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Journal of Borneo-Kalimantan

Welcome to Volume 10, Issue 2 of the Journal of Borneo Kalimantan!

Welcome to the latest edition of the Journal of Borneo-Kalimantan (JBK).

In this issue, we present to you articles showcasing the diversity of topics relating to Borneo-Kalimantan, ranging from ethnomathematics, indigenous language, development and political cultures.

The first article by Jackson Pasini Mairing et al explores the geometrical dimension in the longhouses in the Central Kalimantan. The second article, 'A Brief Linguistic Outline of Hobongan Language' is an attempt at describing a language spoken by 2000 speakers in Kalimantan. The third article by Shalini Amerasinghe Ganendra reviews the Bario Rice Project since its implementation in 2017 which highlights the implementation challenges and the socio-economic consequence to the Kelabit community. The fourth article 'Perspektif Masyarakat Kajang tentang Pelantikan Pemimpin' by Norsawani Ubau offers a unique insight into the relevance of aristocratic leadership in the age of democracy, by focusing on the perspective of the Kajang communities in Belaga, Sarawak. In particular, the article demonstrates the continuing significance of aristocracy in perpetuating the Kajang's socio-political identity which for the people represents one of the most visible heritage from a minority social group in Sarawak. The final article by Lavenne Hunyang Lemali, 'Budaya Politik Berteraskan Nilai' is an interesting article that describes the political culture of the Kayan in Belaga which is based on religion, specifically, Christianity. The author underlines the ways in which a value-based political culture shaped the practice of politics in the community that is tolerant, non-confrontational and moderate.

We express gratitude to all the contributors for choosing JBK as the destination of your work. To our readers, have a thoughtful reading and do write to us for any feedbacks.

Happy New Year 2025!

Prof Dr Poline Bala
Chief Editor
Editorial Team

Ethnomathematics Of *Batang Damang Batu*: Exploration of Traditional Dayak Ngaju Housing In Tumbang Anoi, Central Kalimantan, In Geometry Materials

**Jackson Pasini Mairing¹, Sugiharto², Whendy Trissan³, Muhammad Rizaldi⁴,
Oktaviana Ainun Ratnawati⁵, Pancarita⁶**
University of Palangara, Indonesia

Corresponding author: jp-mairing@math.upr.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Mathematics and culture are often considered unrelated, even though mathematics is an important part of culture that emerges from daily activities. This research is intended to explore the ethnomathematics of *Batang Damang Batu Dayak Ngaju Tumbang Anoi Central Kalimantan* towards the concept of geometry. The approach taken is qualitative with ethnography design. The subjects of this research were *Batang Damang Batu* itself and two interviewers. Data collection was done by collecting documents and interview results. The results of this study, *Batang Damang Batu* contains a variety of significant cultural values and can be used as teaching materials in learning mathematics. The concepts of geometry such as volume, surface area, distance of certain objects, length of line segments and angles in *Batang Damang Batu* can be applied to school math materials. Every part and history of *Batang Damang Batu* has a moral value. The large central space represents harmonious relations between families, despite the potential for conflict they managed to maintain peace. The ancestors of the Dayak tribe preserved the forest to obtain quality wood material, which also emphasizes the importance of environmental conservation and avoiding deforestation in order to obtain quality wood. In addition, the shape and structure of the *batang* has a spiritual meaning, where ancestors always started important activities with traditional ceremonies as an expression of gratitude. There are still many things or buildings in Indonesia, especially Central Kalimantan, that contain ethnomathematics and have never been discussed. It is hoped that this research can be the beginning of further ethnomathematics research.

Keywords: Batang Damang Batu, Ethnomathematics, Geometry, Three-Dimensional Space Objects, Tumbang Anoi

INTRODUCTION

Mathematics and culture are often considered unrelated because mathematics is viewed as neutral, abstract, and free from cultural influence. However, mathematics is an essential part of culture, emerging from everyday activities, making the two inseparable (Pathuddin *et al.*, 2023). One form of exploring this connection is through ethnomathematics, which studies mathematical ideas, activities, and procedures integrated into people's daily lives. Ethnomathematics is a field that explores the relationship between mathematics and socio-cultural contexts, showing how mathematical concepts are produced, disseminated,

and distributed within systems of cultural diversity (D'Ambrosio, 1985). Furthermore, ethnomathematics acts as a bridge connecting cultural preservation and local wisdom with technological and artistic advancement through science (Mairing *et al.*, 2024; Risdiyanti & Indra Prahmana, 2020).

There is a wealth of ethnomathematics research in Indonesia, owing to its rich cultural heritage. Ethnomathematics research usually explores and connects cultural objects such as clothing design motifs, traditional infrastructure, antiques, and many others with geometric concepts (Turmuzi *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, ethnomathematics is often integrated into geometry lessons. Additionally, schools also instill historical and philosophical values in students, which are crucial in shaping their character. These include confidence, sympathy, empathy, respect for others, concern for social issues, and a sense of responsibility (Widodo, 2019). As a result, geometry learning based on ethnomathematics becomes more meaningful (Wahyuni & Safitri, 2023).

Fouze & Amit (2018) stated that there are five aspects of ethnomathematics learning: (1) the ethnomathematics approach teaches that every culture contains mathematical elements and that these cultural elements shape mathematical thinking; (2) ethnomathematics includes all aspects of cultural objects, including their history or creation; (3) mathematical concepts or materials originate from culture and develop into general mathematical concepts; (4) ethnomathematics learning also teaches philosophical values embedded in the culture; and (5) integrating cultural principles and methods with formal mathematics should help students understand and apply mathematical principles, blending cultural values into the goals of mathematics education.

Ethnomathematics is also seen as a solution to overcome students' difficulties in learning geometry. Some difficulties include a lack of motivation to learn geometry and a failure to grasp the material meaningfully. Students often memorize formulas taught in class without being guided to discover those principles, resulting in short-term retention of the formulas (Bora *et al.*, 2024), and they struggle to apply them in problem-solving (Irenewati *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, ineffective teaching models, poor learning quality, inadequate facilities, and environments unsuitable for geometry content are also major contributing factors (Ali & Ni'mah, 2023; Fitriyani *et al.*, 2023; Zahra *et al.*, 2024). One way to address these challenges is by implementing ethnomathematics. Positively perceiving ethnomathematics can make it easier for students to learn and appreciate their local culture (Mania & Alam, 2021; Wiryanto *et al.*, 2022).

Research shows that ethnomathematics-based learning has several advantages. First, it improves students' understanding of the material (Herawaty *et al.*, 2019). Second, it enhances students' representational abilities (Widada *et al.*, 2019) and mathematical communication (Hartinah *et al.*, 2019). Third, students' ability to solve mathematical problems increases with ethnomathematics-based learning (Jabar *et al.*, 2022; Lubis *et al.*, 2021; Nur *et al.*, 2020; Putri & Junaedi, 2022). Fourth, students develop critical and creative thinking through ethnomathematics learning (Faiziyah *et al.*, 2020; Imswatama & Lukman, 2018). Fifth, it improves students' numeracy skills (Manoy & Purbaningrum, 2021). Sixth, students internalize and develop positive attitudes through ethnomathematics (Mairing & Nini, 2023). These findings align with the benefits of contextualizing mathematics in everyday life, specifically through the cultural elements ingrained in society.

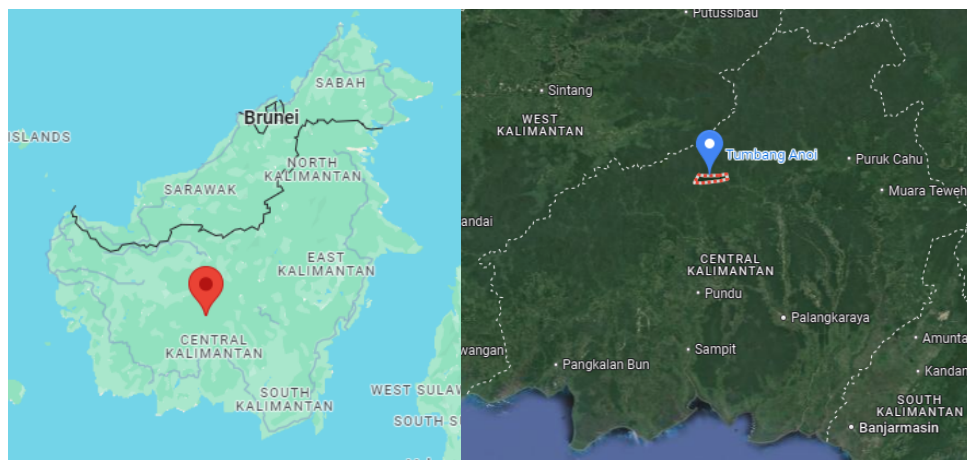
Several studies have explored buildings with strong cultural ties to geometry, such as traditional structures like *bale langgak*, *bale tani*, *bale bonter*, *bale gunungrate*, and *sambi*, all of which incorporate geometric objects (Supiyati *et al.*, 2019). *The Gentala arsy*, a traditional building in Jambi, contains geometric elements such as cuboids, octagonal prisms, cylinders, and half-ellipsoids (Fitriani *et al.*, 2018), while the *Temple of Heaven* integrates geometric concepts along with religious and cultural values in its structure, interior, and exterior design (Zhang *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, several studies have explored the cultural motifs and dances of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan. For instance, ethnomathematics learning that adopts *Dayak Ngaju* cultural motifs by Mairing *et al.* (2024) can help students internalize and

develop positive attitudes from the local wisdom embedded in these motifs. The concept of *belum bahadat* (living by cultural norms) is embodied in the *dandang tingang* motif, which emphasizes the importance of living ethically with others and the surrounding environment. Mangkin *et al.* (2021) also explored the *Tari Dadas Bawo* of the *Dayak Ma'anyan* tribe for ethnomathematics-based learning. Their findings revealed geometric concepts in the hand movements, footwork, and formations of *Tari Dadas Bawo*, including acute, obtuse, and right angles, two-dimensional geometry such as parallel lines, triangles, and circles, as well as geometric transformations like reflection, rotation, and translation. However, there has yet to be a study focusing on the ethnomathematical aspects of traditional Dayak housing, specifically *Betang*, which is used by the Dayak people as a local cultural product. Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study is: "What ethnomathematical aspects are related to the *Betang* used by *Dayak Ngaju* people in *Tumbang Anoi*, Central Kalimantan?" and "What local values or wisdom can be learned from this *Betang*?" The findings of this study could enrich previous ethnomathematical studies on the Dayak tribe in Kalimantan, Indonesia, particularly the Dayak Ngaju community in Tumbang Anoi.

The research aims to explore the ethnomathematics of *Betang Dayak Ngaju* in *Tumbang Anoi* Central Kalimantan. *Betang* is a large traditional stilt house of the Dayak people in Central Kalimantan. Its length ranges from 30 to 150 meters, with a width between 10 and 30 meters. The house stands on stilts, raised 3 to 4 meters above the ground. A *Betang* can house up to 200 people, with each family having their own room and kitchen in the partitioned spaces inside the house (Riwut *et al.*, 2003). Additionally, future researchers could develop an ethnomathematics-based learning model based on these findings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach with an *ethnographic design* (Lodico *et al.*, 2010). The research was conducted in Tumbang Anoi village, Central Kalimantan, a historic place for the Dayak people. Tumbang Anoi is located at coordinates 0.8151° S; 113.1680° E. It was the site of a significant meeting in 1894 that ended the tradition of *mengayau*. The meeting took place in a *Betang* (longhouse), which will be studied further through the lens of ethnomathematics. Below is Picture 1 showing the location of Tumbang Anoi.



Picture 1 *Betang Tumbang Anoi Map Location*

Data collection focuses on answering the following questions: (1) “What is the history of *Betang Damang Batu*?”; (2) “What are the size, shape, and materials of the components of *Betang Damang Batu*?”; (3) “What cultural values can be derived from *Betang Damang Batu*?”; and (4) “How can the mathematical concepts in *Betang Damang Batu* be applied?” The researcher collected data by exploring the cultural object of *Betang Damang Batu*, including the book “*Manaser Panatau Tatu Hiang 2*”, photographs, videos, and the size, shape, and structure of *Betang Damang Batu* by visiting the site directly. Interviews were also conducted with experts, including a Dayak Ngaju building specialist and a cultural leader, *Damang* of Central Kalimantan. The book was used to understand the history of *Betang Damang Batu*, while photos and videos provided detailed views of the cultural object’s shape and size for ethnomathematical analysis. Interview results were used to uncover the local wisdom behind *Betang Damang Batu*. These findings are expected to teach mathematical concepts and cultural values inherent in *Betang Damang Batu*.

Data collection and analysis in qualitative research is an inductive process. Data analysis is highly subjective, as the collected data is presented based on the researcher’s interpretation. Data analysis (Creswell, 2009; Lodico *et al.*, 2010) in this study begins with: (1) Organizing the collected data. The organization starts by focusing on the components of *Betang Damang Batu*, their relationship to mathematical concepts, and the cultural values they represent. (2) Next, the books, photographs, videos, and interview results will be reviewed and further explored. The book will be studied, photographs will be analyzed for their ethnomathematical value, and interviews will be transcribed. (3) Afterward, the interviews will be coded to identify the history and cultural values conveyed by the respondents. The coding will consist of a combination of 7 alphabetic and numeric characters. The first two digits represent the subject code, where the first subject (building expert) will be coded as S1, and the second subject (*Damang*) will be coded as S2. The third and fourth digits represent the topic to be explored: SB refers to the history of the *Betang*, KB refers to its components, and NM refers to moral values. The last three digits represent the line number in the transcript. For example, S2NM044 refers to the second subject's statement on moral values found in transcript line 44. (4) A deeper description of the photos and interview results will follow. (5) The next step is to triangulate the data by comparing the book with the two interview results. (6) Finally, the researcher will provide an interpretation of the collected data and triangulation results based on their own analysis.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on the collection of documents and interviews with sources regarding *Betang Damang Batu* in Tumbang Anoi, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, the researcher found that there are many cultural elements and ethnomathematical values to discuss and learn from. In this study, the ethnomathematical analysis is divided into three areas of *Betang Damang Batu*: the exterior, the interior, and the structural aspects. The findings from documents and interviews revealed numerous geometric concepts and local wisdom values embedded in *Betang Damang Batu*.

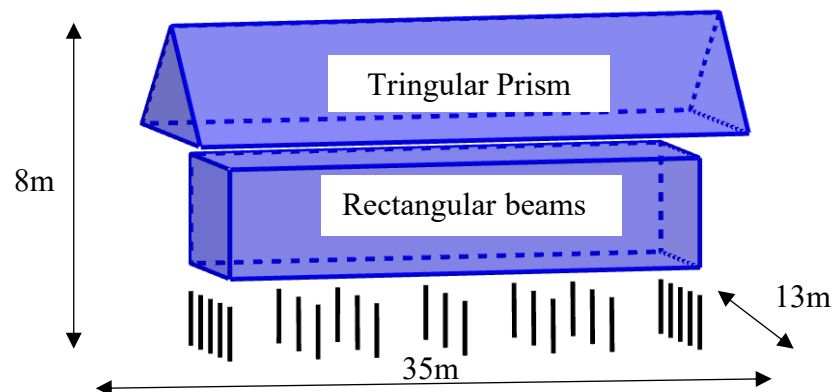
Exterior of *Betang Damang Batu*

The image below (Picture 2) shows the full view of *Betang Damang Batu*. As seen, *Betang Damang Batu* does not resemble typical houses, as it is 65 meters long and built on high stilts. According to interviews, this structure was historically used as a place of peace and housed several tribes and ethnic groups, requiring a long house with many rooms to accommodate more people. *Betang Damang Batu* symbolizes living in harmony among diverse tribes, as it was built to eliminate hostility and conflict between them. More than 300 people gathered for peace negotiations, including participants from regions such as Central, West, East, South, and North Kalimantan, as well as Sarawak. Even foreign tribes, such as the Dutch and English, stayed and attended the peace meetings. After the peace agreements, *Betang Damang Batu* was inhabited and maintained by *Damang Batu*’s descendants. The many family heads living in *Betang* increased the potential for violations of norms, such as moral misconduct. However, *Betang*

community successfully upheld moral values. Thus, the *Betang* was truly constructed to preserve peace and harmony among families and tribes. Additionally, *Betangs* were built on high stilts to protect the inhabitants from wild animal attacks and threats from enemies who opposed peace between tribes.

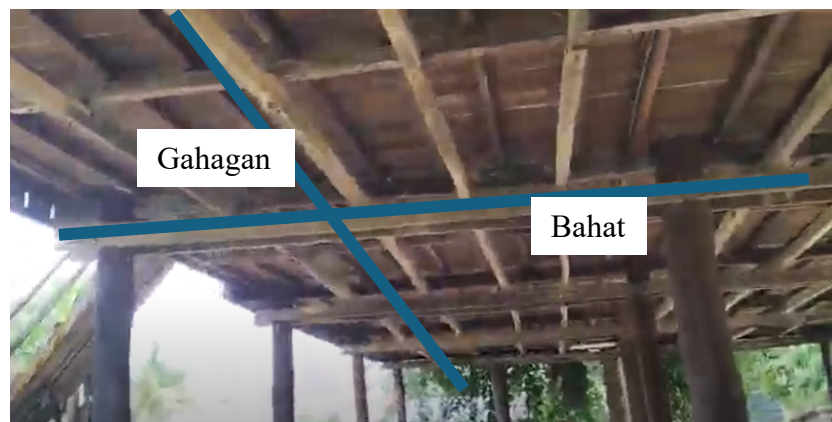


Picture 2 The Whole of Betang Damang Batu from Outside



Picture 3 Betang Damang Batu Space Structure

Based on Picture 3, the geometric structure of *Betang Damang Batu* can be seen as an arrangement of three-dimensional shapes, with the foundation pillars forming parallel lines in a patterned arrangement. The roof of *Betang Damang Batu* is shaped like a triangular prism, while the core part of the house is shaped like a rectangular block. This was also confirmed in the interview with the subject related to the structure of *Betang*. Geometric concepts involving three-dimensional shapes, such as volume, surface area, distances between certain objects, line segment lengths, and the angles found in *Betang Damang Batu*, can be applied to high school mathematics material.



Picture 4 Foundation Structure of Betang Damang Batu

Based on Picture 4, the foundation structure of Betang Damang Batu can be seen. There are 25 founding pillars called *jihi* each approximately 2 meters in size with 5 on each side and 3 in the center. *Jihi* are spaced 5 meters apart in each row of foundation pillars. Meanwhile, the vertical wooden beams (*gahagan*) that support the floor of *betang* consist of 10 pieces, and the horizontal wooden beams (*bahat*) consist of 8 pieces. The arrangement of *bahat* and *gahagan* beams is neatly organized, with each row of pillars and beams spaced equally. What's unique about this *betang* is that it was built without using a single nail. The ancestors used rattan bindings to connect *gahagan* and *bahat* beams. The knot they used carries a deep meaning in the Dayak language: *tege peteng bohul tege peteng matei*. Even without the advanced knowledge we have today, they successfully built a *betang* that has stood strong to this day. The wood used is large and strong, as the ancestors preserved the environment by not cutting down trees indiscriminately, allowing them to obtain large, high-quality wood. The current generation may find it difficult to acquire wood of the same quality found in the *betang* due to a more consumerist mindset. Additionally, in Picture 5, there is a staircase leading into the *Betang Damang Batu*, with 20 steps, divided into lower and upper sections, each consisting of 10 steps. During the time *betang* was built, this staircase could be lifted to prevent attacks by *kayau* (headhunting). This has become a myth that persists among the Dayak people today, where children are forbidden from playing outside at night for safety reasons.



Picture 5 Betang Damang Batu Front Stairs

Interior of *Betang Damang Batu*

Based on Picture 6 below, there is a central room and bedrooms inside *Betang Damang Batu*. The central room serves as a meeting room for discussing peace between tribes in ancient times. This room was used for deliberations to make decisions regarding matters such as finding food, cultivating land, expanding *betang*, and making peace-related policies. Their ancestors first implemented a deliberative system to make decisions, and the final say was with *Damang* (their leader). A *Damang* was chosen for his wisdom and greatness, and everyone in *Betang Tumbang Anoi* always accepted the *Damang's* decisions. This practice is still relevant today in choosing leaders—it is the leader's wisdom and capability that should be considered, not their age or family ties. Being a leader is not easy, as it determines the welfare and prosperity of the people. A leader without ability or wisdom, and subordinates who are disobedient and undisciplined, will lead to the downfall of a nation. This can be likened to a group of people sailing in a boat: if led by an incapable leader and disobedient subordinates, when the leader steers the oars westward and the members row eastward, the boat will be destroyed.

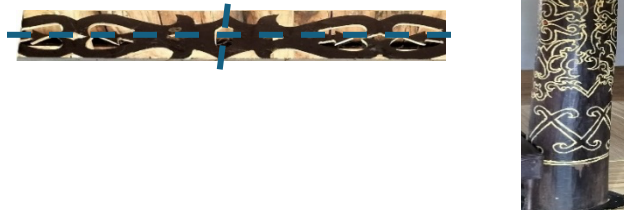
This room is also often used for Dayak traditional ceremonies, commonly known as *Naik Dango* ceremony. Every harvest season, they are not allowed to eat or use their harvest before holding *Naik Dango* ceremony. They first offer their harvest to the spirits and farming tools as a form of worship. This demonstrates that their ancestors highly valued gratitude and thankfulness to their gods.

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Picture 6 Inside Parts of Betang Damang Batu

Now this room is filled with historical artifacts such as photos, meeting evidence, and other items. Additionally, there is a sleeping area for them to rest after holding peace meetings. They sleep together to foster closer family ties, in line with the philosophy of *Batang house*, which states *Batang house*, my palace, tradition, and culture are my soul and body, the foundation of unity, peace, and harmony *habangkalan penyang karuhei tataui*"



Picture 7 Kelakai Leaf Motif on the Pillars and Ventilation of Betang Damang Batu.

Based on Picture 7 above, each vent and pillar is adorned with carvings of the kelakai leaf. The kelakai leaf motif symbolizes fertility, prosperity, and continuity of life. This means that with the formed sense of family, it is hoped that *Betang house* along with its inhabitants and descendants will enjoy prosperity throughout their lives. As seen in Picture 10, the kelakai leaf motif is also repeated and symmetrical both horizontally and vertically.

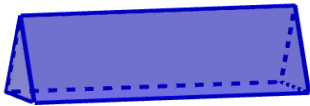
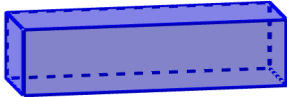
Based on Picture 8 below, the unique beam ring structure of *Betang Damang Batu*, known as *bapahan*, can be seen. The uniqueness of *bapahan* is that it is constructed without nails. There are eight *bapahan* with one supporting foundation beam and nine specially shaped *bapahan*. *Bapahan* is also vertically symmetrical, and it is not only symmetrical in two dimensions but also in three dimensions. The shape of *Bapahan* itself carries the meaning of local wisdom, serving as a protector against evil spirits.



Picture 8 Bapahan Betang Damang Batu

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, *Batang Damang Batu* contains various significant cultural values and can be used as teaching material in mathematics learning. The parts and components of *batang* have geometric properties. It can be seen from the structure of *batang* itself, which is shaped like geometric objects such as triangular prisms and rectangular beams. Additionally, other components like *jihi*, *gahagan*, *bahat*, *bapahan*, and the rooms within *batang* can be used to calculate distances, surface areas, angles, and more. This can serve as teaching material for geometric concepts, such as three-dimensional shapes, including volume, surface area, distances between certain objects, line segments, and angles in *Batang Damang Batu*, which can be applied to high school mathematics subjects. This aligns with previous research that traditional buildings are closely related to geometric concepts (Afriyanto *et al.*, 2024; Jannah *et al.*, 2024; Meyundasari *et al.*, 2024).

<i>Batang</i> Component	Shape of Geometry	Mathematical Concepts
The roof of <i>Batang</i> 	Triangular Prism 	Volume of a triangular prism = $\frac{1}{2}a \times t_{\text{alas segitiga}} \times t_{\text{prisma}}$ Luas permukaan prisma segitiga = $2 \times \left(\frac{1}{2}a \times t_{\text{base of the triangle}} \right) + K_{\text{base of the triangle}} \times t_{\text{prism}}$ Description: a: length of the Base t: height K: perimeter
Center of <i>Batang</i> 	Rectangular beams 	Volume of a rectangular prism = $p \times l \times t$ Surface Area of a Rectangular Prism = $pl + pt + lt$ Description: p: length of the rectangular beams l: width of the rectangular beams t: height of the rectangular beams

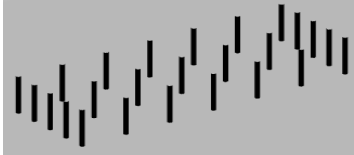
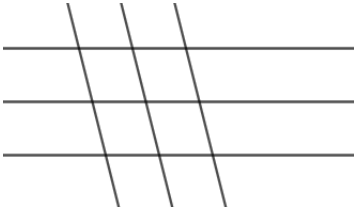
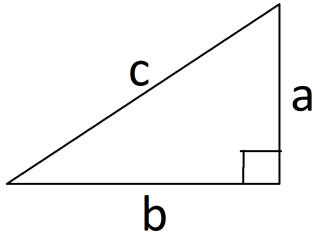
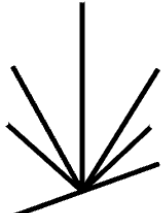
<i>Batang Component</i>	<i>Shape of Geometry</i>	<i>Mathematical Concepts</i>
<i>Jihi</i> 	Line segment 	Distance from a Line to a Certain Objec $td = \frac{ ax_1+by_1+cz_1 }{\sqrt{a^2+b^2+c^2}}$ Description: <i>d</i>: distance <i>(x₁, y₁, z₁)</i>: point coordinates <i>a, b, c</i>: Coefficients in the Equation of a Line
<i>Gahagan and Bahat</i> 	Parallel lines 	Angles on Parallel Lines - Corresponding Angles - Alternate Interior Angles - Alternate Exterior Angles - Same-Side Interior Angles - Same-Side Exterior Angles
<i>Batang Stairs</i> 	Right triangle 	Pythagorean Theorem $c^2 = a^2 + b^2$
<i>Bapahan</i> 	Shape of Geometry 	Symmetry

Table 1 Components of Betang Damang Batu in Relation to Geometric Shapes and Mathematical Concepts

Every part and the history of *Batang Damang Batu* holds moral values. For example, the large central space, which is shared by many family heads, symbolizes harmony. Despite the potential for conflict arising from multiple families living together in a large communal house, such as breaches of etiquette or disagreements due to differences of opinion and perceived injustices, their ancestors successfully upheld moral values and maintained harmony in communal life. Additionally, the wood materials used to build *Batang* were sourced from large, strong trees, made possible because their ancestors valued nature by preserving the forests. This reflects the importance of modern environmental conservation efforts, including avoiding deforestation, to ensure the quality of wood remains optimal, as seen in *Batang*'s construction. Some components of *Batang*, such as *bapahan* (the entrance structure), have symbolic meanings, such as offering protection from evil spirits. The ancestors also held spirituality in high regard, always beginning important activities—like harvesting crops or hunting—with traditional ceremonies to express gratitude to God. The Dayak people are well-known for their local wisdom and moral values, which are reflected in their culture and daily activities, such as farming, hunting, discussions, and other communal practices (Poerwadi *et al.*, 2023; Steven Alexander & Jacqueline Karimon, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Batang Damang Batu is one of the earliest longhouses and holds significant historical importance as it served as the gathering place for tribes to negotiate peace. *Batang Damang Batu* has many cultural features that are closely related to mathematical concepts. This research reveals that the exterior, interior, and structure of the building are strongly connected to complex mathematical ideas such as spatial structures and symmetry. Advanced geometric concepts, including volume, surface area, distances between specific objects, the length of a line segment, angles, and many others, can be applied to school mathematics curricula. This research contributes to the understanding of the ethnomathematical values embedded in *Batang Damang Batu*. Future studies could focus on using *Batang Damang Batu* in practice problems for students. Each part and the history of *Batang Damang Batu* holds moral values. For example, the spacious central area represents family harmony, demonstrating how the community maintains unity despite the potential for conflict. The ancestors of the Dayak people preserved the forest to obtain high-quality wood, emphasizing the importance of environmental conservation and avoiding deforestation to ensure good timber. Additionally, the shape and structure of *Batang* carry spiritual meaning, as the ancestors always began important activities with traditional ceremonies as an expression of gratitude. There are still many elements or structures in Indonesia, particularly in Central Kalimantan, that contain ethnomathematical significance but have yet to be explored. It is hoped that this research will be the foundation for future ethnomathematics studies.

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A Brief Linguistic Outline of the Hobongan Language

Marla Perkins

Independent Researcher

Corresponding author: dr.marla.perkins@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Hobongan, an Austronesian language spoken by approximately two thousands people in the Indonesian parts of Borneo, is an as yet undescribed language. This outline is a brief report on the major typological, social, discourse, sentential, morphological, and phonological structures of Hobongan. The Hobongan language is spoken by a community that is under typical pressures toward attrition: political, economic, educational, generational. Within discourse, it tends to prioritize spatial information (location, navigation) over other types of information (information about character, temporality). Hobongan is a strongly subject-verb-object language, with adjectival verbs. Morphologically, Hobongan is primarily analytic and uses exclusively prefixes to make morphological distinctions currently, and there is some evidence of other morphological processes in the language. There is some lexical flexibility in the language, but prefixes clarify lexical category for many uses of terms. Hobongan is phonologically typical of the languages spoken in that part of the world, being non-tonal, having five vowels, and using a typologically expected inventory of consonants. Allophonic nasalization is common, and vowel length is phonemic. This outline should not be considered comprehensive, and analysis of materials collected during field visits continues.

Keywords: Austronesian, Hobongan, Hovongan, linguistic description

INTRODUCTION

The following is a brief report on the basic typological, social, discourse, sentential, morphological, and phonological structures of Hobongan. The report is based on ongoing field work that I am conducting among the Hobongan, with data collected during site visits in 2012-2015 and 2019.¹ A longer and more thorough description is in progress, but in the interests of providing language documentation in a more

¹ I wish to thank all of the Hobongan who have participated in my linguistic research. They have been generous with their time and expertise and have answered many questions and introduced more. They are ideal linguistic partners. They have given consent for the use of the material that they have provided for written analyses of the language, but they reserve the right to present themselves in images and as individuals. For those who are interested, the following is a link to content that they made available via a government program to document minority populations. Although most of the clothing is traditional for ceremonies, the song was composed and written for this video and is about modern ideas; the dances are also traditional, but traditionally performed only by women. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7X1gVMxNqT8>. Link active as of January, 2022. I would also like to thank Rachel Searcy, a missionary and friend who works among the Hobongan to facilitate a translation of the Bible. She has provided access to her language materials, including sections of completed translation, and many other types of support during my field visits. Her cultural and language expertise have been indispensable.

timely manner, I have prepared this shorter outline. In this document, I include information on my research methods, a brief argument toward how linguistic descriptions could be improved if the descriptions were written descriptively, background information on the Hobongan language, and the outline of a linguistic description.

Hobongan is an Austronesian language (Eberhard et al., 2021; Hammarström et al., 2022) spoken by approximately two thousand people located primarily along the upper Kapuas River, in Kalimantan Barat. A few individuals and small family groups also live in Kalimantan Timur. Most of the Hobongan live in five main villages and travel freely and frequently to maintain their swidden rice fields, to gather plants for food, to hunt and fish, and to trade, both with other groups in and in the town of Putussibau. They travel by boat most of the time, on foot when necessary, and by motor scooter in town.

METHODS

When in the field, I engage in Community-Based Language Research (CBLR; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009). CBLR prioritizes research on a language or languages, for the language community, with the language community, and by the language community. In other words, the linguist(s) involved are active participants in the everyday lives of the people with whom they work, not attempting some kind of external observation (Dimmendaal, 2001), and consult language speakers regarding insights about language, not just for data-collection. Language speakers are the experts, and linguists assist those language experts in meeting their and their communities' language needs.

In CBLR, linguistic work must benefit the community of language users in some way. Most of the Hobongan live and travel in what is now a national park (*Taman Nasional Betung Kerihun*), and they have some of the protections afforded to the national park, such as being a recognized part of a valuable ecosystem, and suffer some of the consequences of the inadequate protection of that park (trespassing resulting in poaching, illegal logging, illegal mining, etc.). However, they are still under all of the usual modern pressures to conform to modern language and culture. For example, education and trade take place in Bahasa Indonesian (BI) or a local trade language. Opportunities outside of the villages require working knowledge of BI. Gaining a government-issued form of identification requires at least some level of conversion to one of the six government-recognized religions, etc. (see Arka, 2013, for an overview of challenges to language conservation in (eastern) Indonesia). In order to gain minority rights, the Hobongan must prove that they are who they say they are, and documenting language, oral literature, and culture are part of that proof.

Because CBLR is a set of basic principles guiding field work, how those principles can be put into use varies across researchers. I first began work with the Hobongan in 2012, when I was invited to visit a friend of mine, Rachel Searcy, who works among the Hobongan, at their invitation, toward a translation of the Bible. I have made several other visits since then. While there, I began working with Searcy's assistance with translation (because I was not yet able to communicate with Hobongan speakers directly), cultural norms (how to be polite), and interactions (introducing me to people who might be interested in discussing language, for example). As I learned more, I did more independent interaction. Using CBLR, I minimized formal elicitations, although the narrative included in this analysis was produced through a formal elicitation, and involved myself in whatever task or event was already in progress. Among other activities, I helped harvest fruit, prepare foods for community gatherings, and care for children. I made recordings and began working through the process of transliterations and translations, assisted by both Searcy and Hobongan participants. Searcy also made available language materials that she had collected with the Hobongan (see the first footnote), and Hobongan participants assisted in discussing the materials that Searcy had made available, including, for example, pronouncing hundreds of individual words while working toward an analysis of syllable structure and stress patterns. Members of the Hobongan community are therefore both the sources of all of the language materials and the experts who answer questions about

those materials.

One limitation that I faced when using CBLR is that, as a female researcher, it was most appropriate for me to work with women. Most of the groups in which I could participate were comprised of women and children.² Because of what I am, most of the language materials are based on the Hobongan language as spoken and used by women and children. Church meetings were one context in which I could consistently observe and record language from men. Although segregated (women on one side of the room, men on the other), both women and men participated in discussions led by men in church meetings. The information on r/d/l alternations below was another aspect of formal elicitation (I identified the alternations based on recordings made in church and other community meetings, then elicited speaker insights about those alternations later), was provided by a couple of men, however. Wherever language differences in age, gender, or other sociolinguistic factors occur, I note the differences.

APPROACH

This report is somewhat different from most traditional language descriptions or outlines in that I begin with narrative discourse and conclude with the sound system. Organizing this abbreviated description from discourse to sound allows the description itself to be descriptive, in that I place the aspects of the language that are most important to the Hobongan—narrative discourse and the sound system—at the rhetorically strongest positions in the descriptions (first and last; rhetorical strength is based on psycholinguistic research for speakers of Germanic languages (the serial position effect: Ebbinghaus, 1885/1913), because I am writing in English; rhetorical strength for the Hobongan could differ). The Hobongan take narrative discourses to be the fundamental units of language and consider sub-units when circumstances require (see sections on those sub-units for more information).³

Starting the description with narrative discourse also allows for emphasis on what makes Hobongan unique, at least among analyses of languages for which any analysis of patterns in discourse structures has been completed. Given the strong history of linguistic analysis for Indo-European languages, discourse structures have often been assumed to be like patterns noted by linguists who are speakers of Indo-European languages. For example, Longacre (1983/1996; more below), defined narrative discourse in terms that emphasize information about character in narratives, arranged chronologically. At this point in history, it is well-known that not all languages fit that pattern (e.g., Japanese, which is event-framed rather than character-framed; see Rothman, 2015, for an especially interesting examination of the ways in which different framing affects how and which information is presented and how those presentations correlate with approaches to addressing the situations that afforded the information), but information in non-Indo-European narrative discourses continues to be under-analyzed. As this study shows, I keep concepts of discourse and information in narrative discourse as part of the language data that need to be analyzed and described, rather than assuming universality that is already known not to be universal. I hope that this short description helps to make the case for more analysis and description of narrative discourses in the world's languages.

² I use the terms 'women' and 'men' to designate people who take female or male roles in Hobongan society. In part because the Hobongan community is relatively small, non-binary individuals are relatively few. In the case of the one non-binary individual I met, that person was accepted when engaged with women in culturally female activities.

³ I suspect that the phenomenon of taking narrative discourse to be the fundamental unit of language is relatively common among the world's languages, and particularly among languages that remain primarily oral, but investigating the distribution of possible fundamental units of language is left to future research. Other researchers have suggested the possibility that there are still other fundamental units of language, such as a full conversational turn (Pascual, 2014: participation by turn by at least two conversants, for example). I further suggest that fundamental units can vary across languages. If that is the case, including evidence that a given unit is fundamental in a given language would need to be included in language descriptions.

What is a narrative discourse? According to SIL (2024, based on works by Longacre), “narrative discourse is a discourse that is an account of events, usually in the past, that employs verbs of speech, motion, and action to describe a series of events that are contingent one on another”.⁴ In my dissertation (Perkins, 2009), I developed a definition of narrative discourse that was based on psycholinguistic research on what speakers of Indo-European languages typically include in narrative discourses: character, causality, time, space. By my definition, any discourse (unit of language that is larger than a sentence: Pike, 1964) that contains each of those elements, broadly construed, is a narrative discourse, even if it does not include other aspects of narrative that researchers have argued for (e.g., experientiality in Fludernik, 1996, or emphasis on doer in SIL, 2024). By keeping the definition flexible and the elements of the definition broad, I intend to keep the analysis of narrative discourses across the world’s languages open for description of what narrative discourses are and do in those languages as well as for comparison of similarities and differences in narrative structures cross-linguistically.

It is possible that the four elements of narrative discourse as identified in psycholinguistic research to this point will not turn out to be universal, in which case, the definition(s) of narrative discourse will need to be updated. However, for the purposes of Hobongan narrative discourse, as well as the narrative discourses that I have analyzed thus far (Perkins 2009, 2019), the four elements are available in each of the narrative discourses, but not always realized in exactly the same ways or emphasized equivalently.⁵ As an example, in the languages of the world, causality appears to be the fundamental aspect of narrative discourse, with the other aspects (character, time, space) tied more or less closely to causality (see Perkins, 2017, for analysis and examples).

Ultimately, beyond SIL’s or my definition, what counts as a narrative discourse in Hobongan is what the Hobongan take to be a narrative discourse. In Hobongan narrative discourse, spatial information (especially locational and navigational information) is the *sine qua non* for narrative discourse. Information about character is somewhat likely to be underspecified, as in the narrative discourse provided below. Temporal information is the least well developed and the most likely to be ambiguous. Hobongan narrative discourses include causal information³, most closely linked to spatial information: locations make available certain possible activities for the characters to undertake. The Hobongan prioritization of causal-with-spatial information might be somewhat unusual when considering the English-language dictum to develop character in order to drive narrative discourse, but it is also recognized that North American English speakers do not go swimming at Walmart, nor do they buy groceries at the furniture store. The place facilitates some possibilities and eliminates others, and in Hobongan discourse, the possibilities of place are of fundamental importance.

Evidence that narrative discourses are fundamental units of language for the Hobongan is as follows:

1. The Hobongan are clear on what works as a narrative discourse (it includes at least spatial information), but what counts as other units of language are open to debate. The Hobongan are willing to consider what words, sentences, or phonemes are, when their projects require them to do so, by participating in

⁴ The SIL/Longacre definition goes on to emphasize doers of those actions, but in Hobongan, as I describe below, the emphasis is on location and navigation more than on the characters who are located or navigating. The character-focused part of the definition is one reason why it is important to describe and analyze narrative discourse structures, rather than assuming universality of the ways in which language speakers organize information and discourses.

⁵ Cross-linguistic variation in how the elements are used and instantiated are why the definitions of each element should be broadly construed, not only to keep the descriptive possibilities open but also to accommodate researcher limitations. For example, I am not an expert on the philosophical aspects of causality, nor on every language ever spoken, but some evidence exists that the Hobongan have a somewhat different notion of causality than I do as a naive user of English-language based causality. The need for descriptive field work in philosophy is enormous and rarely undertaken.

the translation project, or because they begin to write in Hobongan, or because the Hobongan language is changing in ways that can impinge on what they prefer to do with language (more information in the relevant sections). However, they do not need to consider what makes a narrative discourse, because that is clear to them.

2. Hobongan speakers consistently ask where an event (potentially a sentence) took place before they are willing to consider additional content. Other types of discourses are not recognized as discourses until information at least about location is available. The prioritization of spatial information became evident during the translation project (Searcy, personal communication, 2012), when the Hobongan refused to consider the New Testament book of Romans, a heavily philosophical discourse, as translatable until they knew where the discourse had been considered or written.
3. Story-telling, in various genres of narrative, is a common activity for the Hobongan. Even in conversations, one side of a conversational turn often consists of relatively brief narrative discourses. People's actions, feelings, and opinions gain more meaning from the narrative in which those occur than the narrative gains from the people involved.

As part of my commitment to describing the Hobongan language in the most accurate way possible, and to incorporate Hobongan insights about their language whenever possible, I take narrative discourse to be the fundamental unit of the Hobongan language, as the Hobongan do.

NARRATIVE DISCOURSE

The narrative discourse used as the foundation for this brief description was collected in 2019 when I asked high school students to write in Hobongan. Although formal elicitation has its problems (Dixon, 2009), in order to answer more questions, it is often necessary to seek out material that might not occur spontaneously, such as accessing Hobongan writing before many prescriptive rules had been developed for writing Hobongan. The students who participated had been taught to write in Bahasa Indonesian at school, with all of the prescriptive rules available. The students participated eagerly, and their writings were collected, printed, and distributed to interested members of the community. The writings have also become part of the collection of literacy materials that Searcy uses to teach the Hobongan to read Hobongan. All of the personal names in the narrative have been changed.

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<i>Tikun</i>	<i>nong</i>	<i>kajaq</i>	<i>icing</i>	<i>ketou</i>
story	loc	way.of	cat	1st.tri.exc

‘The Story of Our Kitten’

- (1) *De nong nyuap joq ketou nomu lua moq be*
 before when morning foc 1st.tri.exc bathe then and upriver
sa Lelo a HP moq beong mang oniq icing ketou.
 there Lelo get HP and want see small cat 1st.tri.exc

‘Earlier when it was morning, we bathed and then went up there to Lelo’s to get the cell phones and see our kitten.’

- (2) (2) *Ho mono nong ketou be joq Lelo neho icing*
 3rd.sg.nonhuman now when 1st.tri.exc upstream foc Lelo say cat
ketou kobo.
 1st.tri.exc die.

‘It was then when we were upstream that Lelo said our kitten died.’

- (3) *Lua nan joq ketou ce masaq mang ho.*
 then that foc 1st.tri.exc perpendicular.to.river come.in see 3rd.sg.nonhum

‘Then we went in away from the river to see it [the kitten].’

- (4) *Moq na itup joq ho lagiq piqang Mola.*
 and emph one foc 3rd.sg.nonhum again with Mola

‘And there it [our kitten] was again with Mola.’

- (5) *Lua joq Lelo neho ho kobo ture kanon.*
 then foc Lelo say 3rd.sg.nonhum die to.cause animal

‘Then Lelo said it had been killed by an animal.’

- (6) *A nyian togo ho kanon mon baqan tapi*
 One neg able 3rd.sg.nonhum animal any modal but (BI)
ho sajaq kobo ture kanon nen.
 3rd.sg.nonhum to.be dead to.be.caused animal emph

‘One was not able to do anything, and the death was caused by that animal.’

- (7) *Moq kanon nan joq ketou ngala ngomon ni ngobo*
 and animal that foc 1st.tri.exc very think this to.kill
icing ketou joq eot.
 cat 1st.tri.exc foc mongoose

‘And the animal that we’re very sure killed our kitten was a mongoose.’

- (8) *Lua naq nan joq Lelo nacong ketou bage sekola baqan.*
 then in.that.way rel foc Lelo ask 1st.tri.exc downriver school modal

‘Then Lelo asked us to go downriver to school.’

- (9) *Naga po so ngubur ho keheo so.*
 for.that.reason not.yet 3rd.sg.fem bury 3rd.sg.nonhum said 3rd.sg.fem
 (BI)

‘So she wouldn’t bury the kitten yet she said.’

Structures in Narrative Discourse

Titling the narratives was a decision that the students made themselves, as they were engaged in writing. Each student provided more than one narrative, and in order to keep track of authors and materials, they created titles. Some of the titles, such as this one, were provided along with the narratives. Other titles were developed later in the process, particularly as they were helping to organize their collected works.

The writer of this narrative, a woman of about age fourteen at the time of the writing, provided temporal background information that was embedded in a relative clause. Background information occurred in a syntactically backgrounded structure.

In the first main clause, the writer introduced the main locational information (*be*, upstream), which was shorthand for the location for most of the remainder of the narrative. She did not specify *be* (upstream) further because she was writing with and for people who knew what she meant. The contrast later in the narrative between *be* (upstream), and *bage* (downstream) provided a spatial frame within which the writer organized the events of the narrative. The narrative concluded when the action moved away from the original location.

Locational and navigational information are noted in nearly every sentence of the discourse, with the writer’s location and progress given throughout. *Joq* is a common discourse marker, occurring in seven of nine sentences in this narrative. According to Hobongan speakers, *joq* typically directs audience attention to spatial information in the discourse, helping to link sentences together into a discourse, analogous to pronominal reference across sentences in many Indo-European languages. Syntactically, elements such as *joq* scope over the material, especially the clause, that follows them (see below), indicating that focus can be directed to other elements of the narrative, such as the mongoose (sentence 7). However, Hobongan speakers insist that *joq* should be understood as referring across sentences, and usually to the spatial information that is relevant to the clauses marked by *joq*: readers should attend to the downriver and traveling downriver aspects of the school, rather than to being asked to go to school. Given speakers’ intuitions about *joq*, it could be analyzed as a discourse-level pronominal that refers back to the most recently available spatial information, providing spatial continuity and coherence across entire narratives.

The case of *joq* being used for both certainty and the mongoose in a single sentence (7) suggest that *joq* is not always about locational information. It is possible that audience members are expected to focus on the location of the mongoose, who was in an inappropriate place, rather than the mongoose as a character in the narrative, but in discussing this event with the writer, she made clear her horror of the events that the mongoose caused, rather than reviewing the location.

Another information marker, *nan*, is homophonous with a relativizer. When *nan* occurs without a subsequent dependent clause, it indicates information that is inferable from the context, which can include discourse context, general knowledge, or typical assumptions. *Nan* (inferable) occurs in the third sentence, where the writer indicates that, as expected (*nan*), she and some others relocated themselves to see the kitten.

Information that is not specified in this narrative is also revealing. Although nearly every sentence contains some spatial information or at least a possible link to spatial information, the other people involved in the inclusive trial ‘we’ (*ketou*) are never identified. Additionally, the other kittens were never mentioned. There were three kittens, and the mongoose presumably took two of them. The writer only wrote about the one that had been killed and left behind. The narrative ends but does not conclude in a way that might be more satisfying to non-Hobongan readers. The Hobongan writer concluded the story with the last relevant location (school), rather than with the last relevant event for the people involved. Readers must infer that the burial probably took place once the students were back from school, an example of temporal underspecification. A return from school would have been redundant, because that location was already in the narrative.⁶

The Lexicon and Semantics

The status of lexical categories in Hobongan is open to some question. Like many Austronesian languages, lexical categories, and lexical items, can be somewhat flexible. Following Sawaki (2016) and Diessel (2019), I take lexical categories to be instantiations in use, rather than fixed properties of terms. However, there are distinctions between most verbal items and most nominal items, with morphological processes in places to switch between those two major categories (e.g., *komon*, a thought + verbalizing /N/ → *ngomon*, to think, in sentence 7).

Closed-class items appear to have several categories, including verbal markers for tense, aspect, and mood (*baqan*, in sentences 6 and 8), and verbal modifiers such as *mongala* (very, as in sentence 7); prepositions (*piqang*, with, in sentence 4); pronouns (personal pronouns are exemplified throughout the narrative discourse); relativizers *nan* (that/which/what, as in sentence 8) and *nong* (when, sentences 1 and 3); morphological markers such as the verbalizing nasal N-; information markers such as the emphatic *nen* (sentence 6); and narragraph markers such as *lua* (then) and its co-occurring elements (sentences 3, 5, and 8).^{7,8} Most of the closed-class items, such as those included here, are considered separate words by Hobongan speakers; the exception is the morphological verbalizer N-, which is considered part of the baseline lexical item.

All three of the cardinal-direction terms occur in this brief narrative: *be* (upriver), *ce* (perpendicular to river), and *baqe* (downriver). The fact that all three of these terms occurred and were used explicitly in almost fifty percent of the sentences indicates the importance of these terms to narrative organization in Hobongan. The directions that were already in place were also referred to pronominally at least once, as with *na* (emphatic, here emphasizing where the kitten was, sentence 4). Even when the river is not conveniently accessible, as in the location for this narrative (the nearest water was a stagnant irrigation ditch), the Hobongan monitor where they are in relation to the river and report their movements according to their direction relative to the river, as exemplified in sentences 1-3 and 8.

⁶ A reviewer asked to what extent these are the characteristics of written narratives from high school students vs oral narratives from older speakers. The patterns correlate well, allowing for individual variation. The two transliterated narratives that I have from older monolingual speakers are about trips that the tellers took. The narratives exist because movement happened, making the link between spatial information and narrative discourse even tighter than in the narrative included here. Many of the students’ written narratives were also explicitly about travel, as opposed to embedding a narrative about a dead kitten within the frame of being at home vs at school.

⁷ Narragraph is the term I am proposing to cover lexical items that do in spoken language what paragraph markers do in written language.

⁸ Other categories probably exist, such as two-part negation, but are not analyzed here because they do not occur in the focal narrative and because this outline is not intended to be a comprehensive language description.

Hobongan has a limited inventory of prepositions, often marking general categories such as locative or instrumentive rather than having different prepositions for different types of locations or instruments. Typologically, most of the information that would be indicated by prepositions in English is included as semantic information in verbs, as with *masaq* (come in, enter, in sentence 3), making Hobongan a verb-framed language rather than a satellite-framed language (Talmy, 2000, vol 2:21-146).

Borrowings in Hobongan are both a lexical and a sociolinguistic phenomenon. As can be seen from the narrative, Hobongan has borrowed both open-class terms (*ngubur*, to bury, in sentence 9) and closed-class terms (*tapi*, but, in sentence 6). The Hobongan have noticed that there are more and more borrowings in the language, to the extent that older speakers sometimes complain that they cannot discuss their dreams with younger speakers (for the Hobongan, dreams are thought to be the factual activities of the non-physical aspect(s) of people). Despite the frustrations caused by borrowings, using borrowings from Bahasa Indonesian is a way for speakers to try to impress listeners with speakers' cosmopolitanism; listeners might be impressed, but they are also frequently annoyed by having to do that much work to understand what someone is saying and by the better-than-you aspects of choosing to use more borrowings. The writer of this narrative used two fairly common borrowings that speakers of any generation are likely to know and use. The writer is not trying to impress but is communicating clearly.

Syntactic Units and Sentences

What counts as a sentence in Hobongan is open to discussion, and when creating the written narratives, the students did discuss sentences and sentence boundaries: they treated the writing project as an oral project with a written outcome. One possibility that Searcy suggested was that sequential markers indicate sentences, such as the use of *lua* in sentences 3, 5, 8, or continuation markers, such as the conjunction *moq* in sentences 7 and 4. But such markers are not obligatory, nor used exclusively as sentence-break markers. Other students who participated in writing narratives used *moq* to join into single sentences what could have been split into multiple sentences.

I hypothesize that the students were making sentence breaks to indicate information that could have been indicated otherwise in speaking, such as with pauses. If the students were using sentence breaks transitionally between oral structures and written structures, those breaks/pauses would explain some of the variation across and within speakers/writers. Hobongan remains primarily oral, with the students' writing being the first attempts by Hobongan speakers to create written material in their own language. The question of what counts as a sentence and how to present information within a sentential format (e.g., capital letter, period at the end) does not arise when people are speaking. Presenting certain units of language as sentences for written purposes was a new consideration that was introduced in part by the task, in part by their prior training in writing Bahasa Indonesian (BI), and in part by what they have seen via the translation project, which are all sources of information that are outside what they typically do with language. The students' discussion, and preference for oral-accommodating flexibility in presenting sentences, was informative on the process and provides additional evidence that sentences are not the fundamental units of language in Hobongan.

Typologically, Hobongan clauses are Subject-Verb-Object (SVO), with relativizers preceding subordinate elements. Readers will note that I added 'to be' verbs where needed for idiomatic translation. Hobongan does have a copular verb (*sajaq*), but it rarely occurs, and occurs only for emphasis.

When tense is marked, it occurs as a word early in a sentence, and often early in a narrative, as *de* in sentence 1, which established past tense. Once given, tense is consistent until indicated otherwise. Tense occurs within a sentence, but applies across sentences, much as a discourse marker (and could be analyzed well as a discourse marker). Aspect markers, such as inchoative *lua* (then) in sentence 3, do not affect the overall pastness established by *de*.

The differing uses of aspect and modal markers indicate different syntactic effects within the lexicon, as well as different lexical categories. Aspect markers (*lua*, inchoative, as in sentence 3) precede the clauses to which they apply, and modal markers (*baqan*, sentences 6 and 8) follow the clauses to which they apply. In both instances of the use of *baqan*, the main verb in the clause introduced possibility or contingency, with the verbs being about ability and requesting. *Baqan* is therefore the subjunctive modal marker in Hobongan.

There are two main types of modifiers in Hobongan, those that are obligatorily adverbial, such as *mongala* (very) and *nyian* (negation), and those that are adjectival verbs, such as *oniq*, perhaps better thought of as to-be-small. In the case of *beong mang oniq icing* (want see be-small cat) in sentence 1, there are three verbs in a serial construction, followed by the direct object.⁹ One major piece of evidence that adjectival verbs are verbs is that they can occur with serial verb constructions or as main verbs, while nouns or pronouns used attributively follow the nouns that they describe, as in *icing ketou* (lit. cat our: our cat).

In discussion about serial constructions, which are common and available for any open-class category, there appears to be no hierarchical ranking of the elements in the serial construction, but if a series of actions is described, the order of the verbs follows the order of the actions.

Clauses can be connected, as with *moq* (and, sentence 1) or with borrowing *tapi* (but) in sentence 6 or subordinated. Subordinate clauses can be marked as in sentence 7 (with *nan*) and sentence 2 (*nong*), or unmarked, which is less common. The markers for dependency precede the clauses that are subordinated. As with prepositions, subordinate markers indicate general categories of information (sequence in time or navigation, for example) rather than specific types of sequence (e.g. continuous or discrete sequence).

Morphology

Typologically, Hobongan is primarily an analytic language. Affixes are exclusively prefixes. The only prefix occurring in the given narrative is a generic nasal (*N-*) that makes a verb from a noun (see Blust, 2004, for a survey of this phenomenon in multiple Austronesian languages). For example, *ngobo* (to die) has the root *kobo* with the generic nasal forming the verb. The nasal assimilates to the place of articulation of the replaced consonant, not to voicing, as with the velar nasal replacing the velar plosive in *kobo* → *ngobo* shows. If the nasal is added to a word that begins with a vowel, the nasal is usually realized as a bilabial nasal (*anyam*, a design in weaving → *manyam*, to design or execute a woven design), although a few exceptions exist, in which a velar nasal is added to a word that begins with a vowel (*aba*, embarrassment → *ngaba*, to embarrass). As can be seen from *ngubur* (from *kubur*, grave, sentence 9), borrowings follow the same morphological pattern.

The nasal marker makes transitive verbs. When nouns are used as verbal adjectives, the nominal form is retained, and the sentence structures indicates its use as an adjectival verb. For example, *kobo* (death, in sentence 6) occurs as a verb in other narratives, as an adjectival verb: be-dead.

Some verbs that are possible formations from nouns do not have an equivalent nominal form, such as *mang* (to see; possibly **pang/bang*, vision). And not all verbs have an initial nasal, indicating that they are verbs in the lexicon, as well (e.g., *beong* (want)). Likewise, verbs are not the only words that begin with nasals (e.g., *mitom*, iron)

There is some question and discussion of what should be considered free or bound morphemes. As noted, closed-class items that mark aspect, tense, or two-part negation are treated as free morphemes because they apply to clauses rather than with other morphemes. Fully lexicalized forms that appear to be multi-morphemic are treated as bound (e.g., *bocang-* (iterative roundness, such as for waves (*bocangkelok*, wavy) or somersaults (*bocangkuang*) occurs as the initial element in several lexical items but never independently), as are prefixes that are more synthetic, such as the generic nasal prefix. Between those two

⁹ 'The small cat' and 'the cat is small' would both be spoken the same way: *icing oniq*.

clear categories are some more questionable cases, such as the pronominal forms below, and reduplication.

A note on reduplication, because it is a common phenomenon in many Indonesian languages, but less so in Hobongan: Hobongan reduplication is productive only for emphasis or repetition, with the number of repetitions being an indicator of how much the repeated form is emphasized or occurring. Individual syllables can be reduplicated, meaning that parts of polysyllabic words or whole monosyllabic words can be reduplicated. It is also possible to reduplicate parts of syllables, as in the following example. There are a number of reduplicated forms that are in the process of lexicalization that occur primarily in fixed forms, such as *cian-ian* ('good-ood', more-less good). How those types of reduplications should be presented is a question that does not arise in spoken Hobongan. Presentations in writing vary across individuals, as do opinions about what makes a word in the language. In the narrative given, words are what the writer made them.

As can be seen throughout the narrative, case marking and plural marking are not available on nouns in Hobongan. Verbs do not change form for person, number, class, epistemic, etc. The most synthetic forms in the language are personal pronouns, as *ho*, *so*, and *ketou* illustrate.

The entire pronominal paradigm follows:

	Singular	Dual	Trial	Plural
First	<i>ku/kun</i>	<i>karo</i> (exc); <i>tuoq</i> (inc)	<i>ketou</i> (exc); <i>totou</i> (inc)	<i>kai</i> (exc); <i>to</i> (inc)
Second	<i>ko</i>	<i>kom duo</i>	<i>kom tou</i>	<i>kom</i>
Third Nonhuman	<i>ho</i> (nonhuman)	<i>doruo</i>	<i>hitou</i>	<i>hiro/do</i>
Third Human Spoken by Woman	<i>so</i> (feminine or masculine)			
Third Human Spoken by Man	<i>anya</i> (masculine); <i>so</i> (feminine)			

So is an interesting pronoun, in that it exhibits one of the few instances of an overtly gendered term in Hobongan. It can mean third-person-singular-feminine (she) as in the given narrative. It can also mean, depending on context, third-person-singular-masculine (he), when used by a woman. It is the only third-person-singular gendered pronoun used by women.

Third-person-singular pronouns are also the only instance of a grammaticalized animacy hierarchy in Hobongan.

The paradigm is not entirely complete with monomorphemic forms. Hobongan speakers use *duo/ruo* (two) and *tou* (three) to complete dual and trial forms. At this point, whether the numeric additives are separate words or parts of polymorphemic constructions is fluctuating, with different presentations appearing in different contexts.

Readers who are familiar with some other Austronesian languages, including Bahasa Indonesian, will notice the paucity of passive voice in the narrative. *Ture* in sentence 6 is likely an elision of to-ure (passive-marker do/make). *Ture* is an interesting case because of the elision. In most instances of passive voice in Hobongan, the prefix *to-* remains more recognizable (for example, *mori*, to throw away → *tomori*, to be thrown away).

Sound System and Orthography

Places of articulation or manners of articulation that are not included are omitted because they do not occur. Charts of phonemes, some produced sounds [in brackets], and written symbols (in wedges) follow. Capital ‘V’ represents any following vowel:

Consonants

	bilabial	alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
plosive	p b	t d		k g	ʔ <q>
nasal	m	n	ɲ <ny>	ŋ <ng>	
trill/tap/flap		r <d> [r]			
fricative	[β]	s			h
affricate			tʃ <c> dʒ <j>		
approximant		[w] <uV>	[j] <iV>		
lateral approximant		l			

In part because there are not many Hobongan speakers and in part because they travel routinely between villages, there are minimal dialectal differences in Hobongan. The tap/flap and trill appear to be in free variation among speakers. Some speakers use [l] where ‘r/d’ would be expected, again with free variation. Minimal pairs do exist for /l/ and /d/r/, such as *dabeng* (alongside) and *labeng* (wide), which establishes separate phonemes despite some variation in pronunciation. /S/ is one of the phonemes that is realized with extensive flexibility, sometimes being dental, lateralized, or palatal, thus taking up a lot of oral space that is not in use by other fricatives.

Vowels

	front	central	back
close	i i: <ii>		u u: <uu>
close-mid	e e: <ee>		o o: <oo>
open		a a: <aa>	

Hobongan has an extensive inventory of diphthongs and triphthongs, as exemplified by *nyian* (not), *lua* (inchoative), *ketou* (first person trial exclusive) in the narrative. Triphthongs are rarer but do occur, for example *duai* (relationship of people married to siblings), *leou* (continue indefinitely). Most of the logical possibilities for diphthongs exist, to the extent that I suspect that my data is incomplete where one or two of the possibilities do not occur. With vowel length being phonemic (for example, *tut*, stomach gas; *tuut*, a curse) in Hobongan, and the extensive use of diphthongs, a question has arisen with regard to whether the long vowels could be analyzed as same-vowel diphthongs. That question would require psycholinguistic experimentation to answer and remains a topic for future research.

Although nasality is not phonemic for vowels in Hobongan, the vowels in a word following any nasal in a word are nasalized: /ŋian/ (NEG) → [ŋĩã̃n]; /kanon/ → [kanõ̃n] (animal).

Stress in Hobongan is irregular and unpredictable. There is a general preference to stress the first syllable of a bisyllabic word, but there are many exceptions. Hobongan does not appear to have syllable-weight stress, morae, or utterance-level rhythm patterns that would affect the stress patterns on any given word.

Hobongan is not a tonal language. As is common across the world's languages (e.g., Vassière, 2009; Fox, 2012, which includes an overview of literature that has proposed cross-linguistic intonation patterns), Hobongan has a generally falling intonation pattern for statements and a generally even intonation pattern to indicate that speakers have not completed an utterance. Questions may be asked via syntactic means with interrogative pronouns and with question-closing markers, the markers of which receive a rising intonation, or with a generally rising intonation pattern on a statement. Because no questions occurred in the narrative selected for description here, I leave analysis of question forms to a more thorough description of the language.

Syllable structures include the following: V, VC, CV, CVC, where the V can be a lengthened vowel, diphthong, or triphthong. Each of these syllable types can be combined with other syllable types, although in the case of a single-vowel syllable, combining it with another single vowel would not occur across syllable boundaries. Syllables that end in consonants can therefore abut other syllables that begin with consonants, allowing for consonant combinations across syllable boundaries, such as [kang.ha.kit] (to skip or run). Hobongan does not have single-syllable consonant clusters phonemically, but /o/ in unstressed syllables is often reduced to the point of disappearing when it occurs before an approximant: /ko.la.'put/ (type of hard wood) → [kla.'put].

Prefixes that are consonants often assimilate to the place-of-articulation of the first sound of a free morpheme to which they attach. The verb-from-noun prefix, N- is a typical example: *kobo* (death) + N- →

ngobo (to kill). If a free morpheme begins with a vowel, the consonantal prefix appears as itself. If a prefix is syllabic, ending in a vowel, the prefix does not assimilate.

At this point, the writing system for Hobongan is mostly phonemic. Developing an orthography for the Hobongan language has been an ongoing process that initially started in the 1970s when the first group of missionaries who worked with the Hobongan in the Hobongan language began living with them. A notable exception is that Searcy has been using ‘d’ word-initially and ‘r’ word-medially to represent the same phoneme, which is variably produced as a trill or a tap/flap. The main recent change to the orthographic system is to use a ‘q’ for the glottal plosive rather than an apostrophe or single quote mark. That change was made because Hobongan readers did not work with the mark of punctuation as if it were a letter, despite its being used to represent a phonemic sound as other letters do. In addition, the mark’s inconvenience when texting meant that Hobongan language users were routinely substituting other letters, usually ‘k’, for the glottal plosive, or omitting any representation at all for the glottal plosive, despite the occasional confusion that such uses could cause.

The approximants are not represented as consonants in the Hobongan orthography, for the most part, being represented instead as vowel glides. Some borrowed words that the Hobongan encountered first in religious texts written in Bahasa Indonesian, primarily names, do use other letters that are not needed for written Hobongan, such as *Yesus* (Jesus) and *Yohanes* (John) rather than Iesus or Iohanes.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I have presented an outline of a language description based on a narrative discourse. With Longacre (1983/1996), I begin from the idea that language is language when in context and therefore began with a narrative discourse as the basis for description. Unlike Longacre and others, I have taken genre and elements of discourse to be necessary components of a language description, rather than assuming universality of some ways of managing and organizing discourse components. I suggested that determining which unit of language is fundamental to any given language is part of language description.

I noted that in the selected narrative, the writer presented background information in subordinated structures and framed the narrative spatially, locating narrative events between two locations. The writer also used specific lexical items, including cardinal directions and pronominal reference to cardinal directions, to specify those locations. By contrast, character and temporal information were less specified. These patterns are crucial in making a discourse a Hobongan discourse.

From the selected narrative, I also described major structures in the lexicon, syntax, morphology, and the sound system. Hobongan exhibits patterns that are common in Austronesian languages across the more traditional domains of linguistic inquiry, including having some flexibility in lexical category, often morphologically indicated, having SVO word order in clauses like other transitive-type languages, and having a basic five-vowel system with extensions from the main five. Unlike many other Austronesian languages, including Bahasa Indonesian, Hobongan speakers make minimal use of reduplication and passive voice.

Because this article is based on a single narrative discourse, it is not a comprehensive description, and some language phenomena have been omitted from this article. Work on a more thorough description, based on more narrative discourses and other types of discourses, remains in progress.

It is hoped that this approach to organizing linguistic descriptions will inspire other linguists not only to analyze discourse structures in more of the world’s languages but also to consider ways in which language speakers’ language priorities can modify the organization of linguistic descriptions to be more descriptive.

Word List: Leipzig-Jakarta

Hobongan words are written in the Hobongan orthographic system, not in IPA symbols.

Because Hobongan is a verb-framed language rather than a satellite-framed language (Talmy, 2000), it often lacks a single verb form that covers broad semantic domains (go, carry), instead having multiple forms that cover various portions of the semantic domain (e.g., carry in one's hands, carry on one's back, carry overhead, etc.). I have included many of the options, but the list should not be taken to be comprehensive or exhaustive.

Verbs that are potentially deictic and potentially part of the following list, such as *naka* (to go/come down), are often more about the direction of the river than about the direction of motion toward or away from a deictic origo (extrinsic-framing vs subjective-framing) (Bühler 1934/1990). A person who travels on the river is traveling upriver or downriver or across the river, whether that person comes or goes relative to the origo. The direction of the river provides an objective frame of reference that makes some of these terms non-deictics. I have not distinguished consistently between deictic elements and non-deictic elements; this is another area for future research.

English	Hobongan
fire	ikon
nose	urung
to go	lohot (to go down or back); mo (to go around); noressek (to go along an edge); nyokalo (to go around); nyoleong (to go around to avoid going through); nyoolo (to go along in water along the shore); poribung (to go around); purip/murip (to go up); taban/naban (to go along); bokobe (to go upriver); bokobaqe (to go downriver together); bokotohon (to go downriver); botohon (to go downriver); bokosa (to go toward)
water	taang
mouth	baba
tongue	ca
blood	daha
bone	tuqang
2nd.sg pronoun	ko
root	dariq/lariq

to come	habe (to come); bokohuriq (to come upriver); habe-habe (to come closer); kat/ngakat (to come suddenly or promptly); lai (to come across, as in movement across, not discovery); luhu (to come to, find); masaq (to come in); mosut (to come over); pusit (to come out)
breast	tusun
rain	hama
1st.sg pronoun	ku
name	nala
louse	kutu
wing	ilat
flesh/meat	usin
arm/hand	longon
fly	dorakang
night	maam
ear	kabeng
neck	tungok (specifically, the back of the neck); sangan (throat, inside the neck)
far	komoqoco
to do/make	ure
house	late (house with dirt floor); lobu (permanent house)
stone/rock	batu
bitter	paqip
to say	neho
tooth	tuko
hair	buq
big	hiuq
one	ci, ciq (number)

who?	heq
3rd.sg pronoun	anya (masc); so (fem); ho (non-human)
hit/beat	mabaq
leg/foot	hakot (foot); boti (leg, specifically the lower leg/calf)
horn	uhong
this	nin
fish	cien
yesterday	lo
to drink	nyotet
black	moqotom
navel	pusot (also placenta)
to stand	nokocop
to bite	mongot
back	taraq
wind	sorit
smoke	tuki
what?	hono/honon
child (kin term)	usit
egg	toa
to give	kan (to give); kolabun (to give some of one's spiritual power); mitak (to give a little bit from a larger portion); ngapaq (to give food to a bride and groom)
new	tongane
to burn (intransitive)	nutung
not	nyian
good	cian
to know	toqo

knee	bohokup
sand	lokori
to laugh	koraho
to hear	cohing
soil	tana
leaf	daqun
red	toboriq
liver	ate
to hide	sangkurem (to hide); bosangkurem (to hide completely); sokurem (to hide something); topikot (to hide behind)
skin/hide	katau
to suck	nguhom (to suck); nyinat (to suck through a straw); tongapet (to suck on for flavor or comfort); ngoluop (to suck on a seed)
to carry	bopuat (to carry more than one item or to carry more than once); bosoqon (to carry on shoulders); keetang (to carry in the hand); namung (to carry under an arm); napeng (to carry with the hands); ngatong (to carry by means of a handle); ngiang (to carry on the back); ngujung (to carry overhead); ngukun (to carry in the mouth, as a cat does); nuqang (to carry bones for burial); nyahatang (to carry in the hands while walking); nyoqon (to carry on the shoulder); sanglai (to carry between two people)
and	moq
heavy	bahat
to take	itet (to take); icu (to take to); naban (to take along); naq (to take from)
old	maum (old thing); tahakan (old person)
to eat	kuman
thigh	paqan
thick	kape
long	longeang
to blow	hituq (to blow); nguhubong (to blow on a horn); nyoput (to blow darts);

wood	kiu
to run	nokacung
to fall	lubit
eye	maton
ash	abu
tail	ikei
dog	asu
to cry/weep	nangi (to cry); botangi (to cry repeatedly); salap (to cry to be taken along); tosekon (to cry/weep)
to tie	mobot/obot (to tie); bopobot (to tie up many things); moton (to tie together); muhuq (to tie into bundles); ngaput (to tie closed); nobuku (to tie into small bundles); nosori (to tie so that the knot can be pulled loose); nyhoqong (to tie around a hat)
to see	mang
sweet	mi
rope	toqu; obot
shade/shadow	among (also reflection)
bird	asiq
salt	sio
small	iq
wide	daba; labung
star	hojabuq
in	nong (locative generally)
hard	dohon
to crush/grind	ngere (to grind); nahaban (to crush a root, especially to appease spirits); ngirok (to grind teeth)

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Revisiting The Bario Rice Project In 2024

Shalini Amerasinghe Ganendra

Institute of Borneo Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Corresponding author: sganendra@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Bario Rice Project, initiated by the Malaysian government under the National Key Economic Area (NKEA) initiative, aimed to modernize rice farming in the Kelabit Highlands of Sarawak, Malaysia, to boost agricultural productivity and improve farmers' livelihoods. The project sought to address challenges such as labour shortages, declining rice yields, and competition from misrepresented rice products, while introducing mechanized farming methods to increase efficiency. This paper provides an evaluation of the project based on field research conducted in 2017 that culminated in a brief report, and focusses on that report's original objectives, implementation challenges, and the socio-economic implications for the local Kelabit community. Despite significant investment, including approximately RM30 million in government funding, and a joint venture with a private company, the project faced considerable obstacles. These included, critically, a lack of transparency regarding key performance indicators (KPIs) and failed engagement with the local Kelabit community. The 2017 report recorded farmers concerns over the quality of rice produced, as well as the economic viability of the new farming methods. The project's failure to achieve its ambitious goals, coupled with limited community involvement in decision-making processes, raises questions about the sustainability of such initiatives in traditional communities. The fact that there has been no detailed follow up case study of this six year project, which involved government, community and private sector interests, is further indication of a regrettable attitude of neglect that side-steps important learnings.

OVERVIEW

Bario, a town located in the Malaysian state of Sarawak along the border with Kalimantan, has long been the primary settlement of the Kelabit people, a community that was once primarily agrarian. Today, Bario hosts between 13 and 16 villages. At any given time, there are approximately 200 people living there, a number that can increase during festivals to more than 1000 (Dr Sarena Che Omar Jasmin and Siti Aisyah Tumin et al., 2018, p. 11). For centuries, local agricultural produce, particularly rice, has been central to the Kelabit way of life. Bario rice, also known as "Adan," is renowned for its exceptional quality and premium status, making it the principal source of income for many farmers in the region. The community identify themselves still, as rice growers (M. Janowski, 2004).

The importance of rice in the Kelabit community extends beyond economic value; it represents cultural identity, social currency, and tradition. However, rice farming in Bario has faced increasing challenges. At one time, supply of rice for domestic consumption in Bario was depleting. Because of uneven land distribution, the reasons for which are beyond the scope of this study, some farmers produced excess rice, while others had insufficient for personal consumption, and this was "appalling to the Kelabit, who have normally always seen ample rice harvest, and to whom not having enough rice...through the year is the most unprestigious and embarrassing thing that could happen" (M. Janowski, 1991, p. 92). The purity

of Bario rice—both in terms of its cultivation methods and its unique identity—has become a significant issue, particularly given the absence of adequate trademark protection.

The introduction of mechanized farming, while promising greater efficiency and yields, has raised concerns about the quality and authenticity of the rice, with some fearing the erosion of the traditional, chemical-free methods that have historically defined Bario rice. The 2009 award of Geographical Indication (GI) certification for Bario rice by the Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO) protects its brand, making it illegal to label rice from outside the region as "Bario rice" (Petingi, 2019). However, this certification falls short of ensuring quality control, and much confusion remains in the market regarding the authenticity of rice marked 'Bario Rice', with numerous items on offer which are not the authentic Bario "Adan" though they show the "Bario" mantle. Even more recent local press features Bario rice as a healthy and premium food, at premium cost but fails to cover the lack of quality clarification (*Bario Rice*, 2024).



Figure 1: View of Bario from twin otter plane

In 2011, the Malaysian Federal Government approved the Bario Rice Industry Development Project (referred to as the "Bario Rice Project" or "Project") under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) initiative for agriculture. (Prime Minister's Department Malaysia: Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), 2012). The Project had wellmeaning intentions to modernise farming processes and thus address key challenges facing the rice farming sector in Bario. An article from *The Borneo Post* (2012) highlighted the plight of Bario rice: while over 500 acres of land were once dedicated to rice cultivation, in 2012, only half that area was planted then. There was increasing frequency in shortage of Bario rice in the highlands, and many Kelabit households were forced to purchase rice from Miri. Paddy farmers, mostly older individuals, found it increasingly difficult to manage rice cultivation, with the cost of hiring external labour proving prohibitive. As a result, many turned to alternative sources of income, such as homestay businesses (Doreena Naeg, 2012).

The central question, then, should have been and remains whether the Bario rice industry can be revitalized to moving away from the labor-intensive 'traditional' farming of paddy fields to reduce costs and increase harvest output while maintaining the integrity of the grain, and at all times getting the buy in of the Kelabit community, that group of 200 and particularly those active in rice production there. Unfortunately, it seems this layered question was not thoroughly addressed, if considered at all, by the driving stakeholders. To date the lack of publicly available data on the Project and failure of the initiators

to even publish a meaningful case study that highlights challenges in the interest of developing better future programmes, is problematic.

It is important to note that the notion of 'traditional farming' commonly referenced in this context is somewhat of a misnomer. In fact, it is a mid-20th century construct (Coates, 2015). Archaeologist Lindsay Lloyd-Smith, a member of *The Cultured Rainforest Project* at Cambridge University, which conducted a three-year study of the Kelabit Highlands that ended in 2010 (Giberti, 2019), observes that the "traditional" wet rice fields of pre-Ceria Bario were themselves a recent development. The Kelabit first constructed permanent paddies in the 1950s and 60s. Before that, like many indigenous communities in Borneo, the Kelabit cultivated 'hill rice' as opposed to wet rice. Hill rice cultivation is done by seasonal rotation of land plots to enable to recently used land (after harvest) to be fallowed (regenerate soil fertility). This is also called swidden/shifting cultivation. In this way, rice was grown annually with locations continually reshaped. Thus, the idea of rice fields as 'traditional' is, in fact, a relatively modern concept (Coates, 2015). While hand-planted paddy farming is indeed a traditional methodology, Kelabit farmers who advocate for this method argue that it better preserves the integrity of the Adan grain (Kelabit Farmers with Homestay 1, personal communication, November 2024).



Figure 2: Homestay, Bario

The Bario Rice Project launched in 2012 with a grant of RM17.9 million allocation from the Ministry of Agriculture, with the goal of revitalizing rice production across some 200 hectares (Doreena Naeg, 2012). The initial grant saw roughly RM 15 million supporting infrastructure development including a dam, roads and irrigation piping, with RM 2 million for harvesting and processing machinery that was bought by and belongs still to the Sarawak Agricultural Department. The Department leased the machinery to Ceria's subsidiary and maintenance obligations and costs sat squarely with that company (President of Rurum Kelabit, personal communication, November 27, 2024). A second phase of funding followed due to the increasing demand to have vacant land ploughed and resuscitated, which involved an injection of about RM12 million more in government funding (Dr. Philip Raja, Rurum Kelabit President, personal communication, November 27, 2024).

Ceria MD, Thomas Hii, is recorded in a 2013 press article, commenting on the long-term vision behind the Bario Rice Project, emphasising the unique and enduring nature of the partnership created with the Kelabit

association. By that time, 145 hectares of paddy fields had been planted, surpassing the area cultivated over the previous decade (“Bario Rice Enjoying New Lease Of Life,” 2013).

In January 2017, James D. Ganendra and I visited Bario to conduct field research for his undergraduate engineering degree at Cambridge University. Our interest in the Bario Rice Project was piqued through discussions with leading members of the Kelabit community who had supported the mechanization project with Ceria Sdn. Bhd. Additionally, our family’s long involvement with the Kelabit community in Bario, primarily through cultural and educational projects there, fostered a deeper connection to the region and a strong appreciation for its challenges and opportunities.



Figure 3: Traditional Planting Technique

This article provides an overview of the evaluation of the Bario Rice Project Report, October 2017 (James Dennis Ganendra, 2017), and the subsequent developments that led to what Ceria’s Managing Director calls the “hibernation” of the project (Thomas Hii, personal communication, November 28, 2024). Our 2017 findings, based on site visits, discussions with farmers and (somewhat unco-operative) Ceria representatives in Bario, and a review of project-related documents, serve to give a better understanding of the Project’s decline and cessation in 2018.

By 2017, there was already significant scepticism about the project’s impact, with numerous questions surrounding the private company and project management. Even though the project had revitalized about 280 hectares of land and significantly increased rice revenue for farmers, we observed in 2017 a failure to manage critical “social relations” (Marcus Raja, 2015). Despite these challenges, the project had led to an increase in rice revenue for farmers. The unit price of Bario rice rose from approximately RM 12/kg in 2005–2006 to RM 15–20/kg in 2010–2011, due to short supply (Marcus Raja, 2015, p. 40). By 2024, farmers received about RM 13–15/kg (Kelabit Farmers with Homestay 1, personal communication, November 2024; Kelabit Small Holders - Group 2, personal communication, November 2024), though some farmers were able to sell rice for as much as RM 20/kg.



Figure 4: Harvesting Rice

THE BARIO RICE PROJECT, REVIEW AND STRATEGY BRIEF, OCTOBER 2017

a) Original Objectives of the Bario Rice Project

Bario's transition to a more modernised and globalized community has not been without significant challenges. In recent years, many younger Kelabits have migrated to urban centres or abroad, leaving the older generation to manage the rice fields. The labour-intensive nature of rice farming, which requires planting and harvesting by hand, has become increasingly difficult. The cost of hiring external labour—often from Indonesia or Penan communities across the border—has further strained the farming community. In addition, traditional farming methods, while environmentally sustainable, are often inefficient, yielding only modest quantities of rice.

Moreover, the misrepresentation of Bario rice by companies falsely claiming to sell authentic products has made it difficult for local farmers to compete in the market. In response to these issues, the Malaysian government initiated the Bario Rice Industry Development Project to modernise the rice farming sector and make it more commercially viable. The project's objectives included:

- Developing a sustainable rice industry that generates significant income for farmers, the local community, and the nation.
- Creating complementary economic activities such as agro-tourism, aquaculture, livestock farming, and food production.

The government established specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the project, to be achieved by 2014:

- Increasing paddy yield from 1.5 tons per hectare to 3.5 tons per hectare.
- Raising farmers' income to MYR 12,400 per hectare per season.
- Expanding the area under cultivation from 100 hectares to 200 hectares.

The project was to be implemented through a joint venture ('Bario Ceria') between Rurum Kelabit (the Kelabit Association) and Ceria Sdn Bhd ('Ceria'), a Kuching-based company, with the Sarawak Farmers Organisation holding a minority stake. However, despite repeated requests, data on the project's progress has been scarce. Farmers were asked for data on annual harvest yields, but only a few provided the requested information. Ceria, which was directly responsible for monitoring yield and revenue splits, has not shared any data, raising questions about the accuracy of reported progress.

b) Implementation and Farmer Engagement

The joint venture offered farmers three options for participation:

1. Non-participation in the scheme.
2. Land leasing to Ceria, where Ceria manages the land, and the paddy yield is split (30% to the farmer, 70% to Ceria). Farmers can sell their 30% share of rice to Ceria at MYR 3.60 per kilogram, though some have reported difficulty selling their share.
3. Service agreements whereby Ceria provides land clearing (MYR 300/acre), ploughing (MYR 300/acre), and harvesting (MYR 400/acre), and the farmer retains full rights to the produce.

Additionally, the Malaysian government allocated a MYR 17.7 million grant to modernise the irrigation system and related infrastructure, all of which was directed to Bario Ceria. (It was later discovered that this representation was not accurate and that the grant monies were paid directly to Ceria, with part covering the cost of the machinery. Here again we see another example of possible mis-information circulating about the Project.)

c) Review of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- i. Increase in Paddy Yield: The first KPI, to increase paddy yield from 1.5 tons per hectare to 3.5 tons per hectare, has been ambiguous. It remains unclear whether the baseline yield refers to the average across all plots or specific plots, leading to potential misinterpretations. Data gathered to date suggests that many plots yield below 1 ton per hectare, and while some improvements have been noted, no dramatic increases have been observed. Environmental factors such as water availability, pests, and disease have influenced yield variability.
- ii. Increase in Farmers' Income: The second KPI, aiming to increase farmers' income to MYR 12,400 per hectare per season, has not been met. Under the current yield-sharing scheme, farmers would need to achieve yields of at least 11.5 tons per hectare to reach this income level, an unrealistic target under current conditions.
- iii. Increase in Area Under Regular Cultivation: This KPI has seen partial success, with progress in irrigation infrastructure development. However, there are concerns that the irrigation systems are inadequate, with farmers reporting that the dams constructed under the project do not function as intended during dry spells.

d) Other Aspects of the Project

Several challenges persist:

- **Under-utilization of Equipment:** Some machinery provided by Ceria remains unused due to factors such as soil conditions and field contours.
- **Failure of Double Harvesting:** Attempts to implement double cropping have failed.
- **Irrigation System Failures:** The first phase of the irrigation system has not provided adequate water supply.
- **Quality of Rice:** Farmers have raised concerns about the inferior quality of rice returned by Ceria, with reports of contamination and the mixing of new and old rice.
- **Environmental Concerns:** The use of fertilizers and pesticides raises concerns about long-term environmental damage, while the introduction of new pests through machinery remains a risk.

e) Recommendations

While the original KPIs remain difficult to achieve, Bario rice's exclusivity and high demand still present opportunities for increased farmer income. For the project to succeed, improving communication and collaboration with the Kelabit community is crucial. Proper consultation and engagement are necessary to ensure that farmers remain committed to the project.

Bario rice can become a cornerstone for rural development, but a more holistic approach is needed, one that integrates traditional cultivation methods with modern practices and addresses the socio-economic challenges faced by the community. Future projects must also incorporate environmental sustainability and local knowledge to preserve Bario's rich agricultural heritage.

Continued investment in education, better infrastructure, and a clear framework for evaluating the impact of the Bario Rice Project will help ensure that the Kelabit people remain the custodians of their land while benefiting from modern innovations in agriculture.

RELATED OBSERVATIONS AND MOVING FORWARD

2018 was a year of significant change. The ruling UMNO party lost its longstanding position in Malaysia's government, marking a historic shift in the country's political landscape. Concurrently, the Bario Rice Project entered a phase of "hibernation" amid allegations of irregularities and growing discontent among members of the Kelabit community, despite the effectiveness of some of its members. The harvesting and clearing machinery, although now in disrepair, remain in Bario, and are still government owned.

In 2018, the Khazanah Research Department published a survey on the Bario Rice Project, which highlighted the "identity crisis" faced by the Kelabit community due to conflicting objectives and methodologies, essentially the tensions between increasing rural income by adopting productivity-inducing cultivation methods or retaining old methods to sell rice as chemical-free product but with lower yield and poor product quality. While mechanization promised faster economic returns, it also threatened the quality of rice traditionally produced using chemical-free methods (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aisyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 1). The traditional method of rice cultivation, while labor-intensive and requiring six months to yield one crop per year, ensures the purity of the Adan rice product (Doreena Naeg, 2012).

Determining what constitutes a ‘pure product’ is a more complex issue and requires formalised study and documentation, including input from the Kelabit experts. Currently, there are eight genetically distinct cultivars of Bario rice, and the authenticity of these varieties is best determined by the indigenous knowledge of the Kelabit community, rather than relying solely on laboratory processes (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aiysyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 13). Many farmers continue to follow the traditional methods, using their harvested rice exclusively for reseeded in order to maintain the integrity of their crops (Kelabit Farmers with Homestay 1, personal communication, November 2024).

Local accounts identify four main types of Bario rice: 1) fine-grain white, 2) fine-grain yellow, 3) red rice, and 4) black rice (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aiysyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 13). Preserving the integrity of Bario Adan rice requires collaboration with the Kelabit community, particularly the elders who are well aware of the taste integrity of that rice, to develop a viable seeding program that will secure future crops, as well as safeguard the rice’s trademark protection. The current Geographical Indication (GI) certification offers limited protection, and the only trademark associated with Bario rice is owned by Ceria Group, which uses the label: "Ceria Group, Authentic Bario Rice". The Khazanah report also highlights the "limited formalization of Bario rice’s identity" (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aiysyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 15).

This article recommends that the Rurum Kelabit Association apply for and take ownership of the trademark for "Bario Adan Rice." Such an initiative would enable the Kelabit community to regulate and preserve the authenticity of their rice, ensuring that their expertise contributes to the protection of this important cultural heritage. Further research is needed to develop Bario Adan Rice into a specialty product and enhance its marketability. This research must be formalized for future reference and accountability (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aiysyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 16).

Once the scientific identity of Bario rice is firmly established, a Seed Program should follow to secure and propagate the designated cultivars. This program would benefit from duplicate seed placements in Bario and a regulated seed bank in Sarawak, ensuring a sustainable supply of seeds exclusively for Bario. The distinct taste of Bario rice is influenced by the region’s unique combination of soil, air, and water—all of which can only be found in Bario.

A key challenge remains the question of what types of farming the community should adopt. The Kelabit community is divided over the extent of mechanization, and most favour some sort of mechanical intervention. However, even those in favor of full mechanization concede that since the cessation of the project in 2018, the “break from Ceria machines” has led to an improvement in rice quality, as there is less mixing of grains that led to compromised quality and questionable authenticity (Kelabit Small Holders - Group 2, personal communication, November 2024).

The Khazanah report gives a good example of a profitable hybrid farming model, identifying a smallholder who controls her own seed stock, plants her rice by hand, but rents machinery for ploughing and levelling from Ceria (prior to 2018). She also manages the marketing of her rice, processing pre-orders and handling direct sales, pricing her rice at RM 20/kg in 2018 (Dr. Sarena Che Omar Jasmin, Siti Aiysyah Tumin, et al., 2018, p. 23).

Currently, several companies are exploring opportunities to develop Bario rice in collaboration with the farmers' organization, with ongoing negotiations (Kelabit Small Holders - Group 2, personal communication, November 2024). A number of farmers hope that the Kelabit people of Bario and future generations will continue to cultivate their fields for both personal consumption and a viable income. They remain optimistic and hope for an improved and sustainable model of farming that integrates the lessons learned from the Project, to deliver a successful future (Kelabit Small Holders - Group 2, personal communication, November 2024).

CONCLUSION

The 2017 Report provides an overview of findings from field research conducted in October 2017, along with key recommendations proposed by James Ganendra for achieving the original objectives of the Bario Rice Project. The report was shared with Kelabit community leaders, including representatives from Ceria, and concluded that the project had reached a critical juncture. Specifically, it was noted that establishing clear and effective contractual terms could significantly enhance the project's potential moving forward. That report's key conclusion holds true now, namely that:

“Bario rice can become a cornerstone for rural development, but a more holistic approach is needed, one that integrates traditional cultivation methods with modern practices and addresses the socio-economic challenges faced by the community. Future projects must also incorporate environmental sustainability and local knowledge to preserve Bario's rich agricultural heritage (James Dennis Ganendra, 2017).”

The challenges faced by the Bario Rice Project offer valuable insights into the broader difficulties encountered by traditional communities when confronted with modernization. These challenges underscore the importance of meaningful and inclusive engagement with local communities to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes. In this case, the lack of such engagement has contributed to the project's struggles. The challenges faced by the Bario Rice Project provide critical insights into the broader difficulties that traditional communities encounter when adapting to modernization. These challenges highlight the necessity for meaningful, inclusive engagement with local communities to foster mutually beneficial outcomes and to also bring meaningful community investment, including cultural commitment, and participation. In this case, the lack of such engagement has significantly contributed to the project's difficulties. Greater involvement of farmers in the review and data-gathering processes would have been beneficial, particularly by allowing them to voice specific challenges they faced and concerns that they had. These approaches could have been facilitated through townhall meetings, consultations with village leaders, and comprehensive surveys, ensuring that the concerns of local farmers/owners were adequately addressed and incorporated into the project's decision-making processes;

The project under Ceria's management has now come to an end, and there is little awareness among the local community regarding its actual outcomes. Speculation and rumours abound, leaving many questions unanswered. One of the most pressing questions raised by the community is why the company did not remove its expensive machinery upon departing, leaving these resources idle and unused. This has further exacerbated the sense of frustration and disillusionment among the local farmers.

In retrospect, the 2017 study now takes on additional significance as it highlights the potential failure of the project and offers valuable lessons for future initiatives in the region. The study serves as a premonition of the challenges that arose and provides guidance on how such challenges could be avoided or mitigated in the future.

A key takeaway from the report is the importance of clear communication between all stakeholders involved in the project. Transparency and open dialogue are essential, not only to ensure a sense of inclusion among farmers but also to provide them with a clear understanding of the options available to continue supporting their livelihoods. Such communication is vital in sustaining both the local economy and the community's well-being in the long term, including for securing and effecting trademark protection for Bario Adan rice.

The findings emphasize that the future success of agricultural projects in Bario—and similar regions—will depend on fostering strong, collaborative relationships between local communities,

government agencies, and private sector partners. A clear, inclusive approach, grounded in mutual respect and understanding, is essential to achieving sustainable development outcomes for the Kelabit people and their rice farming heritage.

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Meninjau Perspektif Masyarakat Kajang Tentang Pelantikan Pemimpin di Daerah Belaga, Sarawak: Antara Kebangsawan dan Demokrasi

Norsawani Ubau

Fakulti Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Koresponden e-mel: norsawaniubau01@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneroka pandangan masyarakat Kajang terhadap kaedah pelantikan pemimpin di daerah Belaga, memfokuskan kepada tiga objektif utama: kepentingan kepimpinan aristokrasi dalam budaya politik masyarakat Kajang, budaya politik masyarakat Kajang yang menyokong nilai-nilai demokrasi, dan kesan budaya politik terhadap penyertaan dalam kalangan kumpulan sosial dalam kalangan kumpulan aristokratik Maren, Paren, atau Laja, dan kumpulan bukan aristokratik. Penyelidikan ini mengetengahkan perdebatan dan ketegangan di antara kaedah kepimpinan tradisional melalui institusi Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja dan kaedah kepimpinan berasaskan prinsip demokrasi. Timbul kebimbangan terhadap pengekal status quo dan institusi tradisional dalam konteks demokrasi moden serta kepentingan budaya politik dalam memelihara adat warisan. Sebahagian masyarakat Kajang melihat demokrasi sebagai lebih adil dan berkesan, manakala sebahagian lagi percaya tentang kepentingan institusi tradisional untuk kesinambungan budaya dan keharmonian sosial. Dengan menggunakan reka bentuk kajian kualitatif deskriptif, kajian tertumpu kepada masyarakat Kajang di Belaga termasuk kumpulan Punan, Sekapan, Kejaman, Lahanan, Tanjung, dan Kanowit. Data pula dikumpul melalui temu bual, pemerhatian, dan analisis kajian lepas. Oleh itu, penyelidikan ini menawarkan pandangan berharga ke arah mengimbangi pemeliharaan warisan budaya dan pembaharuan demokrasi, dengan implikasi untuk pembangunan dasar dan komuniti.

Kata kunci: masyarakat Kajang Belaga, kepimpinan aristokrasi, demokrasi, politik tradisional, poliarki

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PENGENALAN

Ketika negeri Sarawak terus berkembang dan beradaptasi dengan perubahan semasa, budaya politiknya yang dibentuk oleh sejarah dan kepelbagaian budaya dilihat masih tetap kukuh dalam membentuk landskap politiknya yang tersendiri. Buktinya, pelantikan pemimpin daripada sistem elemen kebangsawanan ini masih lagi mendominasi sistem kepimpinan tempatan terutamanya dalam kalangan masyarakat Kajang di

daerah Belaga. Pemilihan pemimpin berdasarkan keturunan dan status sosial telah mencerminkan model kepemimpinan aristokrasi yang menyatakan bahawa individu paling berbudi dan berintelekt tinggi harus dipilih untuk mentadbir (Saunders, 1981). Meskipun sistem Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja dalam konteks masyarakat Kajang masih dihormati dan dianggap efektif dalam pengekalan keharmonian masyarakat, ia juga telah mencetuskan perdebatan mengenai inklusiviti dan kesaksamaan dalam demokrasi moden, khususnya mengenai hak untuk memilih pemimpin secara terbuka dan adil (Dahl, 1971). Perdebatan ini menjadi lebih kompleks apabila sistem ini berhadapan dengan cabaran menyesuaikan diri dengan tuntutan demokrasi moden yang menekankan penyertaan masyarakat yang lebih luas dan perlindungan terhadap kebebasan sivil. Hal ini seiring dengan konsep demokrasi poliarki (polyarchy) yang memperlihatkan keperluan untuk menyatukan amalan tradisional dengan prinsip demokrasi kontemporari demi memastikan kepemimpinan yang lebih adil dan mewakili kepelbagaian komuniti (Dahl, 1971).

SIGNIFIKASI KAJIAN

Kajian ini memperkenalkan proses pelantikan pemimpin mengikut budaya tempatan di daerah Belaga. Ia signifikan untuk diketengahkan bagi memberikan perspektif dari sudut pandang komuniti yang sedang membahaskan mengenai nilai-nilai demokrasi dan hubungan dengan penerusan budaya kepemimpinan bangsawan yang sekian lama telah menyatukan etnik Kajang di Belaga. Hasil penyelidikan mendedahkan keprihatinan masyarakat Kajang terhadap nilai-nilai demokrasi seperti diamalkan dalam konteks budaya kepimpinan.

METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kajian deskriptif. Pengkaji telah memilih daerah Belaga di bawah yurisdiksi bahagian Kapit. Dengan keluasan 19,403.27 km per segi, daerah Belaga telah diduduki oleh majoriti penduduk daripada masyarakat Orang Ulu, termasuklah *Kayan, Kenyah, Penan, Sihan*, dan masyarakat Kajang sendiri. Fokus populasi adalah Masyarakat Kajang yang meliputi sub-suku *Punan, Sekapan, Kejaman, Lahanan, Tanjung, dan Kanowit*. Sampel terdiri daripada sembilan daripada sebelas perkampungan Kajang di daerah Belaga dengan pemilihan peserta kajian berdasarkan peranan, umur, jantina, dan ciri etnolinguistik. Instrumen kajian termasuklah temu bual, pemerhatian, dan kajian lepas. Pengkaji telah menggunakan teknik pensampelan terarah supaya pengkaji dapat memberi fokus kepada masyarakat Kajang yang berada di daerah Belaga terutama yang memiliki pengalaman dengan isu pelantikan pemimpin di peringkat komuniti masing-masing. Berikut ialah senarai peserta yang telah di temu bual dalam kajian ini daripada kelas sosial *Maren/Paren/Laja* (Jadual 1) dan bukan *Maren/Paren/Laja* (Jadual 2).

Peserta	Ciri Etnolinguistik	Peranan
P. 1 Ajang Sirek	<i>Sekapan</i>	Temenggong @ Ketua Masyarakat Daerah Belaga
P. 2 Lejau Sirek	<i>Sekapan</i>	Ketua Kampung Sekapan Piit
P. 3 Joe Among	<i>Lahanan</i>	Ketua Kampung Lahanan Long Semuang
P. 4 Sylvia Senah Lasah	<i>Kejaman</i>	Ketua Kampung Kejaman Lasah, Long Segaham
P. 5 Michael Nyaleng	<i>Tanjung</i>	Ketua Kampung Tanjung Long Pawah
P. 6 Ladang Keluka	<i>Punan</i>	Ketua Kampung Punan Sama

Jadual 1: Golongan Maren, Paren, atau Laja

Ketua Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK)

Peserta	Ciri Etnolinguitik
P.7 Ukat Lusat	<i>Kejaman</i>
P.8 George Lamai	<i>Sekapan</i>

Ketua Komuniti Gereja

Peserta	Ciri Etnolinguitik
P.9 Bapai Gumang	<i>Sekapan</i>

Rakyat Bukan Maren

Peserta	Ciri Etnolinguitik
P.10	<i>Tanjung</i>
P.11	<i>Kejaman</i>
P.12	<i>Punan</i>
P.13	<i>Lahanan</i>
P.14	<i>Sekapan</i>

*Jadual 2: Golongan bukan Maren, Paren, atau Laja***DAPATAN KAJIAN*****Perspektif Mengenai Kepimpinan Aristokrasi***

Semua peserta kajian daripada kumpulan aristokrasi dan bukan aristokrasi menerangkan bahawa sistem pelantikan ini melibatkan proses pelantikan pemimpin secara turun-temurun dalam keturunan keluarga *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* sahaja. Sebagai tradisi yang telah lama berakar umbi, sistem ini dipercayai sebagai simbol identiti yang seharusnya dipertahankan dan dihormati oleh orang luar. Kegagalan berbuat demikian dapat menjejaskan keharmonian di tempat tersebut, jelas seorang peserta kajian. Walaupun tradisi ini amat berbeza dengan lantikan secara politik, suara rakyat masih signifikan dalam menentukan pelantikan tersebut. Dakwaan dua daripada lapan orang peserta kajian dalam golongan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* yang menjelaskan bahawa sistem ini tidak melibatkan proses pemilihan secara terbuka seperti pilihan raya, telah menunjukkan wujudnya perbezaan perspektif bagi soalan ini. Keputusan temu bual juga masing-masing memperlihatkan kesemua empat belas orang peserta kajian telah bersetuju bahawa bentuk kepimpinan dalam masyarakat Kajang adalah melalui institusi *Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja*. Sistem ini dikatakan telah muncul sebelum kehadiran pelbagai jenis agama dan ia berasal secara turun-temurun oleh nenek moyang mereka. Selain itu, sepuluh orang peserta kajian daripada kedua-dua kumpulan bersetuju dengan tiga pilihan jawapan yang mencirikan sistem ini, iaitu *peribadi (A)*, *ketokohan (B)*, dan *sumbangan keluarga (C)*. Selebihnya, empat orang peserta kajian yang tergolong di dalam kumpulan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* hanya bersetuju dengan pilihan jawapan A, sekali gus membuktikan kewujudan perspektif yang berbeza dalam kalangan peserta kajian.

Perspektif Politik Baharu

Kesemua peserta kajian daripada kedua-dua kumpulan mengetahui dengan baik parti politik yang terdapat di daerah Belaga, iaitu Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Parti Sarawak Bersatu (PSB), Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS), Parti Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), Sarawak Workers Party (SWP), Democratic Action Party (DAP) dan juga Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) dan Barisan Nasional (BN).

Perspektif yang berbeza mula wujud apabila majoriti peserta kajian dalam kumpulan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* tidak pernah menyertai sebarang aktiviti parti politik di daerah Belaga. Kesemua peserta kajian merupakan golongan rakyat biasa yang terdiri daripada suri rumah, pelajar, dan pensyarah. Walau bagaimanapun, lebih empat orang peserta kajian yang lain pernah menyertai aktiviti parti politik, yang mana masing-masing adalah ketua Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK) dan rakyat biasa. Dalam konteks kumpulan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja*, kesemua peserta kajian seramai enam orang bergiat aktif dalam parti politik seperti PBB dan PRS. Mereka berpendapat bahawa penglibatan dalam aktiviti parti politik, seperti mesyuarat dan sebagainya penting untuk membina hubungan komuniti dan menyalurkan maklumat kepada masyarakat.

Pada masa yang sama, semua peserta kajian daripada kumpulan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* telah bersetuju bahawa masalah yang membolehkan masyarakat berjumpa dengan pemimpin bangsawan termasuklah berkaitan isu tanah, rumah tangga, dan hal ehwal adat seperti denda. Keputusan temu bual yang melibatkan kumpulan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* pula menunjukkan kesepakatan bahawa cara terbaik untuk meningkatkan keterangkuman penyertaan politik dalam kalangan masyarakat Kajang ialah melalui penglibatan dalam persatuan komuniti seperti Persatuan Komuniti Etnik Kajang Sarawak (PKEKS), Persatuan Bangsa Kejaman Sarawak (PBKS), Persatuan Lahanan Sarawak (PLAS), Persatuan Kebangsaan Punan (PNA), dan Persatuan Bangsa Sekapan Belaga (PBSB). Melalui penglibatan ini, masyarakat Kajang dapat terlibat dalam program seperti Pesta Adet Saviek dan Program Pemimpin Bersama Rakyat, yang dapat menyatukan sub-etnik dalam kalangan kaum Kajang.

Akhir sekali, keselarasan sistem tradisional ini dengan prinsip demokrasi yang melibatkan peserta dalam kumpulan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* telah memperlihatkan masing-masing tiga daripada lapan orang peserta kajian telah bersetuju dengan pilihan jawapan A iaitu, penghormatan terhadap tradisi dan adat resam masyarakat juga merupakan aspek penting dalam demokrasi, manakala tiga orang peserta lagi bersetuju dengan pilihan jawapan yang menyaksikan pandangan secara neutral oleh peserta tentang keselarasan sistem tradisional ini dengan prinsip demokrasi. Perbezaan perspektif wujud apabila masing-masing seorang peserta bersepakat dengan pilihan jawapan B dan C.

Perspektif Politik Lama dalam Politik Baharu

Persamaan perspektif telah ditunjukkan oleh kedua-dua kumpulan, yang mana mereka dapat menyenaraikan secara jelas dan mengemukakan contoh sesama ketua masyarakat dan ketua kampung masing-masing.

Cara kepimpinan bangsawan menerusi *Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja* ini dapat beradaptasi kepada perubahan kepimpinan akibat demokrasi telah dipersetujui oleh kesemua peserta dalam kalangan kumpulan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* melalui penghayatan terhadap prinsip demokrasi sambil mengekalkan nilai kepimpinan tradisional mereka. Selain itu, proses membuat keputusan dalam sistem ini juga perlu diselaraskan dengan amalan demokrasi. Kerjasama dengan institusi demokrasi sambil menjunjung tradisi kepimpinan ini juga merupakan cara yang mendapat persetujuan semua peserta.

Persamaan perspektif dalam kalangan kumpulan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja* juga turut didapati apabila semua peserta bersetuju bahawa peranan mereka dalam memupuk penglibatan politik masyarakat yang bukan golongan bangsawan adalah melalui penyediaan platform untuk bersuara, berkhidmat sebagai orang tengah atau fasilitator, dan mengekalkan pendirian neutral dan sikap tidak berpolitik kepada golongan bukan bangsawan.

Akhir sekali, perbezaan perspektif yang ketara dapat dilihat apabila majoriti sebanyak 5 orang peserta dalam kumpulan bukan bangsawan telah bersetuju bahawa mereka terlibat secara aktif mencalonkan dan menyokong calon untuk jawatan kepimpinan bangsawan. Walau bagaimanapun, penglibatan tersebut

tidak secara langsung mempengaruhi keputusan muktamad, jelas empat orang peserta kajian. Sebaliknya, dua orang peserta mendakwa bahawa mereka masih memiliki pengaruh yang sama dengan kumpulan bangsawan untuk mempengaruhi keputusan muktamad tersebut. Dua orang peserta pula mendakwa bahawa mereka hanya dimaklumkan tentang keputusan pelantikan tersebut.

PERBINCANGAN

Kerelevanan Kepimpinan Aristokrasi Berdasarkan Institusi Adet Maren, Paren atau Laja pada Era Demokrasi

Kerelevanan kepimpinan aristokrasi melalui institusi *Adet Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* pada era demokrasi ini secara majoritinya menunjukkan ia masih relevan berikutan wujudnya peranan pemimpin aristokrat dalam menyelesaikan isu-isu harian dalam kalangan masyarakat seperti hal ehwal rumah tangga, adat resam, tanah, dan sebagainya. Penglibatan golongan bangsawan dalam isu-isu ini menunjukkan peranan mereka sebagai aktor utama institusi yang bertanggungjawab mengurus dan menyelesaikan isu masyarakat yang penting (Hall dan Taylor, 1996). Tradisi budaya masyarakat Kajang telah memberikan legitimasi budaya dan autoriti kepada pemimpin bangsawan, sekali gus menjadikan mereka rujukan utama dalam perkara berkaitan tradisi dan budaya (Thelen, 1999). Oleh itu, tanggungjawab mereka mengenai hal ehwal kemasyarakatan dan tradisi budaya ini menggariskan kepentingan kedudukan mereka dalam masyarakat serta menyerlahkan kepentingannya pada era demokrasi pada masa kini. Teori institusi mencadangkan bahawa peranan sedemikian adalah penting untuk mengekalkan ketenteraman dan kesinambungan sosial dalam pembentukan sesebuah masyarakat yang stabil.

Selain itu, semua pemimpin *Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* bersepakat bahawa penglibatan bersama persatuan komuniti dan sub-etnik masing-masing secara tidak langsung akan membawa kepada penglibatan dalam program sosial dan kebudayaan seperti Pemimpin bersama Rakyat dan Pesta Adet Saviek. Tindakan ini dapat membuka ruang kepada golongan bukan bangsawan untuk terlibat dalam perbincangan politik dan proses pembuatan keputusan. Kepimpinan persatuan komuniti yang diketuai oleh golongan bukan aristokrat ini juga menggambarkan satu langkah ke arah mendemokrasikan peranan kepimpinan dengan menyeru perwakilan yang menyeluruh daripada pelbagai kumpulan sosial dan budaya masyarakat. Berdasarkan pemerhatian, pemimpin aristokrat secara aktif mengambil bahagian dan menyokong inisiatif yang diterajui oleh golongan bukan aristokrat melalui persatuan komuniti dan sub-etnik. Buktinya, pemimpin *Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* turut serta dengan semua persediaan ke arah penganjuran acara sosial dan kebudayaan seperti mesyuarat dan gotong-royong yang diadakan. Tindakan ini telah menunjukkan komitmen dan kesediaan mereka terhadap tadbir urus kolaboratif dan perpaduan masyarakat. Melalui usaha kolaborasi ini juga, tindakan ini secara tidak langsung meningkatkan rasa hormat di antara kelas sosial yang berbeza melalui kepimpinan yang diterajui oleh golongan bukan aristokrat sendiri. Situasi ini secara tidak langsung memperlihatkan kebolehsuaian kepimpinan aristokrasi dalam konteks moden, seiring dengan teori institusi yang menyatakan bahawa institusi boleh beradaptasi dengan persekitaran yang berubah melalui penyesuaian peranan dan aktiviti mereka (North, 1990).

Tiga orang peserta daripada kalangan bukan *Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* bersetuju bahawa kepimpinan aristokrasi ini selaras dengan prinsip demokrasi. Mereka menekankan bahawa penghormatan terhadap tradisi dan adat resam adalah aspek penting dalam demokrasi. Teori institusi menyokong idea sistem tadbir urus hibrid, yang mana institusi tradisional dan moden boleh wujud bersama dan saling melengkapi. Konsep legitimasi dalam teori ini menunjukkan bahawa penerimaan dan keberkesanan sesebuah institusi adalah penting, dan dapatan kajian mengesahkan bahawa pemimpin aristokrat diakui sebagai penjaga warisan yang dipercayai oleh masyarakat. Persepsi ini signifikan dalam konteks demokrasi, yang mana pemimpin memperoleh kuasa daripada legitimasi budaya yang diberikan oleh masyarakat. Menurut Fukuyama (2011), demokrasi menekankan kepentingan amalan sosial yang menghormati tradisi budaya. Walaupun wujud kebimbangan terhadap kemungkinan berlakunya sekatan suara dan idea baharu, teori hibrid menawarkan

penyelesaian yang sesuai melalui sebuah sistem tadbir urus hibrid yang membolehkan penglibatan institusi-institusi tradisional seperti kepimpinan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja*, sambil memperkenalkan mekanisme demokratik yang memberi ruang kepada idea baharu dan memastikan peluang yang lebih saksama. Perkara ini bukan sahaja membantu mengekalkan kestabilan dan kesinambungan yang penting dalam masyarakat, tetapi juga menggalakkan inovasi dan perubahan yang selaras dengan prinsip demokrasi.

Penglibatan aktif pemimpin bangsawan dalam aktiviti dan parti politik pula menunjukkan integrasi kepimpinan aristokrasi dalam rangka kerja demokrasi. Teori institusi menyatakan bahawa sesebuah institusi mampu menyesuaikan diri dengan persekitaran baharu, dan penyertaan tersebut telah menunjukkan keupayaan mereka untuk berintegrasi dalam struktur demokrasi sambil mengekalkan nilai tradisional mereka. Model tadbir urus hibrid yang menggabungkan unsur tradisional dan kontemporari ini telah memperlihatkan bahawa institusi boleh berkembang, sekali gus memastikan kesinambungan yang berterusan (Mahoney dan Thelen, 2009). Penglibatan tersebut juga memastikan mereka terus dapat mempengaruhi hasil politik, dan tindakan ini selaras dengan konsep kegigihan institusi yang menyatakan bahawa struktur kuasa sedia ada yang baru menyesuaikan diri masih boleh untuk kekal berpengaruh dalam persekitaran baharu.

Kesimpulannya, dapatan kajian telah menyerlahkan keupayaan pemimpin bangsawan untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan realiti politik baharu sambil mengekalkan peranan dan pengaruh tradisional mereka kekal relevan dalam konteks demokrasi moden.

Keserasian Demokarsi Politik Moden di dalam Struktur Kepimpinan Aristokrasi Masyarakat Kajang

Keputusan kajian telah menunjukkan keserasian yang kompleks di antara demokrasi politik moden dengan struktur kepimpinan aristokrasi dalam kalangan masyarakat Kajang. Misalnya, penglibatan aktif orang bangsawan dalam parti politik membuktikan kesediaan mereka untuk terlibat dalam institusi demokrasi moden. Menurut teori institusi, tindakan ini menunjukkan usaha pemimpin tradisional untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan persekitaran politik baru, sekali gus memastikan pengaruh mereka kekal berterusan dalam kepimpinan (Mahoney dan Thelen, 2010). Sebaliknya, penyertaan golongan bukan bangsawan dalam aktiviti politik masih rendah, dan situasi ini mencerminkan wujudnya halangan dalam keterangkuman dan penyertaan demokratik. Teori institusi menunjukkan bahawa struktur kuasa sedia ada boleh menghalang penyertaan yang meluas. Namun begitu, pemimpin bangsawan masih boleh membantu dengan menggalakkan lebih ramai golongan bukan bangsawan untuk terlibat dalam aktiviti politik bagi memastikan kestabilan sosial yang berterusan (Thelen, 1999).

Semua peserta daripada golongan bangsawan juga menyatakan bahawa kepimpinan aristokrasi ini mampu beradaptasi dengan perubahan demokrasi melalui penghayatan prinsip demokrasi sambil mengekalkan nilai tradisi, iaitu melalui model tadbir urus secara hibrid. Kesepakatan terhadap langkah-langkah ini bermakna pemimpin bangsawan telah bersedia untuk menghargai prinsip demokrasi melalui pembentukan model tadbir urus yang hibrid. Dalam konteks ini, teori institusi menyokong idea bahawa sesebuah institusi boleh mengintegrasikan unsur-unsur daripada sistem yang berbeza untuk mewujudkan struktur pemerintahan yang padu (Pierson, 2000). Dengan mengimbangi amalan demokrasi dengan nilai tradisional, pemimpin bangsawan dapat memastikan kedua-dua sistem ini saling mengukuhkan dan bukannya melemahkan satu sama yang lain.

Ciri-ciri peribadi yang dihargai dalam kepimpinan aristokrasi oleh kedua-dua kumpulan peserta kajian juga selaras dengan teori institusi yang menekankan bahawa ciri-ciri peribadi penting untuk kestabilan dan legitimasi kepimpinan, yang mana ia juga sehaluan dengan prinsip demokrasi moden (Hall dan Taylor, 1996). Kepercayaan adalah asas kepada institusi yang berkesan, dan kepimpinan yang jujur dan telus dapat membina kepercayaan dalam kalangan rakyat (North, 1990).

Pertemuan masyarakat dengan pemimpin bangsawan dalam hal ehwal rumah tangga, adat resam, dan tanah juga mencerminkan kedudukan pemimpin sebagai pengantara, terutamanya dalam memastikan keharmonian sosial dan keadilan yang selaras dengan asas demokrasi. Institusi ini telah menunjukkan fleksibiliti dengan menggabungkan amalan sistem tradisional dan demokrasi moden, iaitu dengan mengekalkan nilai budaya sambil menjunjung prinsip demokrasi (North, 1990).

Peserta kajian daripada golongan *Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* juga mencadangkan agar keterangkuman penyertaan politik dapat dipertingkatkan melalui penglibatan dalam persatuan komuniti dan aktiviti kebudayaan bagi memastikan suara rakyat dapat didengari dalam proses politik (Dahl, 1989). Pendekatan partisipatif ini mampu mengukuhkan tadbir urus demokrasi dengan memupuk masyarakat yang lebih inklusif. Percaturan terhadap langkah-langkah tersebut merupakan suatu usaha yang boleh diambil kira dalam sesebuah institusi tradisional yang sedang berevolusi dengan persekitaran politik baharu. Walaupun begitu, usaha pengekalan terhadap nilai-nilai tradisi dan budaya dalam kepimpinan aristokrasi melalui institusi *Adet Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* ini tetap menjadi suatu tanggungjawab yang harus dipikul supaya identiti masyarakat Kajang terus dipelihara dan dijaga dengan baik. Menurut North (1990), teori institusi mencadangkan bahawa institusi berkembang dengan menggabungkan amalan dan norma baharu sambil mengekalkan nilai teras mereka. Cadangan masyarakat Kajang untuk melibatkan pelbagai kumpulan dalam persatuan masyarakat dan aktiviti kebudayaan menunjukkan proses penyesuaian ini, yang mana sistem tradisional menerima amalan demokrasi secara inklusif.

Penyediaan platform untuk bersuara, bertindak sebagai fasilitator, dan mengekalkan pendirian secara neutral pula merupakan peranan pemimpin bangsawan untuk memupuk penglibatan politik masyarakat. Tindakan ini dapat memperkasakan individu dan mempromosikan keterangkuman dalam tadbir urus, iaitu selaras dengan prinsip demokrasi (Dahl, 1989). Contohnya, sistem *kgotla* di Botswana membolehkan komuniti menyuarakan pendapat mereka dalam membuat keputusan (Molutsi dan Holm, 1990). Selain itu, pendirian neutral pula penting untuk tadbir urus yang adil dan meningkatkan kepercayaan awam (North, 1990).

Kesimpulannya, kepimpinan aristokrasi ini telah menunjukkan potensi untuk institusi tradisional ini wujud bersama dengan sistem demokrasi. Dengan menggabungkan amalan demokrasi dan nilai tradisional, sistem ini kekal relevan dan berkesan dalam konteks demokrasi moden.

Cabaran Melibatkan Golongan bukan Maren, Paren atau Laja terhadap Penyertaan Politik dalam Konteks Demokrasi

Cabaran utama dalam melibatkan golongan bukan *Maren, Paren*, atau *Laja* dalam penyertaan politik dapat dilihat melalui kurangnya penglibatan mereka dalam aktiviti parti politik. Hanya empat daripada lapan orang peserta kajian sahaja pernah menyertai aktiviti politik, sekali gus mencerminkan kurangnya kesedaran politik berasaskan demokrasi dan pendidikan politik. Tanpa pemahaman yang jelas tentang proses politik dan kepentingan penyertaan mereka, rakyat berasa tidak berminat atau tidak layak untuk terlibat dalam aktiviti politik. Menurut Milner (2002), kebanyakan negara demokrasi yang sedang membangun memperlihatkan terhadnya pendidikan sivik dalam kalangan rakyat, yang mana perkara ini secara tidak langsung menyebabkan golongan ini tidak menyedari hak mereka dan mekanisme yang tersedia untuk penyertaan politik. Misalnya, di kawasan luar bandar negara seperti India, walaupun struktur demokrasi diaplikasikan, tetapi ramai rakyat kekal pasif secara politik kerana pendidikan politik yang tidak mencukupi. Oleh hal yang demikian, North (1990) di dalam teori institusi beliau menyatakan bahawa sesuatu sistem politik perlu memiliki institusi yang mantap supaya dapat menyediakan struktur dan norma yang memudahkan berlakunya penglibatan politik.

Halangan sosioekonomi seperti kekurangan masa dan akses kepada sumber, juga menjadi faktor penghalang bagi penyertaan politik. Apabila kelangsungan hidup harian menjadi keutamaan, melibatkan diri

dalam sebarang aktiviti politik akan diketepikan terlebih dahulu. Perkara ini boleh dibuktikan melalui pekerjaan peserta kajian yang terdiri daripada suri rumah, pelajar, dan pensyarah. Sebagai contoh, di kebanyakan negara, suri rumah melaporkan rasa terputus hubungan daripada proses politik kerana tumpuan mereka terhadap tugas rumah tangga. Kajian lain juga menunjukkan bahawa wanita yang kebanyakannya menjadi suri rumah mempunyai kadar penyertaan politik yang lebih rendah berbanding rakan sejawat mereka yang bekerja (Burns et al., 2009). Rentetan daripada situasi ini, teori institusi menggariskan langkah yang boleh diambil supaya penyertaan politik rakyat biasa boleh dipertingkatkan dengan ketara, iaitu melalui perubahan norma dan struktur institusi. Menurut North (1990), sesebuah institusi harus berkembang untuk menyediakan struktur yang menampung keperluan unik suri rumah, pensyarah dan pelajar tersebut. Sebagai contoh, masa mesyuarat yang lebih fleksibel dan kewujudan rangkaian komuniti yang boleh membantu mengatasi halangan yang ditimbulkan oleh status pekerjaan mereka. Misalnya, penubuhan kumpulan perbincangan politik tempatan atau forum dalam talian yang sesuai dengan jadual dan minat mereka (Thelen, 1999). Pendek kata, teori institusi ini menggariskan kepentingan perubahan norma dan amalan dalam institusi untuk menyokong budaya demokratik dalam penyertaan yang lebih luas dan inklusif.

Cabaran lain muncul apabila golongan ini tidak mempengaruhi keputusan muktamad dalam pemilihan pemimpin bangsawan di peringkat kampung, walaupun mereka terlibat dalam pencalonan dan sokongan calon. Keadaan ini menunjukkan kekurangan kuasa yang efektif dalam proses pemilihan sebenar, seperti yang dinyatakan oleh Verba et al. (1995), bahawa penyertaan politik harus membawa kepada keputusan yang bermakna. Kekurangan pengaruh ini menjejaskan cita-cita demokrasi untuk penyertaan yang setara. Situasi ini cenderung dilihat dalam sistem yang mana majlis penasihat atau mekanisme maklum balas komuniti itu wujud, tetapi kuasa dalam pembuatan keputusan sebenar dilakukan oleh elit kecil sendiri. Perkara ini sering berlaku dalam struktur tadbir urus tempatan yang mana pemimpin tradisional memegang kuasa dengan ketara. Dahl (1971) juga turut berpendapat bahawa untuk merealisasikan demokrasi yang bermakna, rakyat bukan sahaja perlu mengambil bahagian, tetapi juga perlu mempunyai keupayaan mereka yang benar-benar dipertimbangkan dalam proses membuat keputusan. Apabila penyertaan dihadkan kepada peranan penasihat sahaja, ia tidak sepenuhnya memenuhi prinsip demokrasi dalam perkongsian kuasa.

Isu ketelusan dan komunikasi yang terhad timbul apabila dua daripada lapan orang peserta kajian melaporkan bahawa mereka hanya dimaklumkan tentang keputusan pelantikan pemimpin tanpa penglibatan yang mencukupi. Misalnya, dalam kebanyakan komuniti, keputusan yang dibuat oleh golongan elit dimaklumkan kepada orang ramai tanpa penjelasan atau penglibatan yang mencukupi, sekali gus membawa kepada kekurangan ketelusan dan kepercayaan dalam proses tersebut. Dalam kes ini, ketelusan dan akauntabiliti adalah komponen teras dalam tadbir urus demokrasi (Diamond, 1999). Tanpa komponen-komponen ini, orang ramai tidak akan mempercayai proses membuat keputusan tersebut. Menurut teori institusi, langkah pembaharuan institusi perlu dilakukan. Misalnya, pelaksanaan pembaharuan yang mewajibkan mekanisme maklum balas yang sangat berpengaruh boleh meningkatkan kesan penyertaan awam. Langkah ini sejajar dengan matlamat teori institusi ke arah penyesuaian norma dan amalan untuk memenuhi cita-cita demokrasi (Hall dan Taylor, 1996).

Selain itu, kesemua empat belas orang peserta kajian daripada kedua-dua kumpulan bersetuju bahawa kepimpinan ini sememangnya sistem yang telah lama wujud sebelum adanya parti politik atau wakil rakyat. Sistem pemilihan pemimpin secara turun-temurun ini telah mengehadkan aspirasi dan sumbangan politik rakyat biasa (Lijphart, 1999). Dalam erti kata lain, perkara ini telah menimbulkan cabaran dari segi akses yang terhad terhadap peranan kepimpinan. Demokrasi seharusnya menjunjung prinsip peluang sama rata, tetapi sistem ini telah melemahkan prinsip tersebut (Dahl, 1989).

Seterusnya, kumpulan bukan bangsawan juga merasakan pengaruh politik yang berkurangan kerana keputusan penting cenderung dibuat oleh sekumpulan pemimpin bangsawan yang terpilih. Menurut Highley dan Burton (2006), dalam kebanyakan masyarakat tradisional, keputusan dibuat oleh pemimpin secara turun-temurun tanpa input yang besar daripada masyarakat umum, yang mana situasi ini membawa kepada

kekurangan penglibatan sivik yang lebih luas. Jika dilihat dalam lensa demokrasi, demokrasi yang berkesan sebenarnya memerlukan penyertaan dan pengaruh rakyat yang luas dalam proses membuat keputusan. Apabila sesebuah kepimpinan dan proses membuat keputusan tertumpu kepada cara lantikan daripada keturunan, prinsip demokrasi yang menjunjung penyertaan politik yang meluas akan terjejas (Verba et al., 1995).

Cabaran yang kritikal dan diberi perhatian dalam isu ini adalah berkaitan dengan dilema dalam pemeliharaan budaya dengan kemasukan unsur demokratik. Dalam konteks ini, masyarakat Kajang amat menghargai kepimpinan tradisionalnya melalui institusi *Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja* sebagai sebahagian daripada identiti budayanya. Peralihan kepada sistem demokrasi sepenuhnya boleh menyebabkan kehilangan warisan ini. Situasi ini persis dengan komuniti puak orang asli di Amerika Syarikat, yang mana bentuk tadbir urus tradisional mereka wujud dan beroperasi bersama dengan sistem demokrasi di negara moden (Wilkins dan Stark, 2017). Oleh itu, Huntington (1996) telah menekankan bahawa nilai budaya dan tradisi adalah signifikan dalam membentuk sistem politik. Pemaksan peralihan kepada sistem yang berbeza boleh mewujudkan rintangan dan kehilangan identiti yang serius. Bertitik tolak daripada itu, teori institusi telah menggariskan bahawa salah satu alternatif yang strategik adalah melalui penubuhan sebuah sistem tadbir urus yang hibrid. Sesebuah institusi boleh membangunkan sistem hibrid yang menggabungkan kepimpinan turun temurun dengan prinsip demokrasi. Sebagai contoh, majlis tempatan boleh merangkumi kedua-dua pemimpin keturunan dan wakil rakyat yang memastikan bahawa suara rakyat biasa didengar dan dipertimbangkan dalam proses membuat keputusan (Thelen, 1999). Pada masa yang sama, pemimpin tradisional juga boleh diberi peranan sebagai penasihat formal dalam institusi demokrasi, yang sekali gus memastikan kepentingan budaya mereka dikekalkan sambil menggalakkan keterangkuman. Justeru itu, cabaran untuk mengimbangi identiti budaya dengan penyertaan demokratik dalam masyarakat Kajang menggariskan keperluan untuk rangka kerja institusi yang adaptif dan inklusif. Dengan mengembangkan institusi untuk menggabungkan kedua-dua elemen tradisional dan demokratik, langkah ini dapat mengekalkan warisan budaya sambil menggalakkan penyertaan politik yang lebih luas. Dalam erti kata lain, teori institusi ini telah menjadi medium yang berguna untuk mereka bentuk sistem yang menghormati dan menyepadukan tradisi tadbir urus yang pelbagai sekali gus memastikan bahawa prinsip demokrasi tidak menjejaskan identiti budaya sebaliknya wujud bersama secara harmoni.

Justeru itu, cabaran-cabaran tersebut telah memberikan halangan yang serius terhadap penyertaan politik, khususnya dalam kalangan golongan bukan *Maren, Paren, atau Laja*. Walau bagaimanapun, teori institusi menawarkan alternatif untuk menangani cabaran ini dengan membentuk suatu institusi yang mampu menggabungkan elemen tradisional dan demokratik. Dengan mempertingkatkan kesedaran politik berasaskan demokrasi dan pendidikan politik, meningkatkan ketelusan, dan mewujudkan model tadbir urus hibrid, masyarakat Kajang boleh mengekalkan identiti budayanya sambil menggalakkan penyertaan politik inklusif. Pendekatan ini selaras dengan prinsip teori institusi yang menekankan evolusi dan kebolehsesuaian institusi sekali gus memupuk masyarakat yang lebih demokratik dan partisipatif.

Kesimpulan

Kajian ini menunjukkan variasi pandangan masyarakat Kajang terhadap kepimpinan tradisional melalui institusi *Adet Maren, Paren, atau Laja* dalam konteks demokrasi. Walaupun begitu, pemerhatian jangka panjang mendapati struktur kepimpinan tradisional ini semakin terbuka dan menyerap nilai-nilai demokrasi. Berdasarkan teori institusi, model tadbir urus secara hibrid ini dapat memastikan kepimpinan tradisional kekal relevan dan berkesan dalam konteks moden, sambil mengekalkan budaya politik untuk generasi akan datang.

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Budaya Politik Berteraskan Nilai Di Kalangan Masyarakat Kayan Di Sungai Asap, Belaga

Lavenne Hunyang Lemali

Fakulti Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Koresponden e-mel: lavenne29@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini memfokuskan kepada pengaruh agama Kristian terhadap nilai budaya dan politik dalam kalangan masyarakat Kayan di Belaga. Kajian ini melibatkan 15 orang peserta dari perkampungan Kayan. Objektif utama adalah untuk memahami bagaimana agama membentuk nilai budaya politik dalam masyarakat Kayan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka bagaimana pengaruh agama ini nyata dalam norma dan tindakan politik mereka. Masyarakat Kayan, dengan amalan budaya yang unik dan pemeliharaan agama, menyediakan konteks yang kaya untuk memahami interaksi antara agama dan budaya politik. menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melibatkan temu bual dan pemerhatian berstruktur. Kaedah persampelan bersasar telah digunakan bagi melibatkan kumpulan peserta yang pelbagai, termasuk pastor, *maren uma*, pelayan gereja, jemaah dan pemuda-pemudi. Dapatan kajian mendapati agama Kristian memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk nilai budaya dan politik masyarakat Kayan. Ia mempengaruhi norma politik dan tindakan politik yang menggalakkan masyarakat yang harmoni dan beretika. Kajian itu menekankan kepentingan nilai agama dalam membimbing tingkah laku politik dan penglibatan masyarakat, menekankan keperluan untuk pemeliharaan agama dan budaya yang berterusan.

Kata kunci: budaya politik, politik nilai, agama Kristian, Kayan Belaga, tindakan politik

PENGENALAN

Budaya tradisi dimiliki oleh setiap masyarakat dan diwariskan dari generasi ke generasi. Budaya yang dipraktikkan ini membentuk masyarakat. Kehidupan seseorang masyarakat bergantung pada budaya mereka. Adat resam setiap masyarakat akan menentukan cara kehidupan mereka sendiri. Adat resam ini harus dipraktikkan supaya ia tidak pupus dan tidak dilupakan begitu sahaja Menurut Mohad dan Mokthar (2017), menjelaskan bahawa amalan budaya sesebuah masyarakat biasanya sepadan dengan prinsip agama, yang merupakan asas pemikiran dan kosmologi masyarakat. Dalam kebanyakan kes, setiap negara di seluruh dunia mempunyai adat dan budaya yang unik. Selain itu, budaya boleh ditakrifkan sebagai apa sahaja aktiviti manusia yang termasuk perkataan dan perbuatan. Banyak tradisi budaya dipraktikkan dari zaman ke zaman. Majoriti masyarakat di kawasan pedalaman mengambil bahagian dalam kebudayaan masyarakat tradisional yang penuh dengan roh dan semangat. Mereka boleh hidup dan berkembang subur dalam rangka kerja kepercayaan tradisional yang sama. Kajian ini meninjau fungsi budaya, terutamanya peranan agama dalam mempengaruhi nilai dan tindakan politik di kalangan masyarakat Kayan yang beragama Kristian di Sungai Asap, Belaga.

LATAR BELAKANG KAJIAN

Kajian ini membolehkan masyarakat memahami secara mendalam bagaimana agama mempengaruhi kehidupan sosial, budaya, dan politik etnik Kayan di Belaga. Ini memperkaya pengetahuan sedia ada tentang kepelbagaian budaya dan agama dalam kalangan masyarakat pribumi di Malaysia. Kajian ini juga membantu dalam pemeliharaan budaya politik etnik Kayan bagi memastikan tindakan politik yang berorientasikan beragama terus dihormati dan dijaga dalam era perubahan sosial yang pesat. Dengan memahami bagaimana agama mempengaruhi politik budaya etnik Kayan, kajian ini boleh memberi kefahaman tentang hubungkaitan antara budaya politik dan tindakan politik di kalangan masyarakat bumiputera di Sarawak.

SIGNIFIKAN KAJIAN

Kajian ini membolehkan masyarakat memahami secara mendalam bagaimana agama mempengaruhi kehidupan sosial, budaya, dan politik etnik Kayan di Belaga. Ini memperkaya pengetahuan sedia ada tentang kepelbagaian budaya dan agama dalam kalangan masyarakat pribumi di Malaysia. Kajian ini juga membantu dalam pemeliharaan budaya politik etnik Kayan bagi memastikan tindakan politik yang berorientasikan beragama terus dihormati dan dijaga dalam era perubahan sosial yang pesat. Dengan memahami bagaimana agama mempengaruhi politik budaya etnik Kayan, kajian ini boleh memberi kefahaman tentang hubungkaitan antara budaya politik dan tindakan politik di kalangan masyarakat bumiputera di Sarawak.

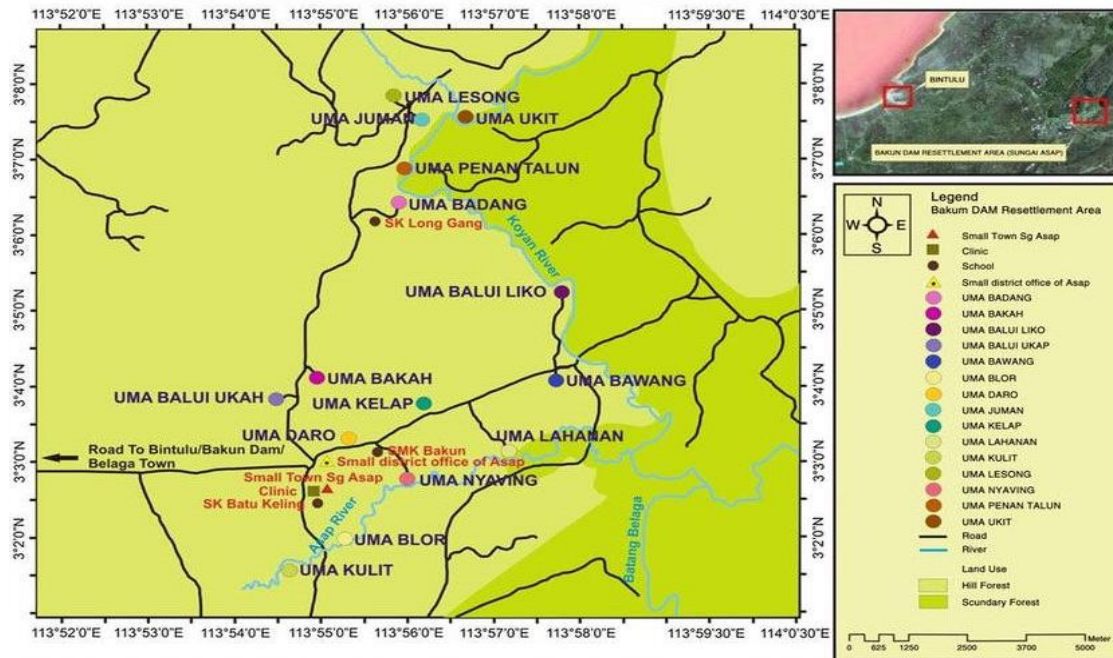
METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Reka Bentuk Kajian

Kajian menggunakan reka bentuk pengumpulan data kualitatif, khususnya pemilihan kumpulan fokus, sebagai pendekatan kualitatif untuk memahami isu sosial. Kaedah ini mengumpul data daripada individu yang dikaji dan daripada sampel yang menyediakan statistik populasi yang lebih komprehensif.

~~ Ruangan ini sengaja dibiarkan kosong~~

Lokasi Kajian



Rajah 1: Peta Lokasi Kajian di Sungai Asap, Belaga

(Sumber: Fadzilah Abdul Majid, Johan Nordensvard, Gusni Saat dan Frauke Urban, 2017)

Rajah 1 menunjukkan kajian ini dijalankan di tiga kawasan perkampungan etnik Kayan iaitu Uma Belor, Uma Lesong dan Uma Daro di Sungai Asap, Belaga Sarawak. Lokasi ini dipilih kerana ia merupakan salah sebuah kawasan penempatan Kayan di Belaga dan juga antara kawasan yang mempunyai banyak aktiviti berkaitan pembangunan rohani bagi komuniti tersebut.

Peserta Kajian

Populasi dari mana sampel diperolehi terdiri daripada kumpulan; i) penduduk rumah panjang Uma Belor, Uma Lesong dan Uma Daro, ii) ketua masyarakat di kawasan kajian seperti Maren Uma, penduduk rumah panjang seperti Pastor, pelayan gereja, jemaah dan pemuda-pemudi dipilih untuk menjadi peserta dalam temubual. Dalam kajian ini, pengkaji menggunakan kaedah persampelan bertujuan untuk pemilihan peserta.

Berikut ialah senarai peserta kajian:

PESERTA	PERANAN	UMUR DAN GENDER
Peserta 1	Pastor	47 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 2	Pastor	45 tahun, lelaki.
Peserta 3	Pastor	58 tahun, perempuan.

Peserta 4	Maren Uma	62 tahun, lelaki.
Peserta 5	Maren Uma	61 tahun, lelaki.
Peserta 6	Maren Uma	59 tahun, lelaki
Peserta 7	Pelayan gereja	52 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 8	Pelayan gereja	50 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 9	Pelayan gereja	45 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 10	Jemaah	54 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 11	Jemaah	65 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 12	Jemaah	76 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 13	Pemuda-pemudi	18 tahun, lelaki.
Peserta 14	Pemuda-pemudi	22 tahun, perempuan.
Peserta 15	Pemuda-pemudi	16 tahun, lelaki.

Rajah 2: Maklumat peserta kajian.

Kaedah Pengumpulan Data

Pengkaji menggunakan tiga kaedah pengumpulan data untuk menacapai objektif kajian iaitu kaedah temubual, pemerhatian dan penelitian data sekunder. Instrumen ini telah diuji melalui kajian rintis di lapangan dan sehubungan itu telah disemak semula untuk penambahbaikan. Maklumat lanjut mengenai instrumen tersebut di huraikan seperti di bawah ini.

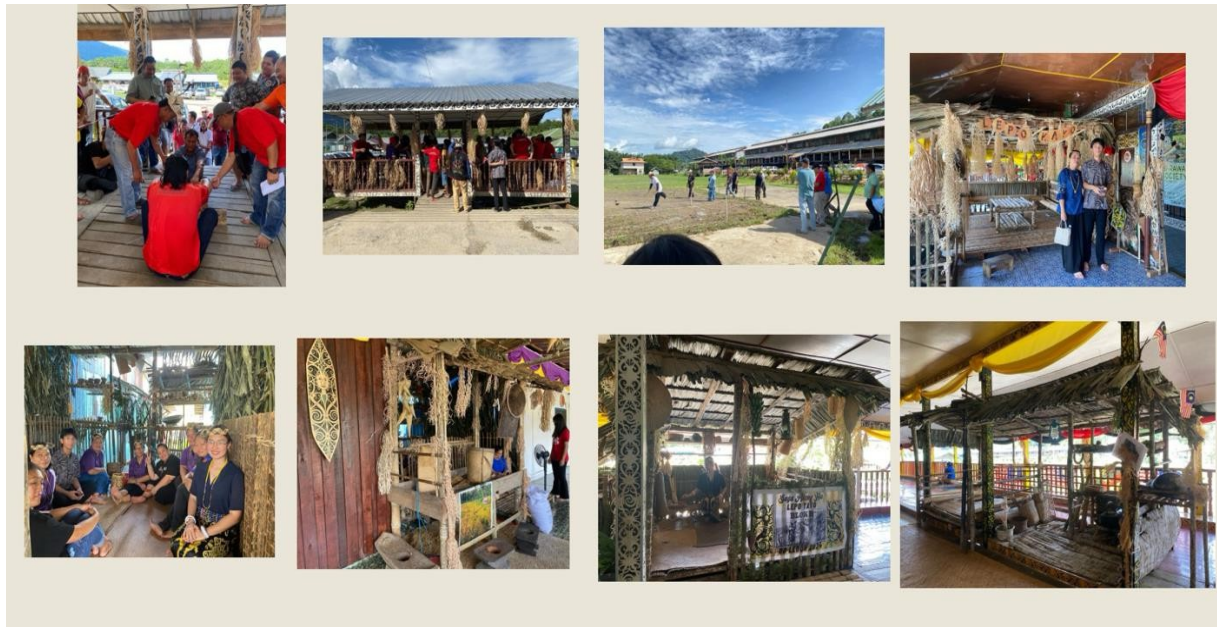
Temu bual

Temu bual dilakukan secara bersemuka dan mengikut kesesuaian masa para peserta. Soalan temu bual direka dalam Bahasa Melayu tetapi untuk memastikan betul maklum balas daripada peserta, proses temu bual juga dijalankan dengan menggunakan Bahasa Kayan. Respon daripada para peserta kemudiannya ditranskripsi dan diterjemahkan ke bahasa Melayu. Penggunaan bahasa ibunda digunakan untuk mereka individu yang tidak memahami bahasa Melayu bagi membolehkan kefahaman yang baik kepada pengkaji dan peserta terhadap soalan-soalan yang diaju.

Data sekunder

Data sekunder ialah maklumat yang telah direkodkan atau dikumpul oleh penyelidik terdahulu. Sumber data sekunder termasuk buku, internet, dan jurnal dan artikel. Oleh kerana data ini sudah tersedia, pengkaji dapat menjimatkan masa dan wang dalam mendapatkan data dan maklumat yang dikehendaki.

Kaedah pemerhatian



Rajah 3: "Lamei Do Ledoh" 2024 di Uma Bawang, Sungai Asap, Belaga, Sarawak.

Sumber: <https://www.facebook.com/share/DgRTj3pC5Nsak/>

Kaedah pemerhatian telah membolehkan penyelidik memerhati budaya politik dalam persekitaran komuniti. Dalam penyelidikan kualitatif, pendekatan ini sering digunakan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang tingkahlaku, interaksi sosial, dan persekitaran situasi yang berkaitan dengan isu kajian. Antara teknik pemerhatian yang dijalankan oleh pengkaji ialah penglibatan langsung serta rakaman audio-visual. Seperti contoh di dalam Rajah 3, pengkaji turut serta dalam program "*Lamei Do Ledoh*" bermula 26 hingga 27 Mei 2024 bertempat di Uma Bawang Sungai Asap. Program itu bertujuan mempromosikan warisan budaya etnik Kayan di daerah Asap melalui pelbagai aktiviti seperti makanan tradisional, permainan, dan pertukaran budaya. Program itu juga menekankan kepentingan memelihara warisan etnik Kayan melalui inisiatif yang turut disokong oleh pihak kerajaan.

DAPATAN KAJIAN

Peranan Agama dalam Pembentukan Nilai Budaya Politik

Tradisi kepercayaan memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk norma sosial dalam kalangan masyarakat Kayan. Kepercayaan agama dan budaya membentuk pandangan dunia dan tata nilai yang dipegang oleh individu dan masyarakat secara keseluruhan. Misalnya, agama Kristian yang majoritinya di Sungai Asap memainkan peranan penting dalam kehidupan masyarakat setempat di kawasan pedalaman Sarawak terutamanya bagi etnik Kayan. Kepercayaan dan interaksi sosial masyarakat dipengaruhi oleh agama. Agama Kristian telah membentuk nilai moral dan sosial, yang telah membantu mewujudkan harmoni dan perpaduan dalam masyarakat yang pelbagai ini. Nilai-nilai seperti toleransi, saling menghormati, dan keharmonian dipupuk melalui ajaran agama dan tradisi budaya yang diwarisi dari generasi ke generasi. Ini dapat dilihat melalui pemerhatian masyarakat Kristian di Sungai Asap yang mengamalkan toleransi dan saling menghormati, membantu menjaga harmoni dan perpaduan sosial. Melalui temubual dengan Peserta 8 yang menegaskan bahawa, "*Agama Kristian bagi kita etnik Kayan memainkan peranan penting dalam budaya itu adat resam kita dan politik, kerana ia menyediakan*

landasan nilai dan moral yang mempengaruhi keputusan politik dan integrasi sosial, serta mempromosikan harmoni dan kepelbagaian contohnya, negara kita hidup dalam bermasyarakat majmuk, kaya dengan budaya dan adat resam serta etnik dan bangsa yang perbagai.”

Pendapat Peserta 8 menunjukkan bahawa agama bukan sahaja menjadi landasan kepercayaan tetapi juga mempengaruhi cara masyarakat berinteraksi dan mengenal pasti diri mereka dalam konteks sosial. Menyokong kenyataannya pelbagai agama dan etnik seperti etnik Kenyah, Penan, Cina, Melayu yang beragama Islam turun hidup bersama di Sungai Asap. Menurutnya, disebabkan kepercayaan Kristian yang menekankan kasih sayang dan saling menghormati, suasana harmoni telah wujud di kalangan penduduk. Misalnya dapat ditunjukkan oleh program komuniti gereja, seperti majlis makan bersama dan sukaneka pada hari keluarga, dan program kebajikan seperti Ceramah Anti-Dadah kepada Belia. Aktiviti seperti ini bukan sahaja meningkatkan hubungan antara ahli komuniti tetapi juga menanamkan rasa persamaan dan kekitaan. Program-program seperti ini memang selalunya akan menjemput para pendoa seperti Paderi dan Pastor yang melakukan bacaan doa berkat untuk keberlangsungan program dengan baik, lancar dan di dalam penyertaan Yang Maha Esa. Penglibatan gereja melalui jemputan pastor atau paderi sebagai pendoa majlis dalam aktiviti komuniti telag memainkan peranan penting dalam mempromosikan interaksi sosial yang harmonis.

Pengaruh Kepimpinan Agama dalam Politik

Pengaruh kepemimpinan agama dalam politik masyarakat Kayan sering terbatas pada peranan moral dan spiritual. Pemimpin agama, seperti pastor dan paderi, cenderung untuk tidak terlibat secara langsung dalam aktiviti politik secara aktif. Sebaliknya, mereka berperanan dalam memberikan nasihat moral dan spiritual kepada pemimpin politik dan komuniti, menjaga neutraliti antara agama dan politik, serta meredakan ketegangan dalam menangani isu-isu politik yang sensitif. Peserta 1 menyatakan bahawa pemimpin agama seperti paderi dan pastor tidak boleh membincangkan atau terlibat secara langsung dalam kempen yang dianjurkan oleh parti politik. Berdasarkan nilai-nilai Alkitab, pastor perlu berdoa bersama dan memberikan bimbingan moral kepada jemaat mereka tanpa mengira fahaman politik. Pandangan ini menekankan bahawa pemimpin agama bertanggungjawab untuk membawa prinsip-prinsip moral universal, bukannya terlibat secara aktif dalam aktiviti politik yang biasanya boleh mengundang kontroversi. Menurut Peserta 1, ia mencerminkan nilai-nilai bahawa kepemimpinan agama harus tetap neutral dan hanya memberi nasihat berdasarkan norma moral, sambil mengatakan, *"Betul, pemimpin gereja, Pastor dan deken (pelayan gereja) tidak digalakkan melibatkan diri secara langsung seperti ikut berkempen, tidak boleh cakap isu-isu sensitif. Ya, memberi panduan moral kepada jemaat dengan memberitahu kebenaran dalam Alkitab serta berdoa bersama."*

Manakala bagi Peserta 2 telah menegaskan bahawa dalam menangani isu politik, pastor dan pemimpin agama harus mematuhi garis panduan yang jelas. Mereka tidak sepatutnya terlibat dalam pendidikan politik atau membuat keputusan politik; sebaliknya, mereka sepatutnya hanya memberi sokongan moral dan doa kepada jemaah mereka. Ini menunjukkan batasan yang dikenakan terhadap pemimpin agama daripada mengendalikan politik secara langsung merupakan sebahagian daripada aspirasi jemaah. Beliau menambah, *"Betul. Tidak perlu terlibat, ada garis panduan sendiri, pastor tidak melibatkan diri dalam politik. Pastor cuma mendoakan. Pastor tidak dibenarkan memberi didikan politik kepada jemaat gereja. Ya, betul pastor beri kata-kata dorongan dan doa itu adalah sokongan moral kami berikan."*

Pernyataan ini menunjukkan bahawa agama harus bebas daripada pengaruh politik yang boleh menjejaskan matlamat spiritual mereka. Ini merangkumi pemahaman yang mendalam tentang peranan yang dimainkan oleh pemimpin agama dalam mengekalkan prinsip moral dan spiritual, tetapi ia mengelakkan daripada terlibat dalam politik praktikal yang mungkin menjejaskan integriti peranan mereka dalam masyarakat.

Kerjasama antara Pemimpin Agama dan Politik

Kerjasama antara pemimpin agama dan politik penting untuk mencapai tujuan bersama dalam masyarakat Kayan. Walaupun pemimpin agama biasanya tidak terlibat secara langsung dalam politik, mereka memainkan peranan penting dalam memberikan nasihat moral dan etika kepada pemimpin politik. Kerjasama ini dapat memperkuat hubungan komuniti dan mempromosikan harmoni dalam masyarakat. Budaya ini dapat dilihat dalam respon Peserta 3 yang menyatakan, *“Betul, sesiapa yang terlibat dalam gereja tidak dibenarkan berkempen lagi-lagi yang pastor dan pelayan gereja kerana Kristian SIB tidak mendorong sesiapa berpolitik.”*

Petikan ini mengatakan seseorang yang terlibat dalam gereja, terutamanya pastor dan pelayan gereja, tidak dibenarkan untuk berkempen politik. Secara khusus, Gereja Kristian SIB tidak menggalakkan penganutnya untuk terlibat dalam politik. Ini menunjukkan bahawa gereja memilih untuk memfokuskan pada peranan kerohanian dan moral mereka tanpa terlibat dalam politik. Bagi Peserta 3 yang merupakan seorang pastor dalam gereja Kristian Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB), prinsip pemisahan antara gereja dan politik digunakan untuk mengelakkan pengaruh politik yang boleh mencetuskan perpecahan dalam kalangan jemaat dan untuk mengekalkan kesucian dan fokus spiritual gereja. Hal ini untuk membantu mengurangkan perselisihan faham dan mengekalkan keharmonian dalam komuniti. Gereja yang tidak terlibat dalam politik boleh berkonsentrasi sepenuhnya pada misi spiritual dan sosial mereka tanpa terjejas oleh kepentingan politik.

Namun demikian, sokongan kerajaan terhadap penerusan aktiviti keagamaan Kristian dilihat penting di dalam pengekalan keharmonian dalam masyarakat. Peserta 4 menyatakan *“Agama bagi kemajuan, memohon bantuan dari pihak berkuasa Sarawak untuk membaiki kerosakan atau membaikpulih gereja, dengan permohonan UNIFOR bantuan minta tambah dana gereja dalam menjaga kebajikan hamba Tuhan, baiki dan buat gereja lebih baik.”* Dengan meminta bantuan daripada pihak kerajaan negeri untuk membaiki kerosakan atau membaik pulih gereja, petikan ini menunjukkan betapa pentingnya agama untuk menyumbang kepada kestabilan sosial dan politik. Permohonan telah dibuat kepada Unit untuk Hal Ehwal Agama-agama Lain (UNIFOR) untuk bantuan yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan sumber kewangan gereja untuk menjaga kebajikan para penganut serta untuk pembaikan dan pembangunan gereja. Ini menunjukkan usaha gereja untuk mengekalkan kebajikan dan tempat ibadat penganutnya dengan baik melalui sokongan pihak berkuasa dan dana tambahan. Justeru, Peserta 4 menyatakan bahawa ini menunjukkan bagaimana kerjasama antara pemimpin agama dan politik dapat memperkuat kesejahteraan komuniti.

Penubuhan UNIFOR mencerminkan usaha kerajaan Sarawak dalam mengekalkan keharmonian agama dan memperkasakan perpaduan di kalangan penduduknya yang berbilang etnik dan agama. UNIFOR memainkan peranan penting dalam membina masyarakat Sarawak yang harmoni dan bersatu padu melalui pendekatan yang inklusif dan adil (Rahman, 2023). UNIFOR memastikan kerajaan Sarawak dapat menjamin semua agama mendapat layanan yang adil sejajar dengan prinsip keadilan sosial dan kebebasan beragama yang digariskan dalam Perlembagaan Malaysia (Yong, 2021). UNIFOR telah menunjukkan komitmen yang teguh untuk membantu perkembangan komuniti bukan Islam di Sarawak sejak penubuhannya. UNIFOR mampu membantu dan menyokong lebih banyak rumah ibadat dan aktiviti kebajikan dengan peruntukan dana yang meningkat setiap tahun. Ini juga membantu meningkatkan semangat keharmonian dan kesepaduan di kalangan orang yang berbeza agama dan etnik di negeri Sarawak.

PERBINCANGAN

Budaya politik berteraskan agama mempengaruhi penyertaan politik

Budaya politik berasaskan agama Kristian telah terbukti menggalakkan tindakan politik yang harmonis di kalangan masyarakat Kayan di Sungai Asap. Menurut teori budaya politik yang dibawa oleh Almond dan Verba (1963), menunjukkan bahawa budaya memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk sikap dan tingkah laku politik individu. Dalam kes masyarakat Kayan di Sungai Asap, kenyataan para peserta menekankan pentingnya agama Kristian dalam membentuk amalan budaya dan politik mereka. Misalnya, Peserta 9 menyebut bahawa Kristian memainkan peranan penting dalam identiti budaya dan politik mereka, menyediakan asas untuk nilai dan moral yang mempengaruhi keputusan politik dan integrasi sosial. Respon berikut boleh dijadikan data bagi menyokong hujah Putnam (2000) bahawa modal sosial dibina berdasarkan nilai dan norma bersama yang disebarkan dari generasi ke generasi. Selain itu, modal sosial yang berteraskan agama boleh menjadi benteng untuk menghalang ketaasuban politik. Peserta 7 menggemakan sentimen ini dengan menyatakan bahawa politik sering dicirikan oleh penipuan dan manipulasi, tetapi ajaran Kristian memberikan panduan moral yang jelas bagi individu untuk membuat keputusan yang jujur. Sentimen tersebut memaparkan pentingnya nilai-nilai Kristian seperti kejujuran dan integriti dalam membentuk tingkah laku politik.

Dalam konteks ini, satu lagi konsep modal budaya seperti yang dicadangkan oleh Bourdieu (1980) menunjukkan bahawa latar belakang budaya memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk status sosial dan ekonomi individu, yang seterusnya mempengaruhi sikap dan tingkah laku politik mereka. Kekristenan boleh dilihat sebagai bentuk modal budaya yang memberikan individu dengan rasa identiti dan kepunyaan dalam masyarakat. Dari aspek teori, ahli antropologi Clifford Geertz (1973) boleh dijadikan rujukan dalam menghuraikan kesan budaya dalam amalan kemasyarakatan. Beliau berpendapat bahawa budaya bukan hanya satu set nilai dan norma abstrak tetapi juga tertanam dalam amalan masyarakat. Dalam kes ini, amalan dan ritual agama Kristian membentuk identiti budaya masyarakat Kayan dan mempengaruhi tingkah laku politik mereka. Selain daripada konsep modal sosial, konsep "penglibatan sivik" yang dicadangkan oleh Robert Putnam (2000) menekankan pentingnya modal sosial dalam memupuk penyertaan sivik. Dalam konteks ini, Kristian boleh dilihat sebagai faktor yang menggalakkan penglibatan sivik dengan menyediakan individu dengan rasa komuniti dan tanggungjawab sosial.

Kenyataan daripada para peserta kajian mengukuhkan lagi tanggapan bahawa agama Kristian memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk tingkah laku politik masyarakat Kayan. Peserta 12 menekankan bahawa “ajaran Kristian membantu individu memahami pentingnya keadilan dan tanggungjawab dalam politik, yang memupuk masyarakat yang lebih harmoni.” Peserta 1 menekankan peranan orang Kristian dalam berdoa agar ahli politik memerintah dengan adil, manakala Peserta 11 menggambarkan bagaimana ajaran Kristian membantu mereka mendekati isu politik dengan kesabaran dan pengampunan terhadap kekurangan pemimpin. Ini lebih menekankan kepentingan nilai-nilai Kristian dalam memupuk rasa etika yang kuat dalam politik. Dalam konteks ini, nilai-nilai Kristian seperti keadilan, tanggungjawab, dan pengampunan memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk tingkah laku politik masyarakat Kayan. Kesimpulannya, kenyataan para peserta menunjukkan bagaimana agama Kristian membentuk amalan budaya dan politik masyarakat Kayan di Sungai Asap. Penemuan ini menunjukkan bahawa ajaran Kristian mempromosikan rasa etika yang kuat dan politik yang didorong oleh nilai, yang seterusnya mendorong penyertaan politik secara harmoni.

Politik nilai yang dibawa oleh budaya politik berteraskan agama Kristian di Sungai Asap membentuk pola interaksi dan keputusan politik komuniti Kayan

Nilai politik masyarakat tempatan dipengaruhi oleh budaya politik Kristian di Sungai Asap. Bagaimana nilai-nilai Kristian mempengaruhi sikap masyarakat terhadap politik agama adalah satu contoh yang

penting. Menurut Kuperman (2014), kepercayaan Kristian mempengaruhi cara masyarakat Malaysia melihat politik agama. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa orang Kristian di Malaysia lebih cenderung melihat politisasi agama sebagai "wahyu Tuhan" dan "kesetiaan pada nilai-nilai Kristian." Kajian Yap (2017) mendapati bahawa nilai-nilai Kristian memberi kesan kepada cara orang bertindak dalam politik. Masyarakat Kristian Malaysia lebih cenderung untuk memupuk solidariti dengan komuniti agama mereka dan menyertai gerakan sosial-politik yang berkaitan dengan agama mereka. Satu kajian yang dijalankan oleh Lee (2019) mendapati bahawa kepercayaan Kristian mempengaruhi pandangan dan tindakan politik masyarakat. Orang Kristian Malaysia biasanya melihat demokrasi dan proses pemilihan umum dengan lebih baik. Bagaimana orang melihat politik agama, tingkah laku politik, demokrasi dan proses pilihan raya awam dipengaruhi oleh bagaimana agama mentafsirkan peranan politik terhadap penganutnya.

Nilai-nilai yang dibawa oleh budaya politik berasaskan Kristian di Sungai Asap berakar pada ajaran yang menekankan keadilan, kejujuran, cinta, dan tanggungjawab. Peserta 14 menyatakan bahawa "agama mengajar kita pentingnya nilai-nilai seperti kejujuran, keadilan, cinta, kesabaran, dan tanggungjawab, yang berfungsi sebagai garis panduan untuk tingkah laku politik kita." Peserta 15 juga menekankan bahawa pendidikan Kristian menekankan nilai-nilai moral seperti keadilan dan cinta, yang mempengaruhi pandangan penganut mengenai isu-isu seperti hak asasi manusia dan kesejahteraan sosial. Aspek kestabilan sosial juga ditekankan dalam agama Kristen. Di Sungai Asap, contohnya, di beberapa buah kampung, pemimpin dipilih berdasarkan status sosial dan reputasi mereka dalam masyarakat dan bukannya melalui pilihan raya rasmi yang diterima oleh masyarakat sebagai kaedah yang boleh memelihara masyarakat daripada berpecah-belah disebabkan oleh persaingan politik kepartian.

Tema etika dalam budaya politik masyarakat Kayan turut dilihat dalam kenyataan Peserta 10 yang menyebut, "*Kristen memberi kita bimbingan moral yang kuat dalam Politik, membantu kita membuat keputusan yang betul dan mengelakkan tingkah laku yang tidak beretika.*" Nilai-nilai ini digunakan dalam pelbagai aspek kehidupan masyarakat Kayan. Sebagai contoh, Peserta 1 menekankan pentingnya berdoa agar politik diamalkan dengan adil, mencerminkan nilai keadilan dalam agama Kristian. Peserta 13 juga menyatakan bahawa "seorang pemimpin harus berintegrasi, adil, bijak, empati, tegas, dan bertanggungjawab, menurut ajaran Kristian yang menekankan nilai-nilai moral." Kesimpulannya, kenyataan para peserta menunjukkan budaya politik berasaskan Kristian telah membentuk tingkah laku politik masyarakat Kayan di Sungai Asap. Penemuan ini menunjukkan bahawa ajaran Kristian mempromosikan rasa etika yang kuat dan politik yang didorong oleh nilai-nilai moral, yang seterusnya mendorong penyertaan politik dan memupuk masyarakat yang lebih harmoni.

Budaya politik berteraskan agama berbeza daripada budaya politik yang berdasarkan etnik

Terdapat beberapa perbezaan di antara budaya politik berasaskan Kristian dan politik berdasarkan etnik. Di satu pihak, politik berasaskan Kristian menekankan nilai-nilai moral dan etika yang kuat yang digunakan dalam kehidupan politik seharian. Ini terbukti dalam masyarakat Kristian di Sungai Asap, di mana Peserta 1 menyatakan bahawa agama Kristian memainkan peranan penting dalam membentuk budaya dan politik mereka. Beliau menyatakan bahawa ajaran Kristian menekankan keadilan, cinta, dan tanggungjawab, yang merupakan nilai-nilai penting yang mempengaruhi keputusan politik dan integrasi sosial. Sebaliknya, politik berdasarkan etnik mungkin lebih menumpukan pada identiti etnik dan kepentingan kumpulan. Ini boleh membawa kepada tumpuan kepada kepentingan dan identiti yang bersaing, dan bukannya nilai dan prinsip yang dikongsi. Namun demikian, budaya politik berasaskan agama boleh juga membawa maksud eksklusif apabila adanya sikap pengecualian terhadap mereka yang tidak mempunyai kepercayaan atau nilai agama yang sama. Salah satu daripada sikap eksklusif tersebut dapat dilihat dalam kenyataan daripada Peserta 14, "pandangan saya mengenai peranan agama dalam politik adalah pelbagai, mulai dari asas moral hingga kebimbangan mengenai pluralisme."

Kesimpulannya, budaya politik berasaskan Kristian di Sungai Asap berbeza dengan politik berdasarkan etnik. Walaupun politik berasaskan Kristian menekankan nilai-nilai moral dan etika yang kuat, politik berdasarkan etnik akan lebih menumpukan pada kepentingan kumpulan. Peranan agama dalam membentuk budaya politik juga penting melalui pemimpin Kristian mempromosikan kerjasama dan keharmonian antara pemimpin agama dan politik. Walaupun politik berasaskan Kristian menekankan nilai-nilai moral dan etika yang kuat, ia juga boleh dipengaruhi oleh tafsiran yang berbeza tentang apa yang membentuk keharmonian dan bagaimana ia harus dicapai.

PENUTUP

Secara keseluruhan, kajian ini mendapati bahawa budaya politik berasaskan agama Kristian mempunyai pengaruh yang besar terhadap penyertaan politik dalam kalangan masyarakat Kayan di Sungai Asap. Tingkah laku dan sikap politik mereka dipengaruhi oleh iman Kristian yang menekankan nilai-nilai seperti keadilan, kejujuran, cinta, dan tanggungjawab. Mereka juga mendorong penglibatan politik yang beretika demi mewujudkan masyarakat yang lebih harmoni. Kajian ini memberikan pemahaman tentang bagaimana agama boleh mempengaruhi tingkah laku politik individu dan kolektif dalam komuniti tertentu. Namun, ia juga mendedahkan potensi eksklusiviti yang boleh mewujudkan sengketa politik yang biasanya diselesaikan melalui pendekatan *realpolitik* berbanding etis.

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Contact Us



wassophia@unimas.my
ljuna@unimas.my
ayahafiffy@unimas.my



+6082-592721
+6082-58100 ext 4167/4195/4196/4198



+6082-584199