialogue. Da'wah communication occurs within the Muslim community and resonates with individuals from various religious backgrounds.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the Sahur Festival becomes an opportunity for inclusion and tolerance, fostering harmony among religious communities by cultivating a shared understanding of universal human values.

The charm of da'wah during the Sahur Festival lies in its ability to inspire and empower the community, particularly with the support of the Mempawah Regency government. This involvement reinforces the potential for inclusive policymaking. According to Ali Akhbar Abaib Mas Rabbani Lubis and colleagues, the issue of inclusive policies in the context of Islam, culture, politics, and democracy is related to the accommodation of religious and cultural organizations, religious celebrations, and culture-based infrastructure.<sup>26</sup> This means that through the Sahur Festival platform, da'wah serves not only as a means of conveying religious information but also as a catalyst for positive change in everyday life.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibrahim, "Interview with Religious Leader of Mempawah."

<sup>24</sup> Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah."

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ali Akhbar Abaib Mas Rabbani Lubis, Abdur Rozaki, and Khoiruddin, "Representation and Capabilities of Non-Muslim Chinese Women as Regional Heads in Singkawang City: A Siyasah Dusturiyyah Analysis," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 23, no. 2 (2023): 357–88, <https://doi.org/10.211254/altahrir.v233i2.6011>.



Integrated da'wah initiatives within the Sahur Festival create an environment that combines spiritual values with actual community development, resulting in a meaningful and lasting impact. The evolution of the Sahur Festival, as explained by the management of Galaherang Kreasindo,<sup>27</sup> can be outlined in several stages: First, the simple *Sahur* Festival, the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency began as a small local event. At this stage, it was mainly attended by nearby residents, creating moments of togetherness through da'wah activities, scripture readings, and shared meals. Second, expanding reach through competitions. Over time, the festival evolved to include local competitions. Events like art contests, traditional music competitions, and cultural performances were introduced to boost community engagement, fostering a spirit of healthy competition and camaraderie. Third, expansion to West Kalimantan. The festival later expanded to a broader area, moving from Mempawah Regency to neighboring regions in West Kalimantan. This growth broadened the festival's reach, involving more people and strengthening regional identity. Fourth, arts and culture-based festivals. Research shows that the *Sahur* Festival has transformed into an event focused on arts and culture. Traditional performances, local dances, and theatrical shows have become vital parts of the festival, blending artistic and religious values—fifth, musical competitions for *Sahur* calls. The festival also features various musical competitions encouraging participants to call Muslims to join in sahur. Using traditional and modern instruments in these competitions creates a festive atmosphere and motivates community involvement.

The findings indicate the evolution of the *Sahur* Festival from a simple local event into a larger cultural phenomenon that engages various segments of society and shows potential for further growth at the regional level. Additionally, there has been a growth and sustainability in the tradition of the *Sahur* Festival, which takes place every two years.<sup>28</sup> Initially, the festival in Mempawah Regency began as a modest local gathering, creating moments of togetherness through da'wah activities, scripture readings, and shared meals.<sup>29</sup> Over time, the festival expanded to include local competitions, such as art creativity contests and traditional music competitions, fostering a spirit of healthy competition and camaraderie.<sup>30</sup> This means that the development of the Sahur Festival is not limited to the local level; it has extended to nearby areas in West Kalimantan. This shift has elevated the festival to a regional level, creating a stronger cultural identity and making it an attractive cultural and tourism magnet.

The growth of the Sahur Festival has occurred not only quantitatively but also through improvements in quality and innovation. Theoretically, the reality of da'wah is constantly evolving to

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<sup>27</sup> Widiensyah and Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization."

<sup>28</sup> Zulkarnain, "Interview with Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah Mempawah."

<sup>29</sup> Ibrahim, "Interview with Religious Leader of Mempawah."

<sup>30</sup> Widiensyah and Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization."

align with social facts, positioning da'wah as an object that can be explored through various approaches.<sup>31</sup> This is evident in integrating technology into the festival's organization, such as using social media, dedicated festival apps, and online streaming. These innovations provide broader access to the community, connect people virtually, and enhance the festival's image as an inclusive and modern event.<sup>32</sup> In this evolution, the Sahur Festival has transformed from a mere annual event into a continuously developing entity.

The *Sahur* Festival benefits from local government support, stakeholder collaboration, and technology integration. These combined efforts are critical to the festival's success in positively impacting the community and the local tourism sector. The growth of the *Sahur* Festival reflects continuity and innovation, which includes: First, increased community participation. Over time, the *Sahur* Festival has seen a rise in participants and community involvement. More residents are taking part in the festival, both as active participants and spectators, creating a stronger sense of togetherness and uniting various cultural elements. Second, collaboration and support from local government. Findings indicate that the festival's growth is closely tied to local government support. The collaboration between local authorities and the festival organizers provides a solid foundation for event development, including logistics, official permits, and promotion. Third, integration of technology in the festival. Innovations have emerged through the incorporation of technology in the *Sahur* Festival. The use of social media, dedicated festival apps, and online streaming offers broader access to the community, connects people virtually, and enhances the festival's image as an inclusive and modern event. Fourth, positive impact on local tourism. The *Sahur* Festival also positively influences the local tourism sector. The influx of tourists attending the festival creates new economic opportunities, from the culinary sector to local crafts, contributing to economic growth and promoting tourism destinations in Mempawah Regency. Fifth, sustainability through education. Research indicates the presence of educational initiatives within the *Sahur* Festival. Cultural and artistic workshops, religious lectures, and other academic activities are integral to the festival, providing a space for the community to learn and celebrate their cultural and spiritual wealth.

With this growth, the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency has transformed from a mere annual event into a continuously evolving entity, positively impacting various aspects of community life and becoming an increasingly attractive cultural and tourism magnet.

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<sup>31</sup> Nur Syam, "Formulating Theories of Dakwah Studies," *Episteme: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2019): 327–45, <https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2019.14.2.327-345>.

<sup>32</sup> Widiansyah and Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization."

## Social Implication and Transformation

The *Sahur* Festival has fostered increased community solidarity, strengthening a unified atmosphere and connecting individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This underscores the importance of promoting Islamic values across various societal discussions, such as unity, peace, tolerance, and human rights.<sup>33</sup> Active participation in communal activities, including shared meals and engagements in competitions, further reinforces social bonds within Mempawah Regency. Additionally, the *Sahur* Festival positively impacts religious education at the community level. Through lectures, study circles, and religious workshops, participants gain deeper insights into spiritual values, enhancing understanding and establishing a sustained learning environment.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, the younger generation is more engaged in the festival through artistic and cultural performances, competitions, and musical events.<sup>35</sup> These activities provide an avenue for creative expression and foster a strong sense of community, rendering the festival particularly compelling for them.

The social implication of the *Sahur* Festival extends to the development of the local creative economy. The *Sahur* Festival celebrates local artists through art and cultural competitions,<sup>36</sup> as well as traditional craft and culinary exhibitions,<sup>37</sup> which significantly boost the creative economy in Mempawah Regency. The *Sahur* Festival growth in Mempawah is evident in increased participation and geographic reach and the continuous introduction of new innovations. The rising community involvement catalyzes exploring new ways of enhancing the festival experience.

Moreover, innovations include the use of technology in organizing the festival. As the Galaherang Kreasindo Committee emphasized, integrating a dedicated app and social media has enhanced public engagement.<sup>38</sup> These innovations foster virtual connectivity during the festivals and strengthen the festival's branding and appeal in the digital era. Additionally, the festival's sustainability is supported through educational initiatives. Workshops on arts and culture, religious lectures, and other educational activities are integral parts of the *Sahur* Festival, providing an opportunity for the community to continue learning and celebrating cultural and spiritual wealth. Thus, the festival becomes not merely an entertainment event but also an ongoing educational platform.

In the realm of the creative economy, the *Sahur* Festival not only empowers local artists but also serves as a platform to promote regional products and crafts. Culinary exhibitions, craft displays, and local products provide opportunities for local entrepreneurs to expand their market

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<sup>33</sup> Wahyudi Akmaliah, Priyambudi Sulistiyanto, and Sukendar, "Making Moderate Islam in Indonesia," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2022, 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2022.20234224>.

<sup>34</sup> Ibrahim, "Interview with Religious Leader of Mempawah."

<sup>35</sup> Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah."

<sup>36</sup> Zulkarnain, "Interview with Pemangku Adat Istana Amantubillah Mempawah."

<sup>37</sup> Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah."

<sup>38</sup> Widiansyah and Veri, "Interview with Galaherang Kreasindo Organization."

reach.<sup>39</sup> In other words, the *Sahur* festival sahur in Mempawah Regency reflects both a respect for its historical evolution and a commitment to progress through continuous innovation and sustainable efforts. The community, artists, entrepreneurs, and local government work collaboratively to sustain and advance the festival, making it a vehicle for diversity, unity, and economic growth. Further details are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Innovations and Sustainability of the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency

No	Innovations and Sustainability	Description
1	Increasing Community Participation	Growth in the number of participants and active engagement in various festival activities created a strong sense of unity and togetherness.
2	Technology Integration	Use a dedicated festival app, social media, and online streaming to broaden access and strengthen virtual connectivity during the festival.
3	Educational Initiatives	Educational initiatives through arts and cultural workshops, religious lectures, and other academic activities make the festival a continuous learning platform.
4	Promotion of Regional Products and Crafts	Culinary exhibitions, craft displays, and local products at the festival allow local entrepreneurs to expand their market reach and support the creative economy.

Sources: Compiled by the researcher.

The table above reflects how the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency has grown in size and embraced various innovations and sustainable efforts. These initiatives involve community participation, technology integration, education, and the promotion of regional products and crafts, making the festival a dynamic entity with positive implications across multiple aspects of life. The consequences of the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency include: First, it impacts local culture, and the *Sahur* Festival has become a key driver in preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of Mempawah Regency. Traditional art performances, regional dances, and theater productions provide a platform for local artists while also introducing cultural heritage to younger generations. Second, enhancement of cultural tourism, the *Sahur* Festival acts as a cultural tourism attraction, drawing visitors from within and outside the region. Art performances, cultural shows, and musical competitions become unique attractions, positively impacting the local tourism sector, showcasing

<sup>39</sup> Setiawan, "Interview with Public Figure of Mempawah."

cultural beauty, and increasing tourist visits. Third, strengthening community solidarity and togetherness during the *Sahur* Festival creates moments of camaraderie and strengthens solidarity within the community. Shared activities such as communal pre-dawn meals, competition participation, and religious activities foster closer social connections, contributing to a more unified community. Fourth, stimulating creativity in cultural competitions, such as cultural competitions at the *Sahur* Festival, provides a space for the community to express their creativity. Art competitions, musical instrument showcases, and traditional performances stimulate artistic innovation, create a healthy competitive environment, and support the growth of community creativity.

With these implications, the *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency has become an annual event and a key agent in shaping and enriching cultural life, tourism, community solidarity, and artistic creativity at both local and regional levels.

### **Conclusion**

The *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah Regency, which began with the establishment the *Jami'atul Khair* Mosque in Amantubillah Palace in 1905, carries deep significance. This includes religious, communal, and cultural aspects, creating a rich cultural heritage. The *sahur-sahur* tradition is not just a religious ritual; it also represents local wisdom and the community's cultural identity. Over time, this tradition has evolved into the *Sahur* Festival, which effectively shares religious messages with the community. The appeal of this outreach is evident through various activities, such as lectures, religious study sessions, and art performances, all of which enrich the Ramadan experience and empower residents. Additionally, the social implications and transformation brought about by the *Sahur* Festival include increased community solidarity, cultural tourism development, and creativity stimulation through cultural competitions. The outreach initiatives integrated within the festival create an ecosystem that blends spiritual values with community development efforts.

This research provides a fresh perspective on the study of oral history. Therefore, it is recommended that *Sahur* Festival in Mempawah Regency be carried out sustainably and consistently to ensure that religious and cultural life remains strong. By doing so, the *sahur-sahur* tradition in Mempawah Regency can become part of local history and identity and a symbol of togetherness, tolerance, and religious spirit that can inspire other regions. While this study is unique, it has limitations; thus, future research should explore Islamic studies and local traditions from various facts, theories, and perspectives in Indonesia.

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