

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND CHARACTER VALUES IN THE TRADITION OF PETIK LAUT IN KEDUNGREJO VILLAGE, MUNCAR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the Petik Laut tradition as a medium for internalizing the character values of coastal communities from a local historical perspective. This study is motivated by the tendency of previous studies to focus more on descriptive-ritualistic and symbolic aspects, thus not integrating the historical dimension with the formation of community character. The research uses a qualitative approach through field studies with participatory observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and documentation of traditional leaders, community leaders, and tradition practitioners. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions with triangulation of sources to ensure data validity. The results of the research show that the Petik Laut tradition contains religious values, mutual cooperation, social responsibility, and respect for nature that are passed down from generation to generation and internalized in the social life of the community. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of local historical studies and contextual character value analysis, positioning the Petik Laut tradition not only as a cultural heritage but also as a source of historical learning and character education based on local wisdom. This research contributes to the strengthening of culture-based local historical studies and the development of character education relevant to the context of coastal communities.

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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesia, as an archipelagic country, has a diversity of cultures, customs, and local traditions that are reflected in the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which means “unity in diversity” (Riyadi et al., 2024). The diversity of ethnic groups and regional languages has given rise to unique cultural practices in accordance with the geographical conditions and belief systems of the community (Directorate of Population and Employment Statistics, 2020). Culture not only functions as a social identity, but also as a value system that shapes mindsets and behaviors. The relationship between humans and culture is reciprocal and has a historical dimension that is passed down from generation to

generation (Mahdayeni et al., 2019; Santri, 2015). In the context of modernization, it is important to study local culture in order to understand and preserve the values that support social identity. Previous studies have shown that local traditions, such as *Petik Laut*, have symbolic, spiritual, and social meanings (Resilita & Fitria, 2024; Himmah et al., 2023; Anggraini, 2023). However, studies that integrate historical aspects with community character values are still limited. Therefore, research is needed that not only describes rituals but also analyzes their connection with local history and the formation of community character.

Banyuwangi Regency is one of the regions in Indonesia known for its rich and diverse local culture. This diversity stems from the interaction of various ethnic groups living side by side in one region. The Banyuwangi regional government actively develops and preserves local culture through various cultural activities and regional festivals (Kurniawati et al., 2024). These efforts demonstrate a collective awareness of the importance of culture as a regional identity as well as a social and cultural attraction. One of the local traditions that still survives today in Banyuwangi is the *Petik Laut* tradition, which is alive and well among coastal communities. The continuity of the *Petik Laut* tradition demonstrates the strong bond between the community and their ancestral culture and reflects the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. This tradition is not only interpreted as an annual ritual, but also as a social, cultural, and spiritual expression of the coastal community, making it a relevant subject for scientific study.

Muncar Subdistrict is a coastal area in Banyuwangi Regency where the majority of the population works as fishermen (BPS, 2024). The community's dependence on the sea has shaped a unique social and cultural lifestyle, in which the sea is not only seen as a source of livelihood, but also as a spiritual space and symbol of life. The *Petik Laut* tradition is a means for the fishing community to express their gratitude for the sea's bounty and to pray for safety. The implementation of this tradition involves the active participation of the community and strengthens social solidarity, giving it ritual as well as social and cultural significance. The *Petik Laut* tradition is a customary ritual that has been passed down from generation to generation and is generally carried out in the month of Muharram or Suro according to the Islamic calendar. This tradition combines cultural and religious elements, which are reflected in prayers, recitations from the Holy Qur'an, and the procession of offerings to the sea. This combination shows the process of acculturation between Islam and local culture, where religious teachings are accepted and practised without eliminating existing traditions (Juliana et al., 2023). The religious and symbolic values in the *Petik Laut* tradition give it a complex and multidimensional meaning.

Various previous studies have examined the *Petik Laut* tradition from various perspectives. Resilita & Fitria (2024) reveal the symbolic and spiritual meanings in the implementation of *Petik Laut*, Himmah et al. (2023) discuss the stages of implementing *Petik Laut* in the Muncar area, while Anggraini (2023) highlights the role of the *Petik Laut* tradition in strengthening social relations among coastal communities. However, most of these studies are still descriptive and ritualistic in nature and have not yet deeply linked the *Petik Laut* tradition with aspects of local history and community character values.

Although the *Petik Laut* tradition has been widely studied from cultural and tourism perspectives, studies that place this tradition as a means of internalizing character values within the framework of local history and the social dynamics of coastal communities are still relatively limited. Some studies tend to emphasize the ceremonial aspects and economic potential, while the historical significance and role of the *Petik Laut* tradition in shaping religious attitudes, mutual cooperation, responsibility, and appreciation for tradition have not been studied in depth. Therefore, this study is important to fill this gap by presenting field data-based analysis, while strengthening the discourse on character education based on local wisdom amid the challenges of modernization.

Based on this review, a research gap can be identified because studies that integrate local history and character values in the *Petik Laut* tradition are still relatively limited, especially in the context of Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District. In fact, local history is important for understanding the origins and development of traditions in context, while the character values contained therein are highly relevant to the lives of today's society. Therefore, this study is novel in its approach, which integrates historical analysis and character values in the *Petik Laut* tradition. This study was

conducted based on the researcher's initial observations of the cultural potential that exists in his neighborhood, not solely because of the existence of conflict, but because the Petik Laut tradition is still practiced as a guideline for life values. The focus of this study is on the history of the Petik Laut tradition and the character values contained therein, hence the title of this study is "ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORY AND CHARACTER VALUES OF THE PETIK LAUT TRADITION IN KEDUNGREJO VILLAGE, MUNCAR DISTRICT." This study has academic and social urgency in the effort to preserve local wisdom amid the challenges of modernization.

The focus of this article is the history of the origins of the tradition and the character values contained in the Petik Laut tradition in the community of Kedungrejo Village, which are described in the following questions: (1) What is the history of the Petik Laut tradition? (2) What are the character values contained in the Petik Laut tradition? This study aims to determine the history of the Petik Laut tradition in the Kedungrejo Village community and to identify the character values inherent in the Petik Laut tradition.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical type to gain an in-depth understanding of the history and character values in the Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency. The research was conducted from July to September 2025 at the main location where the tradition is practiced, covering the preparation stage to the ritual procession. A qualitative approach was chosen because the research focused on exploring the meaning and subjective understanding of the community regarding traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. The research subjects were determined using purposive sampling with the criteria for informants including direct involvement in the implementation of traditions, understanding of the history and development of rituals, having a strategic social role in the community, and willingness to provide information openly. Based on these criteria, 10 informants were obtained, consisting of active fishermen, elders or traditional leaders, the village head and village officials, the organizing committee, and community representatives. The number of informants was considered adequate because the data had reached saturation point, where the information obtained showed a repeating pattern and no significant new findings were found. Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, with validity testing using source and technique triangulation. Data analysis referred to the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and systematic conclusion drawing.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

History and Origins of the Petik Laut Tradition in Kedungrejo Village

The Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, is a maritime cultural heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation in coastal communities. Based on the findings of this study, this tradition has strong historical roots in the lives of Javanese fishing communities, especially in the northern and southern coastal areas of East Java. Similar traditions with various names, such as Sedekah Laut, Petik Laut, or Larung Sesaji, have been an integral part of the lives of Javanese coastal communities for centuries (Widati, 2011; Rahma Wulan, 2020).

The Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo is closely related to the belief system of coastal communities who view the sea not only as an economic resource, but also as an entity with spiritual power. The local community believes that the sea has a ruler or "danyang" who must be respected and given offerings as a form of gratitude for the sustenance provided and a request for safety for the fishermen (Megawati & Ihsanuddin, 2023). This belief then acculturated with Islamic values brought by traders and propagators of Islam in the coastal areas of Java, creating a unique cultural syncretism.

Historically, the Petik Laut tradition in the Muncar area developed alongside the growth of fishing as the main livelihood of the community. Muncar is known as one of the largest fishing centers in East Java, making this

tradition an important moment for the community to express gratitude, strengthen social solidarity, and pray for blessings for the upcoming fishing season (Putri & Yuwita, 2025).

Etymologically, the term Petik Laut consists of two words, namely petik, which means to pick or take, and laut, which refers to the sea. The combination of these two words reflects the activities of coastal communities in harvesting marine products as a source of livelihood, while also symbolizing gratitude for the sustenance obtained from the sea. This is as stated by one of the community leaders of Kedungrejo Village, who said that:

"Petik Laut comes from two words, namely petik, which means to pick or take, and laut, which refers to the main source of livelihood for fishing communities. In terms of meaning, Petik Laut is interpreted as a symbolic effort by fishing communities to "pick" or take sustenance from the sea with gratitude and respect. This tradition is not interpreted as greedy exploitation, but rather as a form of awareness that the sea's bounty is a gift from God Almighty that must be appreciated and preserved. Therefore, Petik Laut symbolizes the reciprocal relationship between humans and nature, especially the sea as the living space of coastal communities" (interview with Mr. Samsul, July 25, 2025).

This finding is in line with the view of Agustina et al. (2023), who state that the tradition of Petik Laut can be divided into two words, namely petik and laut. Petik means to take, collect, or obtain, while laut means the sea itself. In other words, petik laut is interpreted as picking, taking, or obtaining the fruits of the sea, which are useful as a source of livelihood for the community.

The history of the Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village is estimated to have begun around 1900 and was recorded as being more systematically active in 1927. This information was obtained from local historical research and corroborated by oral accounts passed down from generation to generation. Based on interviews with one of the senior fishermen of Kedungrejo Village, this tradition has been carried out by previous generations as a form of gratitude for the sea's bounty and a prayer for safety in their fishing activities. Although there are no written documents that definitively record the beginning of its implementation, the collective memory of the community shows that the Petik Laut tradition has been an integral part of the social and cultural life of local fishermen since the early 20th century. This statement is supported by an interview with one of the fishermen of Kedungrejo Village who stated:

"The sea harvest tradition has been around since I was a child, probably since around 1901. But it became active in 1927, and this tradition began to be recognized in the 2000s because technological developments had begun to take place, so this tradition has become more and more festive from year to year" (Interview with Mr. Sulyono, July 4, 2025).

From the interview with Mr. Sulyono, it can be understood that the tradition cannot be identified, but every coastline certainly has a similar tradition, only the date and implementation are different.

A similar statement was also conveyed by another fisherman who said:

"I don't know when this tradition started, but it has existed since I was born until now. People in the past always did it, so fishermen consciously continue this tradition from generation to generation, but my parents said that this tradition was started in the 1900s" (Interview with Mr. Kholik, July 4, 2025).

The same statement was conveyed by Himmah et al. (2023), that the existence of the Petik Laut tradition in Muncar is an inevitability that cannot be separated from the socio-economic conditions of the local community, where most of the population earns a living as fishermen. The activity of fishing carries a high level of risk and is highly dependent on safety factors, prompting the fishing community to perform the Petik Laut ritual as a form of prayer for safety and smooth sailing in carrying out their work at sea. In its implementation, the Petik Laut tradition in Muncar also includes a procession of offerings that has been held since 1901 and is estimated to have existed long before that

period. The continuity of this ritual shows the strong connection between cultural traditions, community beliefs, and the lives of fishermen in Muncar.

The Petik Laut tradition was originally a simple form of sea ceremony held on the beach by the local community, with offerings and ceremonies at the Muncar port as a sign of gratitude for the sea's bounty. This was conveyed by one of the traditional leaders of Kedungrejo Village, who stated:

"Petik Laut originated from the gratitude of the Muncar community, especially the fishermen in Kedungrejo Village, for the sea's bounty. In its early days, this tradition was carried out on a small scale with simple equipment. The offerings used were only traditional dishes and offerings that did not require large expenses. However, along with cultural developments and community progress, this tradition, which was originally simple, underwent changes until it became a bigger and more festive celebration" (Interview with Mr. Samsul, July 25, 2025).

From the interview with Mr. Samsul, it can be understood that the Petik Laut tradition originated from the gratitude of the fishermen of Kedungrejo Village for the sea's bounty and was initially carried out simply with traditional offerings. Along with cultural and social developments, this tradition then evolved into a larger and more festive celebration without losing its basic meaning.

As time passed, the Petik Laut tradition underwent changes in various aspects of its ritual procession. These changes included the offerings, the series of ceremonial events, and the packaging of the event, which was made more luxurious. Developments in information, communication, and science also influenced the socio-cultural conditions of the community. The evolution in the implementation of the Petik Laut ritual shows a shift in community customs towards a more modern direction. The mindset, attitudes, and lifestyles of the community have changed in line with the progress of the times. This has caused the Petik Laut tradition to continue to adapt without losing its main meaning as an expression of gratitude and cultural preservation. Technological advances in the modern era have facilitated access to communication and information, such as the introduction and promotion of culture, so that the Petik Laut tradition is increasingly known by people from outside the region. This finding is in line with Tamimi and Munawaroh (2024), who state that, in general, technology develops because there are people who utilize resources and use their thinking skills to solve the problems of life that they will face. Every change or development in technology can provide benefits for humans. Technological advances in the modern era have facilitated access to communication and information, including local culture. This is reflected in the statements of informants who mentioned:

"The Petik Laut tradition is promoted primarily through social media as the main means of disseminating information. The promotional materials used include digital posters that are uploaded to the village's official social media accounts. These posters are also shared on various other social media platforms so that the information can reach a wider audience" (Interview with Mr. Ahmad Zaihon, July 24, 2025).

From time to time, changes in tradition have become increasingly apparent in the offering containers, the contents of the offerings, and the festivities. One of the major changes is the offering called ubo rampe. Gitik is a miniature boat measuring about 3-4 meters, which is the most important offering in the Petik Laut tradition procession. At the peak of the sea harvest tradition, the gitik offering is launched into the middle of the sea. This finding is in line with Fahri (2022), who states that the gitik offering has a strong symbolic meaning for fishermen, representing their gratitude to God Almighty for the abundant sea harvest, safety at sea, and the continuity of their lives. In the Petik Laut ceremony, the floating of the githik sesaji is the core and climax of the entire procession. Through this floating, the fishing community believes that the offerings carried out to sea are a means of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans and the sea. The name githik sesaji or larung sesaji is closely related to the final procession of the Petik Laut ceremony, namely the offering of sesaji to the middle of the sea as a symbol of surrender

and return of part of the earth's produce to nature. This is similar to what was conveyed by a traditional leader from Kedungrejo Village, who stated:

"The container for all the offerings prepared is a small boat measuring 3-4 meters, made by the community themselves. These offerings or gitik are very important because the climax of Petik Laut is the launching of the gitik to the east of Sembulung" (Interview with Mr. Samsul, July 25, 2025).



Figure 1. Contents of the offering
(source: documentation, 10 July 2025)

Another change can be seen in the involvement of the millennial generation, who have modified the shape of the offering container. Previously, offerings were placed on a platform made from banana tree trunks, but now they are placed on gitik offerings to make it easier to arrange the ubo rampe. This statement is supported by the results of interviews with other village leaders in Kedungrejo Village, who stated:

"In the tradition of petik laut, offerings are very important, and there are two types of offerings in the petik laut tradition. The first is land offerings, which are similar to those given at a thanksgiving ceremony. The second is sea offerings, which include goat heads, fruits, tubers, and seafood. there are also live chickens, so if you describe all the contents, there will definitely be a lot because offerings are certainly diverse and varied" (interview with Mr. Kholik, July 25, 2025).

This finding is in line with Endraswara's (2003) view that offerings or ubo rampe are an important element in traditional ceremonies as a symbol of spiritual expression to get closer to God and a means of communication with supernatural powers, with the aim of obtaining safety and avoiding disturbance from supernatural beings. The contents of offerings in the Petik Laut tradition have also undergone additions and developments. Initially, offerings consisted only of jenang (rice cake), market snacks, roses, and a few other simple items. Currently, the offerings include around 60 types of ubo rampe divided into 12 groups, such as gold fishing rods, two live roosters, opium, betel nuts, decorative items, various types of bananas, various fruits, rice and side dishes, and a variety of snacks. All of the offerings have their own symbolic meanings, with the exception of agricultural products that are poisonous or dangerous.

The Petik Laut traditional ceremony and series of events

Based on observations and interviews with community leaders and tradition practitioners, the Petik Laut ceremony in Kedungrejo Village consists of several stages that are carried out systematically:

1. Preparation Stage

The preparation stage begins several weeks before the event, such as making gitik saji (offerings) and other equipment. The community works together to prepare various ceremonial equipment, including making offerings, decorating boats, and preparing event logistics. In this stage, the values of mutual cooperation and social solidarity are very evident, where all elements of society, regardless of socioeconomic status, actively participate (Waskito & Widiyanto, 2022).

2. Preparation of Offerings

Offerings are a central element in the Petik Laut tradition. The offerings prepared usually consist of various types of traditional foods such as tumpeng rice, seafood, fruits, flowers, and various types of market snacks. Each component of the offering has a deep symbolic meaning. Jannah et al. (2022) explain that offerings in the Petik Laut tradition contain philosophical meanings related to respect for nature, expressions of gratitude, and hopes for blessings. Nasi tumpeng symbolizes prosperity, seafood symbolizes respect for the source of sustenance, while flowers symbolize beauty and purity of intention.

3. Joint Prayer Ritual

The day before the offering ceremony, the community holds a recitation of the Qur'an. After the day of the offering ceremony, before the procession of offerings to the sea, a communal prayer ritual is led by local religious leaders. In this ritual, prayers are recited in Arabic (Islamic prayers) and also in Javanese as a form of acculturation of local culture with Islamic values. This prayer ritual shows the harmony between traditional beliefs and Islamic teachings, which have become the identity of the coastal community (Sakdiyah et al., 2023).

4. Procession and Offering Ceremony

The procession continues with the transportation of the offerings to Muncar Port using pickup trucks. The procession consists of a drum band, vehicles carrying offerings, people wearing traditional costumes, and accompanying people walking or riding motorcycles and cars. This series of events is part of a celebration that involves broad community participation. The procession of offerings from the mainland to the beach is the most anticipated highlight of the event. The offerings are carried on decorated boats adorned with yellow palm leaves, colorful fabrics, and various traditional ornaments. The community flocks to follow the procession while offering prayers and wishes. Upon reaching the sea, the offerings are floated or cast into the middle of the sea as a symbol of surrender and offering to the ruler of the sea (Winanti et al., 2023).

5. Closing with Social Activities

After the offering ceremony, the event continues with various social activities such as communal meals, traditional art performances, and competitions involving all levels of society. These activities strengthen social bonds and solidarity among residents (Amanatin et al., 2024).

Character values in the Petik Laut tradition

Based on the results of research on character building in the Petik Laut ritual as a traditional custom in Kedungrejo Village, a number of character values were found to be reflected in community life. This traditional ritual not only functions as a cultural activity, but also as a means of instilling social character values that have developed and been passed down from generation to generation. These character values can be identified through the stages of the Petik Laut tradition and the customs of the community in their daily lives. The social practices that accompany the implementation of this ritual show a strong connection between cultural traditions and the process of character building in community life.

The character values contained therein serve as guidelines in social life and strengthen harmony among community members. The character values in the Petik Laut ritual are as follows:

1. Religious Values

Religious values in the Petik Laut tradition are substantially reflected through communal prayers, recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an, and prayers for safety to God Almighty before the larung procession is carried out. This practice emphasizes that Petik Laut is not merely a cultural ritual, but a medium for internalizing the spiritual awareness of the fishing community that the sea, as a source of livelihood, is in God's power. This awareness shapes an attitude of tawakal (trust in God), gratitude, and recognition of human limitations in the face of natural forces. The findings of this study show a new emphasis on the religious function of the Petik Laut tradition as a mechanism for shaping collective character, not just a symbolic expression of religion. In line with Anggraini (2023), the religious value in this tradition represents the gratitude of the Muncar coastal community for the blessings of the sea; however, this study expands on this by showing that this annual religious ritual contributes to the formation of

moral responsibility towards others and the environment. Thus, religiosity in the Petik Laut tradition serves as an ethical foundation that supports the sustainability of the coastal community's character.

2. The Values of Mutual Cooperation and Social Solidarity

The value of mutual cooperation is one of the noble values that has been deeply rooted in Indonesian society and has become part of the national identity. This value is clearly reflected in Pancasila, particularly in the third principle, namely Indonesian Unity, which emphasizes the importance of togetherness and solidarity in social life. In a social context, mutual cooperation acts as a glue for social relations that encourages collective work based on a spirit of volunteerism, mutual assistance, unity, and kinship (Irmayani et al., 2023). These values are clearly reflected in the entire series of preparations for and implementation of the Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village. From the initial stage, the community jointly formed a committee to coordinate various ritual needs, such as collecting funds, preparing offerings, making and decorating boats, and arranging the technical aspects of the procession at sea. Community participation was voluntary without expecting material rewards, which shows a strong collective awareness that the Petik Laut tradition belongs to everyone. The cooperation between fishermen, traditional leaders, village officials, and the general public reflects a high level of social solidarity. Thus, the Petik Laut tradition emphasizes that the successful implementation of traditional activities cannot be achieved individually, but rather through the active contribution of all elements of society.

3. The Value of Environmental Awareness (Eco-Spirituality)

The Petik Laut tradition embodies a value of caring for the preservation of the marine environment. Wulida et al. (2019) explain that the Sedekah Laut (Petik Laut) tradition is a form of local wisdom in maintaining the balance of the marine ecosystem and the sustainability of maritime resources. The community is aware that the sea must be protected and preserved so that it can continue to provide benefits for future generations. This value is in line with the concept of eco-spirituality, which integrates spiritual dimensions with ecological awareness (Asyifa' et al., 2025). In practice, this value of environmental awareness is manifested through certain restrictions in fishing activities, such as prohibitions on using fishing gear that damages the marine ecosystem, prohibitions on fishing during certain seasons to allow fish populations to regenerate, and awareness not to litter in the sea.

4. Values of Tolerance and Harmony

The Petik Laut tradition also serves as a means to strengthen tolerance and harmony among residents. Although the majority of the Kedungrejo community is Muslim, this tradition continues to involve all elements of society regardless of religious or ethnic background. Hapsari et al. (2023) emphasize that the Sedekah Laut tradition reflects the high values of pluralism and tolerance in coastal communities. Rituals that combine elements of local beliefs with Islamic values demonstrate the community's ability to manage diversity and create social harmony.

5. The Value of Responsibility

The value of responsibility is clearly evident in the sincerity of the Muncar Village community in preserving the Petik Laut tradition, which has been passed down from generation to generation. Every party involved in this tradition has a role and duty that is carried out with full awareness, whether in the preparation stage of the ritual, the implementation of the procession at sea, or ensuring the overall security of the event. On the other hand, the organizing committee is responsible for coordinating various technical requirements so that the activities can run according to plan and applicable customary rules. The village government also has an important role in providing support, supervision, and maintaining order during the tradition because the activity takes place within its administrative area. Collective awareness of the importance of carrying out their respective roles shows that the Petik Laut tradition is not only understood as an annual ceremonial activity, but also as a form of social and cultural responsibility that must be maintained. Through this sense of responsibility, the community strives to ensure that the noble values contained in the Petik Laut tradition are preserved and can be passed on to the next generation in a sustainable manner. This finding is in line with Schiller and Bryan (2002), who state that responsibility is a form of individual behavior reflected in the way one responds to various situations in daily life, which requires decision-

making based on moral considerations. Meanwhile, Mudjiono (2012) defines responsibility as an attitude related to fulfilling promises and exercising rights, duties, and obligations that must be carried out in accordance with the rules, values, moral norms, and customs that apply in society.

6. The Value of Respecting Tradition

The value of respecting tradition is reflected in the consistency of the community in carrying out the Petik Laut tradition every year, despite the challenges of changing times and natural conditions. The community views Petik Laut as an important ancestral heritage that must be preserved and maintained. The attitude of respect towards elders and traditional leaders in the decision-making process shows an appreciation for local wisdom, which is still highly regarded. In addition, the Petik Laut tradition serves as a means of passing on cultural values to the younger generation, thereby playing a role in maintaining the cultural identity of the Muncar community. Cultural preservation is essentially a long-term effort that must be carried out continuously and based on the active involvement of the community. Preservation will not last if it is only temporary, elitist, or limited to academic discourse and specific projects. Therefore, the sustainability of cultural preservation depends heavily on the support of the wider community and its ability to become a real part of everyday life, so it needs to be carried out and fought for together by the community as the owners and practitioners of the culture (Hadiwinoto, 2002).

Historical Analysis of the Petik Laut Tradition from a Cultural Anthropology Perspective

The Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, can be understood as a complex cultural phenomenon with long historical roots. From a cultural anthropology perspective, this tradition is a symbolic system that gives meaning to the lives of coastal communities. Geertz (1973), in his theory of cultural interpretation, explains that humans are creatures who depend on the webs of meaning that they weave themselves, and culture is those webs. The Petik Laut tradition, with all its processes and symbols, is a web of meaning that provides orientation for the lives of the fishing community of Kedungrejo.

Historically, the Petik Laut tradition is the result of a long process of cultural acculturation. This tradition has its roots in the animistic and dynamic beliefs of ancient Javanese society, which viewed the sea as an entity with supernatural powers. The belief in “Nyi Roro Kidul” or the ruler of the southern sea is part of the cosmology of Javanese society that has existed since the pre-Islamic era (Widati, 2011). When Islam entered Java, the guardians and spreaders of Islam did not completely eradicate this tradition, but instead carried out a process of Islamization by integrating Islamic values into existing traditional practices. This cultural da'wah strategy is known as “Islam Nusantara,” which is accommodating of local cultures as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islam (Megawati & Ihsanuddin, 2023).

This process of acculturation has resulted in a unique cultural syncretism, where elements of local beliefs are blended with Islamic teachings. In the Petik Laut tradition, this can be seen in the use of Islamic prayers, recitation of tahlil and shalawat, while still maintaining the practice of offering sacrifices, which is a legacy of local beliefs. Sakdiyah et al. (2023) refer to this phenomenon as a “cultural relationship” between religion and local traditions that complement and enrich each other.

In the context of Kedungrejo Village, a coastal area where fishing is the basis of the economy, the Petik Laut tradition has a historical function as a social mechanism for regulating the collective life of the fishing community. This tradition serves as a social calendar that marks the change of fishing seasons, as a ritual of transition from one phase of economic life to the next. In Malinowski's functionalism theory (1944), traditions such as this have a practical function in meeting the basic needs of society, including biological (economic) needs, psychological needs (a sense of security and certainty), and social needs (solidarity and integration).

The Social Function of the Petik Laut Tradition from a Sociological Perspective

From a sociological perspective, the Petik Laut tradition can be analyzed using Emile Durkheim's (1912/1995) structural functionalism theory. Durkheim argues that religious rituals and ceremonies have the primary function of strengthening social solidarity and collective consciousness in society. The Petik Laut tradition in

Kedungrejo clearly fulfills this function by providing a moment when all members of the community gather, actively participate, and reaffirm the shared values that bind them together.

Waskito and Widiyanto (2022), in their research on social solidarity in the Petik Laut tradition, found that this tradition functions as an effective mechanism for social integration. In a fishing community that tends to be individualistic in its daily economic activities (each fisherman works for the benefit of his own family), the Petik Laut tradition becomes an important moment to rebuild collective consciousness and a sense of togetherness. Through mutual cooperation in preparation, participation in the procession, and joint celebrations afterwards, social bonds between residents are strengthened.

Amanatin et al. (2024) explain that the Sedekah Laut (Petik Laut) tradition functions as a “social mechanism” that regulates social relationships in urban fishing communities. In the context of modernization and urbanization, which tend to weaken traditional social bonds, traditions such as Petik Laut become a defense against social disintegration. This tradition creates a space and time where the values of communality, mutual cooperation, and solidarity can be reproduced and transmitted to the younger generation.

From the perspective of Putnam's (1993) social capital theory, the Petik Laut tradition can be understood as a mechanism for building and strengthening social capital in society. Social capital, which consists of social networks, reciprocal norms, and trust, is an important asset for communities to achieve collective goals. The Petik Laut tradition, with all its rituals and collective participation, strengthens these three elements of social capital: it expands social networks through intensive interactions between residents, strengthens reciprocal norms through mutual cooperation, and builds trust through repeated cooperation.

The Petik Laut Tradition as a Medium for Character Education

The Petik Laut tradition has great potential as an effective medium for character education, especially for the younger generation. Lickona (1991) in his theory of character education explains that good character consists of three components: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. The Petik Laut tradition integrates these three components into a single cultural practice.

Jannah et al. (2022), in their research on the value of character education in the Petik Laut tradition, found that this tradition contains various character values that are in line with the 18 national character values developed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. These values include: religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious, patriotic, love of country, appreciation of achievement, friendly/communicative, peace-loving, fond of reading, environmentally conscious, socially conscious, and responsible.

Agustina et al. (2023) explain the concept of “internalization of local wisdom character values” through the Petik Laut tradition. Internalization is a process in which external values contained in traditions become part of an individual's personality structure. This process occurs through several stages: introduction, understanding, acceptance, and implementation. In the context of the Petik Laut tradition, young people are introduced to character values through active participation in the tradition, understanding the symbolic meaning of each procession, accepting these values as part of their identity, and finally practicing these values in their daily lives.

The process of transmitting character values through the Petik Laut tradition occurs informally and experientially. Unlike formal character education in schools, which tends to be cognitive and instructive, character education through tradition is participatory and contextual. Children and adolescents learn character values by being directly involved in traditions, observing the behavior of parents and community leaders, and experiencing the spiritual and social atmosphere created in traditions (Agustina et al., 2023).

From the perspective of Bandura's social learning theory (1977), the Petik Laut tradition provides role models for the younger generation. Through observing the behavior of community leaders, parents, and senior fishermen in the tradition, the younger generation learns values such as respect, responsibility, cooperation, and spirituality. This modeling process is very effective because it occurs in a context that is emotionally and socially meaningful.

Eco-Spirituality Values in the Petik Laut Tradition

One important dimension of the Petik Laut tradition is the value of eco-spirituality or ecological spirituality. This concept integrates spiritual dimensions with concern for environmental sustainability. Wulida et al. (2019) explain that the Sedekah Laut (Petik Laut) tradition is a manifestation of local wisdom in maintaining the sustainability of the marine environment. Coastal communities are aware that the sea is not only an economic resource to be exploited, but also an entity that must be respected and preserved.

Asyifa' et al. (2025) in their research on ecological balance in the Petik Laut tradition explain that this tradition contains environmental conservation principles that are in line with the concept of sustainable development. The values contained in the tradition, such as respect for the sea, gratitude for nature's gifts, and responsibility for preserving sustainability, form an environmental ethic that encourages sustainable fishing practices.

From the perspective of deep ecology developed by Arne Naess (1973), the Petik Laut tradition reflects an ecocentric view that places nature not as an object separate from humans, but as a subject with intrinsic value. The practice of offering sacrifices to the sea can be interpreted as a form of recognition of the intrinsic value of the sea and an effort to build a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

White (1967) in his influential article on the historical roots of the modern ecological crisis argues that one of the causes of the environmental crisis is the anthropocentric view that places humans as rulers of nature who have the right to exploit nature without limits. The Petik Laut tradition offers a more balanced alternative paradigm, in which humans are seen as part of an ecosystem that has a moral responsibility to maintain the harmony of nature.

The value of eco-spirituality in the Petik Laut tradition is also in line with the concept of Islamic environmentalism developed by contemporary Islamic scholars. From an Islamic perspective, humans are khalifah (leaders) on earth who have a responsibility to protect and preserve God's creation (Khalid, 2002). Practices in the Petik Laut tradition, such as prayers for the preservation of the sea, restrictions on fishing, and awareness not to damage the marine ecosystem, are implementations of the khalifah principle.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and analysis that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency, East Java Province is a local maritime wisdom that has long historical roots and contains spiritual, social, ecological, and cultural dimensions that are integrated with each other. This tradition originated from the belief system of coastal communities who view the sea as a sacred entity, and then underwent a process of acculturation with Islamic values, forming a syncretic cultural practice that remains relevant to contemporary society. Historically, the existence of Petik Laut cannot be separated from the socio-economic structure of the Muncar fishing community, whose livelihoods depend on the fishing industry. This tradition functions as a cultural mechanism to express gratitude for the sea's bounty, pray for safety in fishing activities, and strengthen social solidarity among residents. From a cultural anthropology perspective, Petik Laut is a symbolic system that builds the collective meaning orientation of coastal communities, while from a sociological perspective, this tradition serves as a means of social integration that strengthens collective awareness and community cohesion. Furthermore, this study confirms that the Petik Laut tradition functions as a medium for internalizing character values, including religious values, mutual cooperation, responsibility, tolerance, environmental awareness (eco-spirituality), and appreciation for tradition. These values are not only manifested in symbols and ritual processes, but also implemented in the daily social practices of the community. Thus, the Petik Laut tradition has a real contribution in shaping the character of coastal communities as well as being a source of contextual local history learning. Amidst the currents of modernization and cultural commercialization, the Petik Laut tradition shows a dynamic and adaptive nature without losing its basic essence. Transformations in the aspects of processions, event packaging, and the use of digital media are cultural strategies to maintain the sustainability of traditions. Therefore, the preservation of the Petik Laut tradition needs to be carried out sustainably through integration into local education,

scientific documentation, the involvement of the younger generation, and culture-based development that maintains its spiritual and social values. Overall, the Petik Laut tradition not only represents the cultural identity of coastal communities but also holds strategic relevance in strengthening character education, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting sustainable development rooted in local wisdom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of research on the Petik Laut tradition in Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency, East Java Province, there are several recommendations for further research development.

First, further research could examine the Petik Laut tradition from a comparative perspective with other maritime traditions in the southern coastal region of Java to identify patterns of similarity and difference in value construction, symbolic systems, and processes of cultural and religious acculturation. This comparative approach would enrich the field of local history and maritime anthropology studies.

Second, interdisciplinary research integrating historical, anthropological, educational, and environmental perspectives is needed to analyze in greater depth the eco-spirituality dimension of the Petik Laut tradition, particularly its relevance to ecological awareness and marine resource conservation practices in the modern era.

Third, further research can develop a model for implementing the Petik Laut tradition as a source of contextual learning in character education in schools, including the formulation of learning tools based on local wisdom. This study is important to bridge the gap between community cultural practices and the formal education curriculum.

Fourth, studies on the transformation of the Petik Laut tradition in the context of cultural tourism and digitalization also need to be conducted to examine its impact on authenticity, community participation, and the sustainability of the values contained therein.

Thus, further research is expected to not only expand the scope of theoretical studies but also provide practical contributions to the preservation of traditions, the strengthening of local identity, and the development of culture-based character education.

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