

LOCAL WISDOM VALUE OF BUBOHU BONGO CULTURAL TOURISM FROM FOLKLORE PERSPECTIVE

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LOCAL WISDOM VALUE OF BUBOHU BONGO CULTURAL TOURISM FROM FOLKLORE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Bubohu Bongo village of Batudaa Pantai Sub-district, Gorontalo regency is one of the cultural tourism destinations in Gorontalo province. This village has held Walimah festival for a long time to celebrate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. One of the social problems is that the young people of Gorontalo have begun to forget their cultural values and traditions. Hence, they tend to feel apathy toward the local wisdoms behind the cultural events and the history of the region. Therefore, those local wisdom values, especially related to Bubohu Bongo cultural village need to be explored and developed as cultural tourism site. This article aims at studying the local wisdom values of Bubohu Bongo cultural site through folklore approach. The data were collected through field survey and interview; and were analyzed descriptively. This study reveals that Bubohu is a religious village where its people live harmoniously in strong cultural values and practices. It also reveals that the local wisdom in this village is reflected through the ingredients of *kolombengi* cake. The flour represented the religiousness and purity. Meanwhile the sugar reflected the humble and friendly people of Bongo, and the eggs represented the glue that philosophically portrayed the Bongo people as those who uphold their Islamic-based cultural values. The people of Bubohu Bongo village uphold the following manners when visiting a religious tourism village of Bubohu: 1) express greetings, 2) wear appropriate and polite clothes, 3) not committing any types of

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misdeed, 4) not violating the customs and observed values, and 5) maintain cleanliness. The local wisdom values are upheld by the people of Bubohu Bongo as part of their efforts to develop the tourism in Bubohu Bongo village of Gorontalo regency.

Keywords: folklore, local wisdom, religiousness

1. Introduction

Bubohu Bongo village is a village in Batudaa Pantai sub-district of Gorontalo regency. It is one of the tourism destinations in Gorontalo province. Among its potential is a *walimah* festival held every year in this village to celebrate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. This village potential needs to be strengthened and preserved by the government as a cultural heritage of Gorontalo province, which stipulated within the mid-term planning of Gorontalo Province for the period of 2012 - 2017 (Pemprov Gorontalo, 2012).

The community should support the management of this tourism village through their cultures and their practices and participation in tourism management. As such, the whole village could receive benefit from the existence of this tourism village. Cultural tourism is to unify various concepts of this type of tourism within the literature and to promote holistic, flexible and reflexive view of cultural tourism (Canavan 2016). Correia (2011) described that selection of tourism destination is highly influenced by cultural characteristics. Therefore, cultural tourism needs to be sustainably developed. Qian, (2016) described that one of the important factors for the sustainability of tourism is developing a community-based tourism, which in turn will result in sustainable tourism development. Community-based tourism increases their income as well as local community awareness on the preservation of the nature, such as managing tourism activity to lengthen the stay of the tourists (Vitasurya 2015 and Qian *et al.*, 2016). In addition, local wisdom-based tourism is also one of the foundations to develop sustainable tourism, thus community participation and infrastructure development are essential (Vitasurya 2015)

Culture is a way of life, which developed and owned by a group of community and has been inherited for generations (Mulyadi, 1999). There are many elements that shape the culture, e.g. religious and political system, customs, language, tools, clothes, building, and art products. One of the socio-cultural problems among the society is that the young people of Gorontalo are currently unfamiliar with their own culture and history and tend to be apathy toward their own local wisdom. Local wisdom is value upheld and practiced among the society, in which the values are sacred and believed by that particular society (Rahyono, 2009). Therefore, these local cultural values of Gorontalo need to be revitalized for the young people, thus the today's society could inform and learn about their local wisdom and thus preserve the values (Baruadi, 2017)

Therefore, the study on local wisdom values of cultural tourism of Bubohu Bongo Gorontalo is regarded essential to conduct. This study uses folklore approach to

describe the local wisdom values of Bubohu Bongo village imbued within the words, sentences, statements, food, cloths, tools of its community.

Folklore, according to Dananjaja, is part of a collective culture distributed and inherited from generations. These values are collective values in various forms, which traditionally in different versions, either oral or written, or with certain movements and signs to help memorize the values (Danandjaja, 2005). There are two types of folklores, oral and semi-oral folklore.

Danandjaya (as cited in Endraswara, 2009) stated that motivation of folklore research is part of the cultural existence. Folklore approach is a study from cultural morphology and the culture itself as means to develop knowledge, hence, shed light on the correlation of oral culture (folklore) which lives among the community through cultural tourism as part of the effort to develop the cultural tourism in Bubohu of Bongo village, Gorontalo regency.

2. Method

This study applies folklore approach. The data were collected through survey and interview with snowball sampling. The informants in this study were cultural leaders, elders, religious leaders, and community figures to find out the origin of Bubohu Bongo. The data analysis employs qualitative descriptive approach.

3. Results

3.1 Geographical condition of Bubohu Bongo cultural tourism site

Bubohu kingdom used to be one of small kingdoms within the units called *lembo'a* (*Lembo'a lo Bubohu*). Lembo'a lo Bubohu was part of a larger kingdom called *Linula lo Hulonthalangi*. Nowadays the area of this kingdom is administratively a village called Bongo, which stretches between 00° 29' 57,4" NL and 122° 02' 05,4" NL. The area of Bubohu kingdom is within the administrative area of Batudaa Pantai sub-district of Gorontalo regency. This small kingdom (*lemoba*) was established in 1750, during the ruling of Nuwa (raja to Tilayo) (1735-1764) and Botutihe (raja to Huliyalio) (1737-1757). Bubohu is a small kingdom within the Hulonthalangi kingdom or known as Hulonthalo (Gorontalo). The tourism object of Bubohu Kingdom is known as Religious Tourism Village.

Based on the interview with the cultural leaders, historically in 1750, a king from Gorontalo (Hulonthalo) visited the *Tapa Modelo* to carry out discussion with religious leaders and elders and community leaders. It was to formulate government and expansion of the area. The meeting decided that *Tapa Modelo* and *Tapa Huota* joined as part of the Gorontalo (Hulonthalo) kingdom; the area was given a new name Bubohu which was led by Hilumalo Amay as its king. The area of Bubohu encompasses the coastal area with Hulupilo/Huntingo (in Pohe village Gorontalo city today) as its east border and Olimeala (today is known as the border between the Biluhu sub-district and Paguyaman Pantai subdistrict of Boalemo regency) as its west border.

During the Dutch colonization in Gorontalo, the Governor General of East Indie issued a decree on the 17th of April 1889 (Staadblad no. 96 and no. 250 of 1889) on restructuration of authority by revoking the authority and divides the Bubohu kingdom area into hamlets. In 1902, the capital of Bubohu kingdom was made into a village bearing the similar name and led by a chief village titled Ti Bubohu.

Bubohu or well-known as Bongo Village of Batudaa Pantai, Gorontalo regency is one of coastal village in Tomini bay. It is directly bordered with the Tanjung Kramat village of Gorontalo city. This Bongo village has the population of 3,200 people who live within five hamlets, the east hamlet, middle hamlet, west hamlet, tenilo hamlet, and wapalo hamlet. This village was established as a religious tourism village by the government of Gorontalo province in 2004. The number of visitors is increasing annually. Each year, the *Walima* tradition is celebrated annually in Bongo village. Recently, it is packaged in form of festival that draws many visitors from various places in Indonesia. In 2008, the Walima festival broke a record in which 500,000 *kolombengi* cookies (traditional cookies of Gorontalo) were made and consumed during the festival. The walima festival is held for three consecutive days. The people celebrated this festival by reciting prayers and colossal walima parade toward the Grand Mosque in this village. This is the uniqueness of this village. In addition to cultural uniqueness, this village also has tourism assets and other religious tourism sites. The people have high customs and culture that based on Islamic teaching as the reference in their lives.

3.2 The local wisdom value in Bubohu Bongo village

The cultural condition and local wisdom of the community in relation to the history (folklore) in Bubohu will be discussed in two parts: the naming of terms and common practices or tradition within the implementation of Maulid of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Therefore, the values on the term of Bubohu will be discussed and the value within the walima tradition will also be discussed.

3.2.1 The Wisdom behind the term Bubohu

The culture shows the existence of community where that culture belongs. One of the manifestations of this term is the language owner. The view among the pragmatic experts as well as sociolinguistic experts are that in communication or in utterances (whether those utterance are sentences, phrases, or words), what stated by the person who utter the utterance is considered as action. The term Bubohu literally means 'hit' (the action to hit using tool), it also means a bat to hit (a bat made from wood). Bubohu, within the meaning of someone who hit, implies that someone is given a power to provide action to sentence those who commit violation among the community. Therefore, usually the name of the village is also used as the title for the chief of the village, thus the chief of Bubohu village is called *ti Bubohu* (Baruadi, 2011). In Gorontalo history, one of the requirements to become a leader is *buheli* (bravery) and respected due to the knowledge and charisma. The bravery is needed in a leader; as he/she should be able to nurture his/her people as well as to lead his/her army in the frontline during the war. As large power for a king or *olongia* who lead *linula* is called *tau'wa* or a person who

always be in front. The local wisdom value should be emphasized as leader should nurture its people and be in the front line.

As social being, human always build relationship with others and commit mistakes through their actions and words (including in labelling something). All human lives involve interaction with others through their actions, communication words, which manifested through various types and ways of delivering. As king, the chief of Bubohu village is granted title of *ti Bubohu* as well as *Ta'uwa lo Hunggiya* title, as usually given to the king or *olongiya* (governor, regent or mayor) and their deputies. The way a person issue a command, forbid, promise, beg, ask for forgiveness, or invite are influenced by various factors such as speaking counterparts and the communication background, hence, it needs the speakers' consideration. It is also similar to the way the title Bubohu, Tauwa and other titles are given. The things to be considered can also root from the cooperation principles and agreements and rules observed among the society. The cooperation principle is related to the cultural values of the people as their local wisdom. In language behavior, the mentioning of a person's title also reflects cultural values among that society. Therefore, there is a correlation between language behavior and cultural values or the culture themselves that have been practiced for generations among the community.

3.2.2 The Wisdom of Walima Tradition

Walima tradition in Gorontalo is always identical with the mauled celebration that is the celebration of the Prophet PBUH's birth. It has been observed since the establishment of Bubohu Bongo village. At that time, the development of Islamic teaching had been along with the positive economic development of the villagers. This factor also encourage the community to do their best during the Maulid event by trying to make the best walima, and it is believed that the history of walima in this village is almost in-time with the history of Bubohu Bongo village, where it has been celebrated since the establishment of this village. In Maulid celebration, there were prayers recited to God and praise for His prophet. This recital lasts for 15 hours from after the Isya prayers to before the time for Dzuhur prayer. The celebration of Maulid of the Prophet Muhammad SAW at that time was held at the people's houses due to the inexistence of the mosque. The Maulid celebration was in form of the communal dzikir that lasts for the whole night, and at the daytime is followed by the praise for the prophet, and prayers to Allah SWT that the people of Bongo would always be protected and given prosperity.

Walima is inseparable part of Maulid celebration as it has shifted since the establishment of the Mosque. The meals such as rice, fish, fried chicken, cookies, and fruit as well as other agricultural commodities were delivered to the celebration venue packaged in leaves and woven baskets to attract the audience. The celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birth for the Bongo community and Gorontalo community in general is unique and always attracts attention. The whole procession needs to be well prepared, from the preparation of *walima*, *dikili* and *tunuhio*. The celebration preparation activities reflect the religious values of the community. The people of Gorontalo consider cultural, art, and literary activities as part of the worships; thus, they have to do

their best in praising the Lord and glorify His prophet to gain blessings in the afterlife. Therefore, there is a correlation between the attitude to celebrate this walimah tradition and the local wisdom of the Gorontalo people.

3.3 The Local Wisdom value of Bubohu Bongo village from the folklore perspective

Dorson (as cited in Endaswara, 2009) states that folklore is similar to folk life. These two terms are different but complementing each other. According to Dorson, these two terms have four components, one of them is material culture, which means that physical folklore, such as food, clothes, household tools, and social folk-custom, that is the social correlation of the community, related to certain habits, such as births and deaths.

3.4 Material culture

The Kolombeing cookies are usually available during the Maulid celebration in Bongo. Kolombengi is a symbol found in the gate of the religious village of Bongo. This cookie is a traditional cookie from Gorontalo.



Figure 1: The Gate toward the Bongo Tourism Park

The Tolangga with kolombengi ornaments on the gate to the religious tourism park of Bubohu. Tolangga is a place where meals that would be taken to the mosque are placed during the Maulid celebration. Generally, it is filled with various food from *Bilinthi* which is placed on top of a *toyopo*. *Kolombengi* is a popular cookie during the Maulid celebration as it has in-depth philosophical values. The ingredients are flour, sugar, and eggs. *“White flour represent that this village is well-known for its religiousness compared to other villages”*.

In the production of *Kolombengi*, flour is the main ingredient with its philosophy. The white color of the flour represents the purity and the soft texture of the flour represents the good and polite manners of the Gorontalo people regardless to their loud voice. This softness reflects the softness of its people’s heart. Meanwhile, sugar represents the peaceful lives of the gorontalo people. The sweet taste of the sugar implies that when there are visitors, the Gorontalo people must not show bad attitudes toward the visitors. In addition, eggs represent the glue that makes the sugar and flour

stick together, which represent the way of life of Gorontalo people that tightly bind by its customs.

Gorontalo's philosophical motto: "*custom is based on the sharia; and the sharia is based on the Koran*", is represented by the eggs. The people of Gorontalo consider that their laws as based on Islamic law. For instance, a thief is punished by amputating the hands, etc. All misbehavior should be punished using Islamic law. This Islamic-based punishment shows that the majority of the Gorontalo people are Moslems. The non-Moslems minority are the immigrants that settle in Gorontalo. Therefore, Gorontalo is also known as the Porch of Medina (the second holy city in Islam)

3.4.1 Social folk custom

Social folk custom means that the road map of social relationship is related to certain practices such as births and deaths. The practices in Bongo community during the Islamic events are considered as sacred events, as it is to commemorate the Prophet's birth. The common practices or manners that often observed when visiting this Bubohu village are: 1) recite greetings, 2) wear appropriate and polite clothes, 3) not committing any types of misdeed, 4) not violating the customs and observed values, and 5) maintain cleanliness.

Reciting *salam/greeting* is a life style for the people in Bongo. This practice is for both familiar people and for strangers to strengthen the bonds between them. The greeting is also a prayer for those who recite and reply to it. Replying to the *salam* also show the Islamic values. Utilization of polite and clothes that cover parts of body is applied for people in Bongo especially when they visit the religious park. In general, Islamic values based on the Qur'an are the basis of the practices for people. People should not violate the customs and norms among the people of Bongo to avoid the repercussion from God. Therefore, people in Bongo use to wear clothes that cover their bodies not to violate the norms. In addition, maintaining the cleanliness is also a common practice and a must among the people of Bongo as a part of practicing their faith. These local wisdom values are strictly upheld by the people in Bongo especially in religious tourism park.

4. Conclusion

Bubohu is a religious village where people live in sacred cultural values that based on Islamic teaching. As their way of life, they maintain their utterances where they prepare various unique meals with ornaments in a place called *tolangga* filled with traditional cookies dominated by *kolombengi* cookies. The local wisdom is reflected in the ingredients of *kolombengi*. The flour represents the Islamic values and purity. Sugar reflects of Bongo's people attitude and the eggs with thick Islamic philosophical values.

The common practices to be done by the people who live nearby as well as the visitors are: 1) recite greetings, 2) wear appropriate and polite clothes, 3) not committing any types of misdeed, 4) not violating the customs and observed values, and 5) maintain

cleanliness. The local wisdom values are strictly upheld by the people of Bubohu Bongo as part of their efforts to develop Bubohu of Bongo village in Gorontalo regency.

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