

## Traditional Leaders' Communication Strategies in Fostering Harmony Through the Selamat Kampong Tradition in Belitung

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** communication strategy; traditional leaders; selamat kampong.

Selamat kampong is a tradition or custom that has been passed down from generation to generation and is carried out in every village in Belitung. Selamat kampong is not only an annual routine tradition in Aik Rayak Village, Belitung Regency, but the implementation of this event contains several aspects such as traditions, approaches, and communication strategies. This study aims to find out how the communication strategy of traditional leaders creates a sense of peace in the tradition of surviving the village in Aik Rayak Village, Tanjungpandan District, Belitung Regency. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The results of the study show that traditional leaders use persuasive communication with 3 persuasive communication strategies: (1) Psychodynamic strategies, involving the community and the younger generation, and evoking emotions through joint prayer to foster a sense of responsibility and increase togetherness. (2) Sociocultural strategy, namely collaborating with LAM (Malay Customary Institution) and implementing Islamic culture to create a sense of peace. (3) The meaning construction strategy, which is the provision of knowledge on understanding traditional values and cultural identity to strengthen solidarity between village communities. This study concludes that the communication strategy of traditional leaders plays an important role in maintaining cultural traditions and stability in Aik Rayak Village.



### Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelago that consists of various cultures, tribes, religions, and customs. Each region in Indonesia has its own traditional culture and characteristics which are influenced by several factors, including racial differences, geographical location, island conditions, natural conditions, the entry of cultures from abroad, technological developments, and differences in transportation and communication conditions (Ramadhani & Trisnangsih, 2022). Culture and communication have a close relationship and influence each other inseparably (Sumarlan & T.I.Ukka, 2024). Culture makes communication more dynamic and communication makes culture sustainable. In everyday life, cultural elements are always attached to us and affect every interaction including communication. Different ways of communicating also affect a person in

conveying messages because each region has cultural differences and the way people communicate depends on their language, rules, and cultural norms (Rayhaniah, 2022).

Local wisdom is one of the cultural characteristics that must be maintained and preserved because it is a tangible manifestation of local culture. This tradition, which has been passed down from generation to generation, is part of the culture that must be preserved. Each region has its own distinctive culture, which contains local wisdom values (Putra, 2019). Tradition is a cultural heritage that is passed down from generation to generation which includes values, norms, beliefs, and practices that form the identity of a community. One of the local cultural wisdom that is still implemented and preserved in Indonesia today is the Selamat Kampong Tradition in Aik Rayak Village, Tanjungpandan District, Belitung Regency. This tradition is not only a cultural heritage but also contributes to maintaining social harmony and stability because it can create a sense of peace and strengthen close social relations between communities.

Selamat kampong is a hereditary customary tradition carried out in every village in Belitung. This procession is led directly by a traditional leader commonly called a village shaman. The Selamat kampong tradition is carried out every year on 1 Muharram (Islamic New Year) to maintain the security and peace of the village and express gratitude to the creator (Belajarbudaya.beltim.go.id, 2021). Traditional leaders are people who occupy important positions or roles in the customary social order of an area. They are traditional leaders who have a role and function in passing on culture, as well as prioritizing traditional rules, norms, and customs (Tahan, Kehik, & Mael, 2021).

Customs play an important role in shaping the identity of a community and in preserving the values and traditions that have been passed down. Customs contain rules that regulate social behavior and relationships between individuals, so customs also aim to strengthen social relations and ensure social stability. This is because customs play a role in regulating behavior in society (Koentjaraningrat, 2004). In the implementation of the Selamat kampong Tradition, traditional leaders not only act as tradition preservers but also as communicators to convey important values to the community. The communication strategy used by traditional leaders is a major factor in how the messages conveyed can be well received by the community.

Communication is the cornerstone of human life (Sumarlan et al., 2021). Through communication, people can interact and share information to achieve common goals. Communication can also be a means to develop and preserve cultural customs. In this case, the communication strategy of traditional leaders is the main factor that determines the creation of a sense of peace in the community. Through communication, information about traditions can be passed down from generation to generation.

Here are some previous research results which according to researchers are very relevant to the research, namely, first, research by Ghea Frasilia Utami, Nuraida, and (Utamia et al., 2023). In this study, traditional leaders made the younger generation the successor of the tradition. The communication strategy carried out by traditional leaders in preserving their traditions is to introduce all local wisdom, all ancestral relics, ancestral graves, and books about customs (Utamia et al., 2023). Second, this research was

conducted by (Wahyuni et al., 2023). This study concluded that the communication strategy of traditional leaders is to preserve the culture of Kampung Bali in Kandis, Siak Regency. Traditional leaders strategically plan the selection or determination of communicators, media messages, goals, and expected effects so that each activity achieves the desired goals. The evaluation strategy they always use is to reprimand each other if they make mistakes. By the Balinese Village tradition, they always say “homsanti Santi hom” (Wahyuni et al., 2023).

In general, the research conducted by this researcher has similarities and differences with previous studies. The similarity of this research lies in the research subject used, namely the communication strategy of traditional leaders. The difference in the researcher's research lies in the object of research and research location. This study aims to analyze the communication strategies used by traditional leaders in the Selamat Kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village. Research on the selamat kampong tradition is expected to provide deeper insight into how traditional leaders communicate in carrying out this tradition. By understanding the communication strategies used by traditional leaders in the selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village, it is hoped that this research can make a positive contribution to preserving and maintaining Indonesia's cultural heritage.

## **Method**

The method used in this research uses a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is an approach to collecting and analyzing data. Researchers use qualitative methods with a descriptive approach. The purpose of this research is to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate understanding of the phenomenon under study based on the data obtained. The location of this research is in Aik Rayak Village, Tanjungpandan District, Belitung Regency with research time conducted for approximately three months.

The method used to determine informants in this study uses a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a technique of taking data sources where the informant is a source of information about the object under study. Researchers conducted interviews with (name of shaman) the traditional leader of Aik Rayak Village. The informant in question is an informant who is considered a source of information or a person directly involved in the implementation of the Selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village. The data collection techniques used in this research are interviews, observation, and documentation. (a) The interview is the process of obtaining information for research purposes through questions and answers between interviewers and respondents using interview guidelines (Edi, 2016). (b) Observation is a data collection technique carried out through recording and observing the behavior of the object (Abdurrahman Fatoni, 2006). (c) Documentation is collecting information about events or past events and then documenting related research at the research location (Rueping et al., 2008). Data validation techniques use source triangulation validation techniques by reviewing data that has been obtained from various sources such as interviews, observations, and documentation.

## **Results and Discussion**

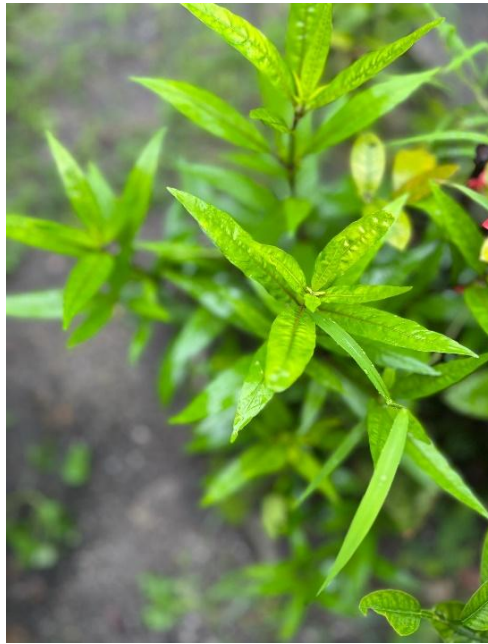
### **Description of the Selamat Kampong Tradition**

Culture or customs that are often carried out by groups of people in an area are traditions that are maintained for generations. This tradition is an ancestral heritage that must be preserved (Wildan et al., 2019). Belitung is an area that has customs and traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation, especially in Aik Rayak Village.

The history of this selamat kampong tradition began in ancient times when the livelihood of the people of Belitung was farming rice in the fields (ume padi). They move from place to place in planting rice for a certain time. After they successfully harvest (ngetam) they hold a celebration. This is where they hold selamatan or selamat kampong every year until now. This celebration is not only about asking for the harvest, but also asking for safety, welfare, health, sustenance, and rejecting bad luck and calamities.

Selamat kampong is an annual tradition in Aik Rayak Village. This event is held every year at the end of March, and all residents of Aik Rayak Village are invited to attend at the residence of the Traditional Leader's house or in Belitung, commonly called the dukun kampong. Traditional leaders play a very important role as they exercise rights, powers, and customs to support development and responsibility in the community. (Rompon, 2024). This selamat kampong tradition aims for the safety of the kampong and to ward off any misfortune. The event then continued with the reading of prayers together by traditional leaders and ended with the distribution of leaf slices that had been prayed for together. These slices of leaves are called kesalan.

Kesalan is one of the unique traditions of selamat kampong where before returning home slices of kesalan leaves (neruse leaves and ati-ati leaves) are given to the entire village community. Slices of kesalan leaves are washed on the face while saying Bismillahirrahmanirahim, then sprinkled in each yard of each house to avoid or reject any disaster.



**Figure 1 Leaves Ati-Ati**  
*Source: Personal Documentation*



**Figure 1 Leaves Neruse**  
*Source: Personal Documentation*

In the implementation of Selamat kampong, there is a series of Selamat kampong tradition events with an arrangement of activities, as follows:

1. Forming the Committee

A meeting is held to form a committee that involves villagers, including the younger generation. The committee will organize a series of events.

## 2. Finding Funds

In carrying out the selamat kampong tradition event, funds are obtained from community donations that have been agreed upon in the meeting to meet the needs of the event.

## 3. Preparing the Place for the Event

The traditional leaders and the committee prepare the place that will be used for the implementation of the Selamat kampong tradition. The place used is usually the home of the village's customary leader.

## 4. Looking for Leaves for Kesalan (Neruse Leaf and Ati-ati Leaf)

These leaves will be used and will be distributed to residents as part of a series of Selamat kampong tradition events.

## 5. Announcement of the Event

Traditional leaders will convey the implementation of the event to announce the date, time, place, and entertainment.

## 6. Implementation

All villagers gather at a predetermined place to pray together. This prayer is led by the traditional leader. During the implementation of this event, slices of kesalan (peruse leaves and ati-ati leaves) were prepared.

## 7. Closing

After the series of events is over, the sliced leaves that have been prepared will be divided to be sprinkled in their respective homes. To add to the festivity, the Selamat Kampong tradition event will be filled with art performances or entertainment.

The Selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village is always the same every year. But over time, the times have changed. Local wisdom in the past is different from local wisdom today, which tends to focus more on aspects of place and locality (Jafar et al., 2020). The implementation of the Selamat kampong tradition has been modernized to suit the development of the current era. In the past, the Selamat kampong tradition consisted only of reading prayers by traditional leaders, but now the Selamat kampong tradition is accompanied by measles performances and other traditional arts.

Bercampak or measles is one of the traditional cultural arts from Belitung. The main character of Campak is one or more dancers who dance on an open stage accompanied by the sound of traditional musical instruments such as Rambus, violin, drum, and tawa-tawa. The dancers sing while chanting. The men then dance along and end by paying some money (Rahma, 2022).



**Figure 2**  
**Campak Belitung**

Source: Belitung.tribunnews.com

Communication is a process where someone sends a message to another person to convey information, changing attitudes, opinions, and behavior either directly or indirectly (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2018). Darmo as the customary leader of Aik Rayak Village, explained that in the implementation of the selamat kampong tradition event to improve the approach to the community, customary leaders will convey information about selamat kampong through direct socialization and install banners at several points in certain areas.

#### 1. Socialization

Socialization According to traditional leaders, one way to influence the community to follow and preserve the Selamat kampong tradition is to have direct interaction with the community directly. Traditional leaders consider this socialization as an approach because socialization makes it easier to interact and meet directly with the community.

#### 2. Banners

Influencing the community is not enough with socialization. Therefore, traditional leaders also disseminate and provide information to the community through banners.

Communication helps a person act and influence parties more effectively about what is communicated by informants. Based on interviews with informants, the delivery of information about the Selamat kampong tradition is through direct interaction and banners. Traditional leaders utilize this approach to influence the community to participate in the selamat kampong series of events and to preserve the selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village. In addition, traditional leaders involve the community in efforts to preserve the Selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village, so traditional leaders of Aik Rayak Village use several approaches such as disseminating information through direct socialization or installing banners. It can be concluded that the history of

culture has its value because people always interact through communication and information exchange (Hasibuan & Muda, 2018).

### **Communication Strategy of Traditional Leaders in Creating a Sense of Peace in the Selamat Kampong Tradition**

Communication strategy must be able to show how it goes in practice, the approach can change at any time depending on the prevailing circumstances and conditions. (Kalianda, 2018). Persuasive communication is a process that describes the flow or stages through which persuasive messages sent by communicators are received, processed, and understood by communicants. This includes elements of attention, understanding, learning, and acceptance. The message is then learned and accepted, with the final result being a change in attitude for (Mirawati, 2021). In doing this, the traditional leaders of Aik Rayak Village use persuasive communication theory which consists of three forms of strategies, namely, psychodynamic strategies, sociocultural strategies, and the meaning construction strategy.

#### **1. Psychodynamic Strategy**

This strategy focuses on human emotional or cognitive factors. In this case, the use of emotional statements and persuasion messages can change certain behavioral psychology. The essence of the psychodynamic strategy is a message that can effectively change individual psychology in various ways, thereby encouraging individuals to respond openly to the behavior expected by the persuader. (Saddam, 2014).

The Selamat kampong tradition event is an event from the community for the community. In every selamat kampong tradition event, young people must be involved in the committee so that in the future they can understand what customs are carried out annually in Aik Rayak Village. During the implementation of the Selamat kampong tradition, all villagers are present at the residence of the Traditional Leader's house to wheel together. The meaning of this tradition is not only asking for harvests, but also asking for safety, welfare, health, sustenance, and rejecting bad luck.

The results of this interview in the psychodynamic strategy, traditional leaders can involve the village community and youth in the selamat kampong tradition. Traditional leaders strengthen the community's sense of cultural identity. This strategy has an impact on human psychological aspects because traditional leaders can foster a sense of responsibility and instill pride in Indonesia's cultural heritage in the community. In addition, traditional leaders also evoke human emotions as all villagers feel connected to each other through collective prayers. This emotional factor reduces fear as the Selamat kampong tradition creates a sense of emotional security.

#### **2. Sociocultural Strategy**

Sociocultural strategies explain that human behavior is influenced by forces outside the individual. This strategy is often used in conjunction with pressure to compromise between individuals, allowing for diverse exchanges between media and individuals. The essence of the sociocultural strategy is that messages should be determined by mutual agreement. (Saddam, 2014).

As leaders of the event, traditional leaders have the right and responsibility to influence the community. In this way, they can ensure that the community will safely participate in the selamat kampong traditional event. Traditional leaders work closely with the LAM (*Lembaga Adat Melayu*), be it the village LAM, sub-district LAM, or district LAM. This allows traditional leaders to inform the wider community about the cultural values and traditions of Selamat kampong, for example on the date of the Selamat kampong event which has been set to coincide with the holy month of Ramadan and anticipated amid today's development.

Based on the results of interviews in the aspect of sociocultural strategies, it appears that the way the Selamat kampong tradition is carried out has changed. In the Selamat kampong tradition, traditional leaders apply social aspects and Islamic culture in an environment that is still influenced by this culture. In addition, as respected leaders of the event, traditional leaders not only preserve culture but also instill the values of peace and togetherness in establishing silaturahmi among the community to encourage the preservation, development, and protection of culture and customs. This can strengthen the position of traditional leaders as liaisons between the village community and outsiders.

### 3. The Meaning Construction Strategy

The meaning construction strategy is a concept that links knowledge with behavior, with the main assumption that knowledge can influence and change a person's behavior. (Saddam, 2014).

In ancient times, the livelihood of the Belitung people was to cultivate rice in the fields (*ume padi*). They moved from one place to another to plant rice for a certain period. After they got the harvest (*ngetam*), they held a celebration. This celebration is selamat kampong. Selamat kampong, which is held every year, is not merely a ritual event. Through this selamat kampong tradition, traditional leaders appeal to people who want to cut down trees, dig wells, and do other activities. Each of these activities must be communicated in advance to traditional leaders so that they can be carried out safely and under control.

The knowledge provided by customary leaders will help the community understand selamat kampong that the selamat kampong tradition is a cultural heritage that contains values of life, livelihood, and culture. Traditional leaders also convey knowledge and understanding that the Selamat kampong tradition is not just a ritual, but also strengthens the importance of solidarity between village communities. By preserving this tradition, the community can strengthen social ties.

From the results of the interviews, researchers can conclude that the selamat kampong tradition has its meaning so the culture needs to be maintained and preserved. This allows traditional leaders to successfully build an understanding of traditional values that the Selamat kampong tradition is not just a routine event, but also a cultural identity.

## Conclusion

Selamat kampong is a tradition or custom passed down from generation to generation that is carried out in every village in Belitung. The procession of this tradition is led directly by a traditional leader commonly called a kampong shaman. The Selamat kampong tradition aims to maintain the safety of the village and reject any misfortune.

Selamat kampong tradition contains several aspects such as tradition, approach, and communication strategy.

Selamat kampong is a celebration of the harvest obtained from the livelihood of the Belitung people, namely farming rice in the fields. The selamat kampong tradition is not only about being grateful for the harvest, but also asking for safety, welfare, health, sustenance, and rejecting all disasters. The Selamat kampong event begins with reading prayers together by traditional leaders and ends with the distribution of slices of *kesalan* leaves that have been prayed for together. The *kesalan* leaves are one of the unique things about the selamat kampong tradition where before going home the villagers are given *kesalan* (*neruse* leaves and *ati-ati* leaves) to sprinkle in their respective yards. In conveying information to the community, traditional leaders use several approaches such as direct interaction with the community and the use of banners at certain points. Traditional leaders use this approach as a means to influence the community to participate in a series of Selamat kampong events to preserve the Selamat kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village.

Persuasive communication strategies used by traditional leaders in creating a sense of peace in the Selamat Kampong tradition in Aik Rayak Village are: (a) Psychodynamic Strategy. Traditional leaders involve the village community and the younger generation in the implementation of the Selamat kampong tradition. This strategy has an impact on human psychological aspects because traditional leaders can foster a sense of responsibility and instill a sense of pride in cultural heritage to maintain Indonesian history and culture in the community. In addition, traditional leaders also evoke human emotions because the entire village community feels connected through joint prayer activities. (b) Sociocultural Strategy. Traditional leaders ensure that the community will participate safely and peacefully in the selamat kampong tradition because traditional leaders work together with LAM (Lembaga Adat Melayu). This makes it easier for traditional leaders to inform, preserve, foster, and protect culture and customs. Traditional leaders also apply Islamic culture to an environment that is still influenced by Islamic culture. As the leader of the event, traditional leaders not only preserve culture but also instill the values of peace and togetherness in the community. (c) The Meaning Construction Strategy. The knowledge of traditional leaders helps the community understand that the Selamat kampong tradition is a cultural heritage of ancestors that contains the value of life, livelihood, and culture. In addition, the Selamat kampong tradition is not just a ritual but also strengthens the importance of solidarity between village communities. This allows traditional leaders to successfully build an understanding of traditional values that selamat kampong is not just a routine event, but also a cultural identity.

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