

# The Meaning of Symbolizing the Salo Taduppa Ritual Tradition in Building a Culture of Community Cooperation in Karama Village

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**Abstract.** This research examines the Salo Taduppa ritual tradition as local wisdom that contains peace values and the communication process can build a culture of community cooperation between the people in Karama Village. This tradition is carried out for traditional medicine, thanks giving, and asking for a mate. In this study, the theory of symbolic interactionism was used to examine the meaning of each ritual tool and offers. Data collection was carried out employing observation and in-depth interviews which were then analyzed explicitly. The results showed: that the Salo Taduppa ritual was able to make people work together to carry out the ritual, together to protect nature, and every offering and ritual tools had the meaning of peace and cooperation.

**Keywords:** Meaning of Symbolization; Salo Taduppa Ritual; Community Cooperation

## 1 Introduction

Indonesia is famous for its cultural diversity. Especially for the South Sulawesi region, some cultures are of high value and have unique and different characteristics. The cultural diversity referred to is in the form of traditional knowledge, traditional folk tales and games, traditional expressions, traditional food, traditional weapons, architecture, traditional clothing, and hereditary traditions in the form of ritual ceremonies. All in the form of a legacy of knowledge from time to time. [Arisal. etc, 2018: 390]

This research examines the tradition of the Salo Taduppa ritual as local wisdom that contains peace values and the communication process can build a culture of community cooperation between communities in Karama Village. The discussion about the tradition of the Salo Taduppa ritual is something that is considered important because the ritual is considered capable of being a traditional medicine, prayer for a mate, childbirth, gratitude for what the people in Karama Village get. This ritual can establish social interactions, make people cooperate, and mutually protect nature.

Of the many traditions that exist in Karama Village, only the Salo Taduppa ritual has survived to this day. The community believes that in social life they are also required to

always be side by side with one another, to care for each other and care for each other, and to always remember their ancestors.

Until now, culture is still attached to traditional societies that cling to what they call *pamali*, this belief becomes the manifestation of humans to be able to adapt to nature. Believing in the existence of a human relationship with nature can be seen from the mystical problems that exist in nature, believing in the creator god, believing in supernatural beings who have a conceptualization between social groups and animals that exist in nature. [Keesing, Roger. M. 1992: 131]

In a study conducted [Arif Widodo, 2020:14] Cultural Values of Topat War Rituals as a Source of Social Studies Learning Based on Local Wisdom in Elementary Schools. The research resulted in the conclusion that the cultural values contained in the Topat War ritual included: compromise value, religious value, historical value, the value of togetherness and equality, the value of cooperation, the value of deliberation and kinship, and the value of tolerance. The cultural values in the ritual are relevant to the topic of social studies learning in grades IV and VI. Learning topics that are relevant to the cultural values of the Topat War rituals include theme 1 "the beauty of togetherness", theme 7 "the beauty of diversity in my country" and theme 8 "where I live" in grade IV, and theme 2 "unity in diversity" in class. VI.

The research conducted by [Rifa'i 2017] with the title "Ethnography of Tingkeban Neloni and Mitoni Ritual Communication", the researcher said that in the seven-month rituals in Summersuko Village, Gempol District, Pasuruan Regency to analyze several communicative events there were several components, namely: Type, topic, function, or purpose, environmental situation, participants viewed from age, language used, content and meaning of messages, and sequence of actions, as well as interaction rules and norms. With this analysis, it is hoped that the components will be able to examine how the rituals of the seven-month event in Summersuko Village are communicative events.

From these two studies, it can be concluded that social life is certainly inseparable from the existence of culture and traditions that prevail in the community so that communication and culture have an attachment and are two inseparable concepts. Culture itself is a way of life that is developed and shared by a group of people from generation to generation. Culture has always been a part of communication behavior, in the process of communication participating in determining, maintaining, developing, or inheriting culture.

Although research on culture and rituals exists, what distinguishes this research is because of the meaning of the rituals and symbols used in the Salo Taduppa ritual procession, so that the basic assumption of researchers departs from an understanding of the importance of knowing the portrait and meaning of the symbols of the Salo Taduppa ritual as traditional medicine as well as seeing one of the cultural identities that exist in South Sulawesi.

## **2 Methodology**

The approach used by researchers in assessing the theme of this research is qualitative. The method included in this qualitative research (paradigm) can describe, explain, and build relationships from the categories of the data found. This is following the aim of the researcher to describe, analyze and explain the communication behavior of a social group, in this case the community in Karama Village. The role of researchers in qualitative research is the planner, data collector, analyzer, and finally as the originator of the research. Therefore, researchers are the key to conducting research. Researchers do not only act as data collectors, data processors, and discoverers of research data. Researchers will also become friends for the subject so that

the results will be more accurate and valid because the more the subject believes in the researcher, the easier it will be for them to tell honest stories and minimize falsification.

By using purposive sampling technique, which is a technique for finding and determining informants employing researchers selecting certain people who are considered to be able to provide the next necessary data based on data or information obtained from previous informants, researchers can determine other informants who are considered to provide more complete data. The stages that the researchers used in the data collection technique in this study were as follows:

#### **a) Observation Method**

Observation is the activity of a process or object with the intention of feeling and then understanding the knowledge of a phenomenon. Based on knowledge or ideas that have been previously known, and to obtain the information needed to continue a research. This method is used by researchers to make observations of the object under study in order to get some information about the ritual tradition of Salo Taduppa. With the observation method, it is easy for researchers to make comprehensive observations about community activities in the Salo Taduppa Ritual tradition to complement the research results. In the observation process, there are several stages carried out by the researcher, the first thing the researcher does is determining the location of the observation, then collecting the observational data. At this stage the researcher will also see firsthand how the interactions that occur at the observation location to see the Salo Taduppa Ritual Tradition Procession.

#### **b) In-depth Interview Method**

Interview (In-depth Interview) in research is the process of obtaining information for research purposes by means of face-to-face question and answer between the interviewer and the respondent or the person being interviewed. Interviewing is a data search technique by collecting a number of data in the form of experiences, opinions, beliefs, knowledge of values, norms and attitudes, as well as responses. In the process of interviewing, the speakers will ask questions about the essence of the problem to be researched as well as things that are not yet known about the Salo Taduppa ritual tradition in the traditional healing procession.

#### **c) Literature Method**

Literature is a technique of gathering relevant information by accessing books, reports, and archives related to objects that can be used as material to support this research.

#### **d) Documentation Methods**

The documentation technique used in this research is to record research data from interviews, notebooks, archives and so on. In this research, there is a lot of data collected in the form of archives or documents.

### **3 Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1 The Salo Taduppa ritual in the Karama Village**

Culture has a very broad meaning. One expert said that culture is the result of very complex human creativity. In it contains structures that are interconnected, so that it is a unity that functions as a guide in life. This means that culture is a unit of a series of forms and elements that are interrelated with one another (Tri Widiarto, 2009: 10).

This research is located in Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Some of the people there are very thick with ritual life, belief in occult spirits, so they still adhere to customs. Like the Salo Taduppa Ritual which has existed since ancient times and is still surviving in the midst of the times like today. Salo Taduppa comes from the Bugis language which means salo is river, taduppa means facing each other. The people there call it that, because the river which is located in Karama Village comes from three directions and its mouth is in the middle.

Salo Taduppa is a way to honor the ancestors or ancestors whom they believe are female crocodiles and male snakes. The people in Karama Village strongly believe that the Salo Taduppa ritual is able to treat people who are sick or have been disturbed by supernatural beings. In the Salo Taduppa ritual there are several steps that are carried out, the first is preparing the food. What is mandatory is cooked chicken with grated coconut. They call it "nasu likku" or "lawa" grated coconut as a symbol of white which means holy and chicken meat means welfare. Then, prepare sweet fruits as symbols and prayers that their lives will be sweet too.

After the food has been prepared, the people bring the food to the river. At the Salo Taduppa ritual stage, the community trusts a person who is considered an expert to recite a special prayer and burn incense. Usually people who are believed to be elders and understand the history of this ritual.

The people in Karama Village consider that the Salo Taduppa ritual is one of the traditional community traditions that are still considered to have advantages and values that are quite relevant to the needs of the supporting community. This ritual is a human effort to remember and relate to the spirits of the ancestors, it is also a manifestation of the human ability to actively adapt to nature or its environment in many ways. Society strongly holds the belief that the relationship between nature and humans is a necessity that cannot be denied, because this relationship has very high sacred values.

To see how symbolic the Salo Taduppa ritual is when the ceremony is to be held, relatives and relatives will come, help each other or work shoulder to shoulder in relation to the smooth running of the ritual and the community sitting together. From the beginning to the end of the event there was a warm interaction between the people. The message conveyed in the Salo Taduppa ritual is that people always remember their ancestors, protect nature, be grateful for God's gift for the provision given, and be harmonious with each other.

In this case, ritual is a process of implementing tradition, while tradition is a cultural product, or the development of human activity as a social being and a cultural creator. This tradition is called a cultural medium for man and by this means he is able to adapt himself to his experiences in his entire environment. In this environment, human thoughts, feelings and actions toward feelings are beyond the reach of everyday experience with himself, his friends, and with the real world that has made us believe. Myth is understood as a story that tells the truth that ignores the scientific method and is not scientifically debunked.

The Salo Taduppa ritual proves that culture and communication interact closely and dynamically. According to [Mulyana, 2008: 14] that the essence of culture is communication, because culture arises because of communication, and culture is created influencing the way of communicating members of the culture of the community concerned. Several kinds of cultural or cultural characteristics according to Mulyana [2008: 122], including the following:

- a. Culture is not innate but learned.
- b. Culture can be passed from person to person, from group to group, and from generation to generation.
- c. Culture based on symbols.
- d. Culture is dynamic, a system that changes over time.
- e. Culture is selective, representing a limited number of behavioral patterns of human experience.
- f. Various cultural elements are interrelated.
- g. Ethnocentric (considering one's own culture as the best or the standard for judging other cultures).

From the above description, it can be concluded that culture has a very large function for humans and society. Seeing that society also needs satisfaction, both in the spiritual and material fields. Most of the needs are met by a culture that originates in the community itself.

Meanwhile, in general, social experts assume that cultural value orientation is an indicator for understanding human resource capabilities and quality. In the concept of a whole human being that includes both physical and spiritual dimensions, value orientation is one of the factors that help shape the condition and spiritual potential of humans [Wayan, in Basrowi, 2014: 80].

### **3.2 Mutual Cooperation between Communities**

Koentjaraningrat, [1974: 19] defines culture as the whole system of ideas, actions, and human work in the context of community life which is made the property of humans by learning. The word learning gives the sense that there are many actions of human life in a society that are not done by learning. Indeed, "culture" and "cultural action" are all actions that humans must do by learning. Departing from the culture in the Salo Taduppa ritual, there are values about a caring soul between fellow communities, cooperation is very visible in this ritual process. Objects and offerings represent good wishes.

Currently, mutual cooperation activities are starting to be rare, especially in urban areas. This happens because it is influenced by technological developments that bring people into modern life, while in rural areas mutual cooperation can still be found, although eroded by the advancement of times and technology such attitudes are still preserved until now. Mutual cooperation rural areas can be found in certain cultural events such as traditions in the village. This tradition is one of the factors in maintaining the attitude of cooperation in rural communities. The attitude of cooperation that makes rural people show friendliness because of the attitude of togetherness and does not differentiate one from another, does not differentiate between social classes.

The awareness from every level of society to participate in the Salo Taduppa ritual is a sign that the ritual can create social care, sincerely helps each other, and pray for one another. Communication is a contact relationship between humans, both individuals, and groups. In everyday life, whether we realize it or not, communication is a part of human life itself. Humans from birth have communicated with their environment [Widjaja, 2008: 1].

### 3.3 Symbol Theory

In this study, tradition is seen as symbols with certain meanings, where typical communication activities have specific events as symbols with certain meanings as a result of the interaction of the people of Karama Village, Bulukumba Regency, carrying out the Salo Taduppa ritual.

The symbol comes from the Greek word *symbollo* which means to throw together, throw or put together in one idea or idea the object is visible so that the object represents the idea. Symbols can lead a person into ideas of the future or the past. Symbols are manifested in images, shapes, movements, or objects that represent an idea. Although symbols are not values in themselves, symbols are very necessary for the benefit of the appreciation of the values they represent. Symbols can be used for any purpose, such as science, social life, as well as religion. Symbols form not only in the form of visible objects but also through movement and speech. Symbols are also used as one of the language infrastructure, which is known as the language of symbols [B, Fritz, Doroth, 1952].

The meaning of the relationship between an object and its symbol. Meaning is formed based on the relationship between the communication symbol (symbol) and the user's human mind (object) [Vardiansyah, 2004: 70-71]. The symbol is a stimulus that contains the meaning and value that is learned for humans [Mulyana, 2004: 77]. The meaning of symbols is often limited to its conventional sign, which is something that is built by society or individuals with a certain meaning that is more or less the standard agreed upon or used by the community members.

The leading and very useful symbol theory was created by Susanne Langer. Langer's theory is very useful because it confirms several concepts and terms commonly used in the field of communication. This theory has a standardization for the semiotic tradition in communication studies. According to Langer in Morissan [2013: 135], animal life is governed by feelings, but human feelings are mediated by several concepts, symbols, and language. Animals respond to signs, but humans need more than just signs, humans need symbols.

Symbols are used in more complex ways by getting a person to think about something separate from their presence. A symbol is "an instrument of thought". The symbol is a human conceptualization of something, a symbol that exists for something [Littlejohn, 2009: 153]. Humans, as creatures who recognize symbols, use symbols to express who they are. Humans in living their lives may not be alone but in groups or called the community, because one another needs each other. Humans as members of society in carrying out their interactions often use symbols to understand their interactions.

The functions of symbols according to Raho [2007: 110] are as follows:

- a. Symbols allow humans to relate to the material and social world by allowing them to name, create categories, and remember objects they find anywhere. In this case, language has a very important role.
- b. Symbols perfect humans to understand their environment.
- c. Symbols enhance the human ability to think. In this sense, thinking can be considered as a symbolic interaction with oneself.
- d. Symbols increase the human ability to solve human problems, while humans can think by using symbols before making choices in doing something.

Blumer's interpretive process has two distinct steps. First, the actor shows himself the objects that are the object of his actions; he must show in himself the things which have meaning. The interaction with itself is something other than a process that communicates with itself. Second, based on the process of communicating with himself, interpretation becomes a matter of dealing with meanings. The actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and changes meanings based on the situation he is in and the direction of his actions.

According to Ritter [2004: 289], The main characteristics of the theory of symbolic interaction are as follows:

- a. Humans can think, this is what distinguishes them from animals.
- b. The ability to think is formed through a process of social interaction.
- c. In human social interaction, studying the meaning and meaning of symbols that will increase their thinking ability.
- d. based on interpretation and the conditions faced by humans will change the meaning and meaning of symbols.
- e. The interconnected patterns of action and interaction that makeup groups and communities.

This people not only interact with other people but symbolically also interact with themselves. This symbolic interaction is carried out using language which is the most extensive, rich, and sophisticated social system.

#### **4 Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research that the author has described in the previous discussion, in general, it can be concluded that the Salo Taduppa ritual is carried out as public gratitude for what is obtained, prayer formate, and as traditional medicine. The symbolic meaning contained in the Salo Taduppa Ritual tradition in Karama Village, Bulukumba Regency is that every offering, food, ritual equipment to movement has a meaning in the form of hope for better, and the implementation of this ritual can build an attitude of cooperation between the community.

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