

EXPLORATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE POTENTIAL OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE AT THE MENDUT VILLAGE CULTURAL MARKET EXHIBITION

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Abstract - *This study explores the Cultural Market as a platform to accommodate and preserve culture and tradition, with a special focus on traditional agriculture in Mendut Village. Using qualitative research methods including interviews and documentation, this study aims to understand how the Cultural Market functions as a platform to maintain and celebrate traditional agricultural practices. Through in-depth interviews with farmers and analysis of historical documents and agricultural practices in Mendut Village. The purpose of this study is to explore and identify the potential of local wisdom in Mendut Village by focusing on traditional agriculture, and how strategies to attract visitors to come to Mendut Village especially at the Cultural Market event. The research findings show that although modern technology influences agricultural practices, cultural values and traditional methods remain an integral component of community identity, playing an important role in maintaining cultural diversity and strengthening the local cultural market.*

Keywords: *Exploration, Traditional Agriculture, Cultural Market Exhibition*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country rich in traditions and cultures that are passed down from generation to generation. The diversity of ethnicities, languages, and religions that exist throughout the archipelago make Indonesia one of the countries with the most diverse cultures in the world. In the book Tumanggor (2013) Koentjaraningrat said that culture is a form, namely as a culture system, social system, and artifact. According to Yunus (2012) culture is values that are passed down from generation to generation in the form of solidarity values. It can be concluded that culture is composed of cognitive, normative, and material components, so that there is a close relationship between humans because humans are the result of that culture. In a broader perspective, culture is interpreted as a system in which there are norms, values about social relations and behavior that become the identity of the community concerned. As a system, culture needs to be reviewed from the manifestation of human life that is connected to ideas, behavior, and creative results (history, tradition, customs, language) that are influenced by various aspects. At the UNESCO conference it was stated that culture is not only defined as performing arts, but includes a broad understanding as an identity of a group, tribe or nation.

Just as the tradition of planting rice using traditional tools is one of the agrarian cultural heritages that has been going on for centuries in Indonesia. This practice not only reflects local wisdom in utilizing nature, but also contains strong values of mutual cooperation and togetherness in society. Tradition is an important element in maintaining the cultural heritage of a society. In various parts of the world, local traditions related to agriculture have an invaluable role in maintaining cultural diversity and preserving local knowledge. In Indonesia, a country known for its cultural richness and agriculture as the backbone of the economy, agricultural traditions are a valuable heritage that colors the daily lives of rural communities (Abdullah, 2020).

According to some people, traditions such as traditional farming are still interesting enough to always be discussed in history, especially for the people of Mendut Village in Magelang Regency. The tourism awareness group in Mendut Village then created an event that would accommodate tourist objects and culture in Mendut Village. Abundant culture and traditions are priceless treasures owned by a region, but without the right container, this heritage is at risk of being forgotten by the next generation. Traditions, arts, customs, and local wisdom that are passed down from generation to generation need a place to continue to live and develop amidst the changing times. Containers such as cultural events, festivals, and traditional exhibitions are crucial in efforts to maintain and remember this rich culture. Through these spaces, people can recognize, appreciate, and pass on the cultural wealth they have to future generations. According to Gombrich (1994), "Without proper documentation and maintenance, many aspects of culture will disappear and become only faded memories" (Gombrich, EH The Story of Art. Phaidon Press). Therefore, without efforts to accommodate and facilitate culture,

we risk losing part of the identity and history that makes us a unique and diverse nation.

The purpose of this study is to explore and identify the potential of local wisdom in Mendut Village by focusing on traditional agriculture, and how to attract visitors to come to Mendut Village, especially at the Cultural Market event. The main focus of this study is to identify traditional farming methods that are still practiced, explore the cultural values behind these techniques, and analyze how this local wisdom interacts with modern challenges.

2. METHOD

The method used in this study uses a descriptive qualitative method. Which is a method used to explain phenomena, both natural and artificial, in the form of forms, activities, characteristics, and so on. As in this study, the researcher explains a traditional agricultural activity as one of the uniqueness and local culture in Mendut village. The aim is to explore and identify more deeply the traditional agricultural activities in Mendut village in the cultural market exhibition activities, in order to attract the interest of both local and tourist visitors who attend the Cultural Market exhibition.

The data collection technique used was observation where KKN UIN Sunan Kalijaga students visited directly the rice fields used in traditional agricultural processes. Not only do we see, but we also help directly with the agricultural process from planting to harvesting rice. Apart from that, the necessary data was obtained by means of interviews conducted by representatives of UIN Sunan Kalijaga KKN students by visiting the residence of the resource person.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

How can traditional farming methods still practiced in Mendut Village be identified and explained?

Rice is a very important cultivated crop for mankind as part of the world's population depends on this crop. In Indonesia, rice is a primary need for the community. This staple food that contains energy and carbohydrate sources cannot be lost to the community. In various regions in Indonesia, rice is also an important crop for farmers. Although the harvest period is different in each region, the results will be the same. According to BPS, the rice harvest area in 2019 was estimated at 10.68 million hectares and decreased compared to the previous year.

According to experts, one of the factors that cause the decline in crop yields is the cropping system. Basically, the planting system carried out by farmers in Indonesia is the same. Sometimes the obstacles are water and pests that attack rice plants. The process carried out by farmers is also mostly the same, namely with predetermined steps. These steps include preparation of planting media, seed selection, nursery, planting, land care, prevention of pests and diseases, and also harvesting. Of course, with a good planting process, the rice obtained will also be of good quality.

One area that has good rice yields is Sikepan Hamlet, Mendut Village, Mungkid Subdistrict, Magelang City, Central Java Province. In the Mendut area, there is a pretty good advantage for farmers. The water reserves used for rice plants are very sufficient every day. Therefore, the paddy crop always produces high quality rice. The process is as follows:

The first step taken by farmers is to prepare the planting medium. This preparation is done by cultivating the soil as a planting medium. The soil must be completely deserted or free of weeds and weeds. If it is free from weeds, then plow the soil. Modern times like this are certainly not done manually, but already using plow tools or oxen. Land that has been plowed is flooded with water so that the soil melts and the poison can disappear because it is neutralized.

Once the land is ready, the next step is seed selection. The method of selecting rice is by taking old rice and drying it then putting it in a sack. After that, the rice in the sack is soaked for about 2 days. In the morning, the soaked rice is removed and in the afternoon it is seen whether it has grown or not. If it has not grown, then it is soaked again until the seed is the tip of a needle. This sign will make the seeds of superior quality and high quality. Of course, these seeds are worth cultivating.

The third step is seeding. Seeding rice seeds is the process of preparing rice seeds before they are transferred to the planting area in the rice field. It aims to prepare quality rice seeds so as to obtain optimal productivity levels. The place for seeding in each area is different. For the Sikepan Mendut area, it is usually placed near the land to be planted.

The planting process is carried out after the seeds in the nursery process have grown three to four perfect leaves. Transplanting from nursery land to land ready for planting needs to be careful so that it is not damaged. Planting is done by inserting the roots in an L shape so that the roots can grow perfectly. The depth at which the seedlings are planted is also determined between 1 cm and 15 cm. "1520 days, give the first fertilizer, namely urea as much as 20 Kilograms. 25-30 days the second fertilizer is 30 Kilograms. For the next fertilizer process, it is necessary to see the situation and condition of the paddy plants. If it is not fertile enough, then in 2 months fertilize again with the same weight."

Then after the rice plants have been planted and fertilized, farmers must swamp the land properly. Three things that need to be done are weeding, irrigation, and fertilization. Weeding is done to keep the land clean from nuisance plants. Watering is given according to the needs of the rice. In Sikepan Hamlet, the water problem is not so much of a problem because water in this area is not difficult. This is a joy for the farmers. Fertilization is done so that rice can grow well. This treatment is done regularly. It can be done once every two weeks or once every three weeks depending on the growth of the rice plant itself. Farmers must also be careful with pests that always attack rice plants. Prevention of pests and diseases can be prevented by applying pesticides.

The last step taken by the farmers is harvesting. Harvesting is done with signs of yellowing and bowing rice. In modern times, there are already tools used for

harvesting. You can also use a serrated sickle and place the harvest on a mat by knocking out the rice from inside the grains. By using these steps, the rice produced will be of high quality and healthy for consumption. This is the process of planting rice in Indonesia. Farmers are people who have great merit in their work. No one can match farmers in terms of their benefits for producing primary materials for the community, especially in Indonesia.

In this modern era, technology has penetrated almost all sectors of life, including agriculture. However, in various regions in Indonesia, especially in rural areas, traditional agricultural tools are still widely used. The use of these tools is not only about preserving culture, but also a form of local wisdom that plays a role in maintaining soil fertility and increasing agricultural yields in a sustainable manner. Sikepan Village, for example, still maintains the use of traditional tools such as hoes and buffaloes for plowing rice fields.

The hoe is one of the most popular traditional farming tools used since time immemorial. Made of a metal blade with a wooden handle, it is used to loosen soil, clear weeds, and make beds. Despite the availability of modern farming machines, the hoe remains the first choice for farmers in the village due to its simplicity and ability to cultivate land that is difficult to reach by heavy equipment.

In some villages such as Sikepan Village, the use of buffaloes to plow rice fields is still common. These animals are used to pull wooden or iron plows used to cultivate the land. Compared to tractors, the use of buffaloes is considered more environmentally friendly because they do not produce pollution and are able to make the soil looser. In addition, the interaction between farmers and buffaloes creates an ecosystem balance, where buffalo dung also serves as organic fertilizer that fertilizes the land.

A harrow is a traditional tool used to level the ground after plowing. It is similar to a large comb pulled by a buffalo or cow. This tool helps farmers level the land so that it is ready to be planted with rice or other crops. Although it looks simple, the harrow is effective in breaking up large chunks of soil and improving the soil structure, so that water can be absorbed properly and plants can thrive.

To harvest rice, farmers often use ani-ani, a small knife-like tool with a wooden handle. With this tool, farmers cut the rice stalks one by one, keeping the grains intact and of good quality. Although it may seem slow, the use of ani-ani ensures that only ripe rice is harvested, reducing the risk of damage to crops that are not yet ready for harvest.

After the rice is harvested, the next process is to separate the grains from the husks, which is often done using a mortar and pestle. Lesung is a large wooden or stone container, while pestle is a long stick used to pound the rice. Although there are modern milling machines, lesung and alu are still used in some areas because they are believed to maintain the flavor and quality of the rice.

The use of traditional farming tools not only reflects local wisdom, but also provides significant ecological benefits. These tools do not require fuel or electricity, thus reducing carbon footprint and pollution. In addition, the use of animals such as

buffaloes in the plowing process helps maintain soil fertility naturally without the need to use excessive chemical fertilizers. This local wisdom also teaches people to utilize natural resources wisely, without damaging the environment.

While traditional farming tools have many advantages, modernization is still necessary to improve efficiency and productivity. However, this does not mean completely abandoning traditional methods. Instead, the integration of local wisdom and modern technology can create more sustainable agricultural solutions. For example, the use of modern tools for planting and harvesting can be combined with environmentally friendly traditional tillage techniques.

Traditional farming tools are an important part of local wisdom that continues to live on amidst the times. They not only serve as tools in farming, but also reflect the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. By maintaining ecological balance and work efficiency, these tools have proven to be able to support a sustainable increase in agricultural yields. Therefore, in the midst of modernization, it is important to continue to preserve and integrate traditional farming tools with the latest technology so that agriculture remains productive, environmentally friendly and sustainable.

How can the potential of local wisdom in Mendut Village, particularly in traditional agriculture, be utilized to attract visitors

Traditional farming methods are now rarely found in larger cities. The traditional agriculture still preserved in Mendut Village makes it a unique and prominent attraction that can draw outsiders to witness it. Therefore, Mendut Village, known for its rich cultural heritage and local wisdom, especially in agriculture, holds significant potential to attract visitors through its traditional farming practices.

The availability of existing agricultural land as an educational tourism site offers visitors the opportunity to engage directly in the process, providing them with an in-depth experience of a well-preserved traditional way of life. This agriculture-based tourism, rooted in local wisdom, not only provides insight into farming techniques but also introduces visitors to the associated culture, customs, and local values.

By leveraging this local wisdom, Mendut Village can develop various attractive tourism packages, such as agricultural tours, organic fertilizer workshops, or hands-on harvesting experiences. These initiatives will not only boost the village's income through tourism but also support the preservation of cultural and environmental heritage. Furthermore, visitors who come with the intention of learning about traditional agriculture will return with new knowledge and appreciation for the importance of sustainable farming methods. Thus, Mendut Village can utilize its local wisdom as a key attraction that provides economic benefits while preserving valuable cultural heritage.

4. CONCLUSION

Agricultural activities in Indonesia are not something foreign to do. Almost all areas in Indonesia have agricultural land planted with various types of planting media, one of which is rice. In the process of planting rice, farmers generally use modern tools that are considered faster in their work. However, in Sikepan village, Mendut sub-district, Magelang district, in the rice planting process, farmers still use traditional methods, namely using buffalo and other traditional tools. selection and sowing of seeds, planting and fertilizing, and the harvesting process. This is certainly one of the preservation of local culture that needs to be known by the general public. Because as we know, currently the use of traditional tools in the rice planting process is rarely found.

Not only that, agricultural activities in Sikepan Village are used as an educational tourism location that provides an opportunity for both local and tourist visitors to help farmers with their activities in the rice fields. Of course, this provides visitors with a firsthand experience of how the process of traditional agricultural activities that are very rarely found. So that this educational-based tour not only provides insight into farming techniques, but also introduces the values of customs and local culture to visitors who attend.

Thus, from the explanation that has been presented above, we can know together that the potential of traditional agriculture in Sikepan Village is very worthy to be exhibited in the Cultural Market event. This is to attract the interest of visitors so that more and more people are interested. So that the tourism education that has been built on the basis of cooperation between the residents of the Sikepan, Mendut environment, continues to grow with the increasing number of visitors.

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