BETWEEN MYTHS AND ETHOS: FRAMING MESSAGES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION OF KAMPUNG NAGA TASIKMALAYA WEST JAVA

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ABSTRACT. Kampung Naga, also called Naga Village, is a customary community that still preserves the traditions of their ancestors, which in this case is the Sundanese culture. They live adjacent to nature, believe that it is a gift from God, and based on this concept, they consider natural disasters as causes of bad human behavior. This belief exists because the village does not only live in nature but with it as well, and as a customary community, they have their ways of managing it. Therefore, this research aims to determine the myths and ethos associated with environmental communication activities. It also tries to identify the role of traditional leaders in transmitting cultural values to the younger generation through these activities. The results showed that the Naga Village community uses myths and ethos for environmental communication through the Pamali concept and by living with nature. They are also good role models in inheriting values, which become tools to awaken the community and the young generation, and these are often conveyed at traditional events as manifestations of their beliefs in nature. The inheritance of values by the younger generation is performed through the enculturation process to develop customs that will later become social controls in the community.

Keywords: myths; local wisdom; customary community; Naga Village; values internalization

INTRODUCTION

Generally, the needs of a customary community are few, simple, modest. They are accepting of the existence of nature as a friend and even as a part of life. (Asriningpuri et al., 2015). A simple understanding regarding these communities is that they consist of people with a uniqueness inherited from their ancestors. This concerns their views of life, religious traditions, and other values that are ancestral commandments and so, are endeavored to maintain and implement. (Miharja, 2016).

Talking about the life of the Kampung Naga Community from birth to death, cannot be separated from the culture. Culture is the whole system of ideas, behavior, and the results of human behavior, both immaterial and material, culture can be seen as a type of human, which gives birth to a certain lifestyle that is typically and meaningfully different from other groups, which is the result of the manifestation Human behavior and work that contribute to the realization of a lifestyle that has distinctive characteristics. The existence of the Kampung Naga community in a social life and living with nature shows local knowledge and the ability to think and behave which have been institutionalized into customs and become a way of life is a reflection of values of their local wisdom.

The existence of the Naga village community socially and with nature shows local knowledge, thoughtfulness, and behaviors that have been
institutionalized into customs and life guidelines and are valuable reflections of their local wisdom.

Local wisdom can be defined as noble values contained in cultural assets, as traditions, principles, and life mottos. It is a manifestation of the behavior of a particular community, which allows nature and the environment to coexist without being destroyed (Sufia et al., 2016).

Traditional or local wisdom is rooted in the history of local life and is used as a reference for order and culture, with each community possessing the wisdom to maintain unity, integrity, and clan identity. Furthermore, it means a comprehensive insight or perspective that comes from life (Sukmayadi, 2016). Because tradition is part of the culture, this wisdom can differ from one group to another. According to Sumunar et al. (2014), local wisdom is beneficial to community lives and is considered very valuable. The system was developed because of the need to live, maintain, and continue existing according to the situations, conditions, abilities, and values in the community concerned. Therefore, local wisdom becomes a part of the way of life to solve all encountered problems (Setyawati et al., 2014).

Naga village has a strong character and is fenced by powerful customs, which form a distinctive entity in the domination of the Sundanese culture. The strength of the community character is built through the cultivation of values that are closely held and led by the kuncen of the village, particularly the traditional elders. Meanwhile, local wisdom is found in several groups in Indonesia, and it contains numerous noble values of the nation’s culture that is still as strong as the identity of the community character. Although the value of local wisdom is often neglected or ignored because it is considered incompatible with the times, this study promotes noble ideals that can be used as a model for the development of Indonesian culture.

Individual attitudes and actions are part of the community in Kampung Naga which has various desired goals in everyday life. Individuals have ways of maintaining and collecting various traditions of life. Have tools to collect information, record various potentials that are and will occur, and all of them are influenced by the value orientation they have. The traditions used can be special actions, such as meditation, pamali, prohibitions, religious rituals or individual actions related to social structures that lead to existing values, meaning that actions are motivated by religious or religious values. In this case, the Naga village community behaviors influenced by the structure of community beliefs, namely beliefs, culture, customs which are the local wisdom of the community that are firmly held in interacting with God, humans and nature.

Local wisdom functions in building character, and values that become attitudes, so, beliefs of community members are internalized and preserved continuously in education, family, and society units (Subekti et al., 2019). This internalization is through teaching to improve knowledge and becoming accustomed to behavior. It is also performed by exemplifying to provide role models, as well as enforcing well-motivated and strict rules so that people are aware of what should be implemented.

Local wisdom has become a core ethical value, which is continuously internalized and preserved by all community members in their homes, and manifested in their daily behaviors. It is inseparable from the supporters and usually covers all elements of human culture, including religious systems, language, economy, technology, education, social organization, and art. This begins from ideas, which are then applied in the practical stages and during the creation of cultural materials. Furthermore, it will continue to develop according to the times, the intensity of social interactions, and socio-cultural enculturation (Marpaung, 2013). The ethnic ranking of local wisdom can occur in various fields, for example, in response to the surrounding nature, humans build houses with spiritual aspects to protect them. A customary community has an individualistic way of managing nature (Boiral et al., 2020), which is by recognizing it as a friend and a gift from the Almighty that requires constant protection (Kakoty, 2018). According to these people, nature will care for them if it is protected, and from this, behaviors and attitudes that believe in nature and live in harmony are developed. Environmental communication is a strategy and/or concept of rules, and people that receive it can understand what they have to do to protect nature. Also, these persons can recognize the government or environmental activists’ actions to prevent floods, improve the quality of nature, and be cautious of threats to human health and surroundings (Bakti et al., 2017).

In essence, local wisdom plays a role in people’s lives both in terms of social, economic and belief. Local wisdom in society can become a norm that regulates the behavior of individuals in society. Local wisdom can be an internal control based on antidotes such as fear of spiritual sanctions and revenge through magic. So that the individual who makes a mistake feels that he will be punished, even though no other individual in society knows his mistake. For example, in Kampung Naga, there is a forbidden forest that residents may not use at all with the term taboo/pamali if used (pantangan). The term pamali, taboo or taboo is indeed an obligation...
which is an unwritten law that must be obeyed by the community. Including the matter of maintaining the sustainability of the forbidden forest.

The function of local wisdom is as a way of life or behavior in the community and its relationship with the environment, for example in the community on the slopes of Mount Merapi. In the community on the slopes of Merapi, local wisdom in the form of myths, prohibitions and taboos acts as an unwritten rule that functions as forest conservation. Local wisdom in the community on the slopes of Merapi is a form of ecological wisdom. Behind the myth which contains prohibitions against cutting down trees, looking for grass and hunting for animals on the slopes of Merapi, is actually a form of ecological wisdom of the local community so that the forest and its contents on the slopes of Merapi will always be preserved (Minsarwati, 2002). Similar to the Tengger community in East Java, local wisdom acts as an unwritten rule that guides the community in dealing with problems in everyday life. The Tenggere Community consider natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, landslides, epidemics and others to be events in the supernatural world, therefore the Tenggere community try to reject all kinds of dangers with various kinds of religious rites to try to connect with the world. supernatural (Masmuh & Faturrohman, 2003). With the existence of myths, norms and goals can be obtained, because with myths people understand the relations of life and the meaning of life, myths can provide confidence, hope and comfort when we are hit by a disaster.

The study describe the myths and ethos associated with environmental communication activities with a qualitative paradigm, by inductive thinking, with a typology of qualitative rationalistic approaches. These steps were performed to determine the myths and ethos of environmental communication activities. Also, the role of traditional leaders in transmitting cultural values through these practices to the younger generation was examined.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach, which was considered suitable as it was natural and required integrity that corresponded with the study problem. Also, it was in line with the inculcation of valuable characters based on local wisdom. Furthermore, qualitative methods were used to examine the conditions of the natural object, as opposed to experiments, and the researcher was utilized as the key instrument. The data was collected through triangulation or combined techniques, a descriptive product obtained and then analyzed by inductive methods. (Mulyana, 2002). Meanwhile, the results of this qualitative research emphasized the meaning rather than generalization (Moleong, 2000).

The study observed and interviewed five people of the residents of the Naga community that performed their work activities by the internalization of valuable characters. They were represented by Kuncen Kampung Naga, Indung Beurang or traditional health workers, and three indigenous people of the village.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher that went into the field to obtain information through observation and interviews. An inter-human approach was employed, meaning that more contact was made with the indigenes or people around the location during the research process. Therefore, there was freedom to seek detailed information and data on various materials required for the investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

National culture is interpreted as a value, norm, and civilization that is inherited and taught to future generations. It is also an order that regulates a nation and social life according to already taught values and norms, which are the core of educational processes (Bruno, 2019). Therefore, several processes must be performed for education to be a cultural mission. The first is cultural inheritance, then helping individuals choose social roles and teaching them to perform these functions. Third, education should integrate various individual identities into a wider cultural scope, and fourth, it must be a source of social innovation.

A culture that is profitable and can maintain the existence of society in the natural, biological, and physical environment will be passed on to future generations to form a tradition. According to Soekanto, there are three cultural functions of society, namely the protection of people from the natural environment, the initiative to regulate community life, known as customs, and the creativity to express desires or feelings (Ningrum, 2012) the aim of this research is to analyze the traditional dynamic community of Kampung Naga, especially to: (1.

Concerning culture, Naga villagers remain adherent to their customs and traditions to this day and continue to use cooking, farming, and other daily tools, without utilizing modern equipment. Customary communities are known as people that deeply love and uphold traditions. Their fear of natural disasters, death, hunger, curses, taboos, and threats to their lives has created various traditions...
that are still in existence (Hamid et al., 2018); (Schwann, 2018) located on traditional territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Peoples in British Columbia (Canada. These traditions are confirmed by a set of values contained in their original religious or belief systems and manifested in traditional ceremonies. Therefore, the existence of customary communities is usually bound by traditions that respect patterns of relationships that are in harmony with their natural and social environment.

Naga villagers have a mindset and behavior that results from conformity and adherence to traditions passed down from one generation to another through orders and prohibitions. Furthermore, society has become a vehicle for the process of inheriting socio-cultural values, innovation, and transformation, and this inheritance, also known as enculturation, is the process by which traditions or customs are formed. Cultural obedience and inheritance of social values, norms, and rules are continuous activities, and the key person in preserving them is the Kuncen. Furthermore, customs guide patterns of good and bad behaviors, obligations, and taboos (Ningrum, 2012) the aim of this research is to analyze the traditional dynamic community of Kampung Naga, especially to: (1).

The life of a society in principle always follows complex guidelines for attitudes and behavior, such as norms, beliefs, rules, laws, and so on. The whole thing is what drives humans to behave and behave. Thus, it can be said that values and norms are references and guidelines for people’s lives in carrying out their daily activities. In other words, values and norms are part of a pattern of life that cannot be separated. The pattern of life provides a benchmark for society in terms of bad and good choices, may and may not be as well as other social rules.

Living alongside nature is a belief held firmly by the Naga villagers in Neglasari, Salawu sub-District, Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java. This is because the residents continue to maintain the karuhun or ancestral customs and traditions that have been around for hundreds of years. One of such customs is the preservation of the forest upstream of the river, known as the Biuk Forest or Leuwueng Naga, which has an area of about 1.5 hectares. These villagers believe that their lives will not be saved should the forest be unpreserved.

The principle of life combined with nature has been proven to make the Ciwulan River last forever and also provide benefits for many people on its banks. According to the Naga village community, one of their Natural Conservation Concepts is the division of the area into three parts. These are Leuwueng Larangan, Leuwueng Resapan, and Leuwueng Garapeun, and this division is for the use of traditional tools and natural materials for bathing, which are intended to preserve nature around the village.

The protection is manifested in the concept of preserving a forest located upstream of the Ciwulan River, and it is believed that the existence of large trees in these protected forests will continue to provide continuous water flow into the River. The presence of various large trees and medicinal plants thriving in Biuk Forest is unsurprising. No one is allowed to enter this forest, which is located at the foot of Karacak Mount, including the Naga Villagers. Furthermore, the residents are not permitted to touch any fallen trees in the forest, and even when allowed to collect surrounding medicinal plants, they are obligated to obey the orders of the traditional elders. The existence of the prohibited leuwueng or sacred forest proves that the Naga community also executes natural conservation. This area is sacred, and no community members dare to enter because they genuinely appreciate the pikuku or customary rules. The region surrounds the sacred grave and the forest across the Ciwulan River, so nobody is allowed to take forest products, and entry is permitted only on certain days. Hence, it is pamali or taboo or to enter the area when forbidden (Hendiawan & Astuti, 2017).

Lewueng prohibitions are sacred areas, such as forests, that are well-guarded by the community and are never entered or destroyed. The belief of maintaining forests in customary territories is the result of obedience to ancestral inheritance and mandates. Therefore, the condition of these sacred areas is an example of community ethics and behaviors in assessing forests that have been maintained for a long time (Nurkamilah, 2018). These behaviors also include conservation efforts that are not widely practiced by modern society.

Leuwueng Garapan is an area where land is cultivated into agricultural plantations by using traditional tools. Therefore, these farm products, which are only used for personal food and needs, are not sold at markets. The harvested rice is sundried before being kept in the leuit or the storage area, while some villagers raise chickens, goats, cows, and fish. Other residents that are not involved in agricultural activities craft souvenirs and kitchen utensils from bamboo and wood, such as bushcraft and gardening tools. (Wiradimadja, 2018).

The natural environment in Naga Village is both profane and sacred. This means that the community is in harmony with a profane environment, which also
reflected the inclusion in an ecosystem that interacts with other natural components. The components are either biological or physical and are formed through ethics obtained from customs or related laws. Meanwhile, the sacred environment of this village corresponds with nature, and their respect for it is shown by performing sacred mythical ceremonies to maintain the natural environment, which has been exemplified by their ancestors.

Their desire is not to destroy but to unite and adapt to nature. This makes the community use only simple equipment without technology. Some of the equipment includes hoes in place of tractors, wood fuel rather than gas stoves, as well as kerosene lamps and bamboo materials instead of electricity and brick walls, etc. This concept corresponds with the efficient and sustainable energy contained in a natural ecosystem, where efforts are made to use low technology tools with a short processing time. (Nuzuluddin & Andadari, 2019).

Myths and ethos as message packaging in environmental communication

The Naga community has specific unwritten rules formulated as prohibitions, pamali, or taboo, as well as wills and consequences. These legal provisions made by the ancestors cannot be disobeyed and should be upheld by all, and anyone in violation will not be clearly sanctioned but will personally receive the consequences. The unwritten rules pertain to the method of building, the house shape, location, and direction, as well as ceremonial clothing, art, etc., and are some of the local geniuses that continue to be held fast.

There is a legitimacy regarding these prohibitions, which has been understood and obeyed from one generation to another as a sincere social awareness, without written threats and sanctions. It is the word “prohibition,” known as “Pamali,” which implies a taboo and a magical nature that cannot be questioned. Pamali possesses the meaning of prohibiting, as well as unmeasurable sanctions, and the expression has become a signpost in managing nature (Nurdiansah, 2017).

This concept is local wisdom formulated as a prohibition that is continuously instilled in the younger generation through the examples of good behaviors and role models. Pamali is the guardian of all words and behavior, and the combination with traditional community life is no longer a strange phenomenon. In reality, traditional societies are still classified as mystical because they still believe in mythical entities and the advice of their ancestors that live alongside the reality of life.

Pamali is a prohibition for individuals to speak or act badly towards their environment. It is usually associated with another word, “myth,” which is considered by some as a story that cannot be justified based on human reason and logic. Myths are collections of stories or tales transmitted from one generation to another and believed by a certain group. They are considered to have a certain relationship with past human lives, and many parents in this village still uphold their beliefs about the truth of these myths.

There are several categories of myths: 1) Myths in the form of gugon tahun, namely those in the form of certain prohibitions. If the prohibition is violated, it will receive bad consequences; 2) Myth in the form of associative shadows. This myth appears in the dream world. This means that people believe in good dreams and bad dreams. If someone has a bad dream, a salvation will be held to avoid unwanted things; 3) Myths in the form of fairy tales, legends and stories. This is believed to have a strong legitimacy in the minds of the people; 4) Myth in the form of sirikan (which must be avoided), the emphasis of this myth is on things that should not be done (ora ilok or pamali). In addition, myths have the following characteristics: a) myths have sacred or sacred characteristics; b) myths can only be found in the world of myths, or lives in the past; c) myth only refers to important events; d) the truth of the myth is not important (Endraswara, 2013).

It can be said that myth is part of the culture of society. Myths cannot be separated from culture, myths are born from people’s views of an event or event that is considered extraordinary. Myths have an important meaning in the lives of people who adhere to them. Myth is a form of oral folklore that is passed down by word of mouth, and myth is a tradition that is believed to reveal a certain truth.

Everything that is forbidden in Naga village begins with the keyword, “Pamali,” and for this community, it is the prohibition of actions that are considered bad. It was inherited from previous leaders and ancestors and has been believed and obeyed by residents from previous generations up till now.

The reason behind the myths these villagers believe in is either because they are real or simply that they have become accustomed to living with them. Myths are part of the belief system in society, beliefs that attract people’s attention to things that are supernatural and unreasonable, especially in matters related to their daily lives. This is reflected in people’s belief in natural events beyond the reach of human power, such as birth, death, the journey of the universe, disasters and other natural events.
Behind the incident, people believe that there is an influence of extraordinary power, full of mystery, while humans cannot prove it with their minds.

Sometimes the words “pamali” and “myth” are much more powerful than laws or statutes, and if examined, moral messages can be indeed found to be contained in them. In essence, myth plays a role in people’s lives both in terms of social, economic and belief. Myths in society can become a norm that regulates the behavior of individuals in society. Myth is one of the internal control tools. Internal control is based on antidotes such as fear of spiritual sanctions and retribution through magic (Horton & Horton, 2019). So that the individual who makes a mistake feels that he will be punished, even though no other individual in society knows his mistake.

A pamali sentence learned during a conversation with Mang Ntang was filled with moral messages, “Remember, we don’t live in nature but with it. (Ningrum, 2012) the aim of this research is to analyze the traditional dynamic community of Kampung Naga, especially to: (1. For Naga village, cultural consequences have high spiritual values, and the sanctions only appear as sin or guilt. However, they are felt by the perpetrator as a burden that torments the mind, even if the violation is unknown by others. Therefore, these cultural sanctions show the same high knowledge and awareness as the religious equivalents.

Myths as message packaging in environmental communication

Although these sanctions are only as sin or guilt and felt by the offender, the consequences have a high spiritual value for this community. Also, they show advanced knowledge and awareness similar to religious sanctions (Ningrum, 2012) the aim of this research is to analyze the traditional dynamic community of Kampung Naga, especially to: (1. Prohibition, consequences, and kuncen are informal social controls, which are psychological and non-physical powers, expressed as mental pressure on citizens that do not obey orders and taboos.

Knowledge of myths and ethos is instilled into the youth of Naga village through a process of environmental communication. This is promoted by inheriting cultural values, with the essence of living and caring for nature, which will, in turn, protect them. By the provision of early education and examples of good behavior to children through a pilot process, parents do not command but show what is good and bad. Education plays an important role from the earliest age to adulthood (Horton & Horton, 2019). And is filled with environmental messages so that it will be embedded in the younger generation that their village exists with nature.

Myth for the people who support it is not just an interesting story or considered historic, but a statement of high truth, which provides a pattern and foundation for life. The value system that exists in society is stored in the ideas or thoughts of a society, which will always be upheld and obeyed. From these mythical stories emerge norms in the form of prohibitions or just advice.

He existence with nature was emphasized by Kuncen Desa Naga through the following statement: Kalakah nyengel mun aya bencana alam teh, teusalah, Anu nyebut bencana alam kumaha kayakinan di urang anu nyeupeng agama Islam nyen anu nyipta keun alam teh sifat tanah iyeu Maha welas, Maha asih Maha suci, moal mungkin anu Maha suci ngadamel alam jang ngajadikeun hiji bencana, beca keun ka urang luhur ni kieu mah lain bencana alam tapi bencana akhlak. (Natural disasters do not exist, and the concept is wrong. Since nature was created by an all-gracious and merciful God, and cannot create disasters for humans. A disaster caused by human behavior, which destroys nature is behavioral and not natural).

The customs of these people protect against changes that are considered to disturb the social balance hence, they reject external negative influences. An example is modern equipment that can damage the harmony of their life with nature. However, external factors that do not conflict with customs or have negative impacts on the nature of their adoption are accepted, for instance, they use mobile phones for communication. Naga village is open to innovations that do not conflict with their customs and so have experienced socio-economic changes without social disputes. This is because the innovations adopted agree with their customs.

The transmission of traditional values of parents to the younger generation is important, as it helps them to know and understand indigenous and customs. This prevents them from being uprooted by the entry of other negative cultures (Rath & Suryana, 2019).
2013). Examples of good behavior are the most effective ways to internalize and disseminate cultural values and norms to the younger generation. The development of these values by parents provides real role models for the younger generation to appreciate and internalize them because these are not taught, but rather, are imitated.

Cultural values are concepts about what lives in the minds of most people about what they consider good, valuable, valuable and important in life, so that they can function as guidelines that give direction and orientation to people’s lives. Value is something that is considered good, something we seek, something pleasant, in short value is something good. Values are an important part of culture. An action is considered valid, meaning that it is morally acceptable if it is in harmony with acceptable values. Value is also an idea about whether experience is meaningful or not.

CONCLUSION

The Naga community can adapt, interact, and forge harmonious relationships with both their social and natural environments. Local wisdom in this village refers to the existence of empowerment in utilizing natural potentials based on socio-cultural values. Furthermore, it is reflected in behaviors concerning various fields of life, both in social arrangements and in interacting with the natural environment. For this community, local wisdom functions as a guide and behavior controller, which guarantees them a sustainable life force in a preserved natural and harmonious social environment. Obeying and passing on customs to the Naga community is a dogmatic imperative, as these cultures have shaped the personalities of the people and caused the society to have traditional characteristics.

Naga village utilizes myths and ethos for environmental communication through the Pamali concept, as well as living with nature, and providing good role models to assist in inheriting values. These tools, which are often conveyed at traditional events as a manifestation of their beliefs in nature, serve to awaken the community and the younger generation. Finally, the process of inheriting socio-cultural values or enculturation form customs and values, which will later become social control in the community

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