



The education values and motivation behind violence in the tradition of the Sasak Tribe in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to elaborate on the Peresean tradition, which is a unique and typical tradition among the Sasak tribe in Lombok, Indonesia. This tradition was held in ancient times to train fighters to fight invaders and beseech for rain. Nowadays, it is used to greet guests or tourists and celebrate national holidays, religious holidays, and traditional days. The present study employed ethnographic approaches. The researcher conducted the study in the West Nusa Tenggara province of Indonesia, specifically focusing on the Sasak tribe. This study result indicates that motivational reasons established from the Peresean tradition are to preserve culture and belief motivation. Meanwhile, the values education implies behind the violence in the Peresean tradition are, first, to strengthen the sense of solidarity and kinship between religions and local community members. Second, the values of such a tradition educate the mentality of sportsmanship to abide by Peresean rules. The third is to educate, in the spirit of courage and toughness, the young generation of the Sasak people in defending and contending for the sake of tribe, religion, and country. The integration between values-education, and people's motivation is the foundation and pillar for preserving the Peresean tradition in the Sasak tribe until today.

1. Introduction

Lombok Island is an island inhabited by most of the Sasak people. The Sasak people spread across the Indonesian archipelago but mainly lived in West Nusa Tenggara province. Apart from having a lot of natural beauty and tourist spots, Lombok Island also has unique and exciting customs and traditions. Hence, Lombok Island obtained the best halal tourism title at the world level (Pertwi and Taqwiem, 2021). Some fascinating practices include the *Gamelan* tradition, the *Nyongkolan* tradition at weddings, the

Ngurisan tradition during newborn babies, and many others. The tradition that people like and are most interested in, especially young people, is the *Peresean* tradition, while the most interesting religious practice is the *Tahlilan*/congregational dhikr and praying (Suhupawati & Mayasari, 2017). There is also the *Jagongan* tradition, a custom of welcoming a newborn for seven days. This tradition is a form of gratitude and familiarity among people in the village, both men and women (Widyaningrum & Tantoro, 2017).

The cultural traditions within a society result from the creative, aesthetic taste and intentions that were prevalent during a given period. The cultural phenomenon under consideration has emerged from a frequent and ongoing habitual practice. Traditions are commonly referred to as activities collectively owned by a community (Koentjaraningrat 1962). Customary practices comprise a form of culture in Indonesia which are inherited from our ancestors. Each region has its own customs, habits, or characteristics (Sulhan, 2018). Many types of research related to values education values, particularly in character building toward the tradition of a region. Among the values reflected in a region's traditions are honesty, discipline, love of the motherland and nation, and so on (Arrazaq & Aman 2020; Nikmah 2020). Research on Reog Ponorogo using the character education values approach has been studied. This study's results implied that nationalism values are contained in Reog Ponorogo (Sriana, 2020), religious values (Setyami, 2021), togetherness, and strengthened kinship values (Taena et al., 2016; Erni, 2018). And another value is the increasing gratitude to God Almighty and compassion for others (Hemafitria, 2019; Chandra et al., 2019). There are also social values, responsibility (Asih et al., 2017; Mastuti, 2016), mutual cooperation, and willingness to sacrifice values (Sholeh, 2021; Hadi, 2017). Previous studies have predominantly focused on the significance of education, honesty, discipline, and other values related to education. Research studies on local cultural traditions in Indonesia thoroughly examine the complex nature of their underlying motivations and values are rarely encountered.

Peresean is a customary practice found in the Sasak community. The *Peresean* tradition holds a prominent position within the cultural practices of the Sasak tribe and enjoys widespread popularity across various social strata. In addition to its widespread popularity within the *Peresean* tradition, this practice also holds potential as an educational tool for both younger generations and the broader community. One of the educational values that can be acquired is the value of leadership, as stated by Mastur (2018). Utama (2021) analyzed the *Peresean* tradition of the Sasak tribe, utilizing a character education framework. The research results elucidate that the *Peresean* practice serves as a means of establishing and maintaining the identity of the Sasak people, regardless of their geographical location. The acquisition of character education values includes discipline, honesty, creativity, hard work, and democracy. These qualities have the potential to serve as exemplars and principles for the Sasak community's way of life. Asyari (2022) studied the socio-cultural aspects of the *Peresean* tradition within the Sasak community. The findings of the study indicate that the *Peresean* tradition's violent nature is motivated by social values. This tradition encompasses social values such as sportive, integrity, bravery, and fraternal principles. Several positive social values underpin the violent activities associated with this tradition.

Teaching values comprehensively and systematically to children is a form of planned character education. Providing correct and wrong understanding to children is one way to instill concepts early on. This comprehension concept follows society's behavioral standard (Heidari et al., 2016). A particular view explains that character education is, naturally, a personal trait. This individual trait generates certain morals and character (Suwartini et al., 2017). The process of character building is centered on the education of values. In addition to receiving instruction in values education, children are also educated on the background and development of values and moral principles upheld within the nation and state (Santoso et al., 2020; Prijanto, 2020). We must continue carrying out character-building in children both at and outside of school. Some of the essential character values taught are the values of honesty, caring, defending the truth, and being responsible (Komara, 2018).

Character building is related to values education. This values education is interpreted as the usual moral education in society (Wijoyo, 2021). Believing in one God is the primary value that constructs the basis for forming such moral values (Hayati & Usriyah, 2020). Setting an excellent example by teachers and society constitutes good character education for children. It is a tangible form of a good character value education process (Farida, 2016). The method of character formation is an effort to cultivate the heart and soul. The actual output of the character education process is seen in the child's daily behavior. Such examples are a caring attitude towards their friends, caring for the environment, being responsible for every task, and being devoted to their parents (Asa, 2019).

The role of Islamic boarding schools in education is highly significant, particularly in building character education. Akram & Iqbal (2020) studied Islamic boarding schools' role in Indonesia. Their study result explains that Islamic boarding schools' role in educating students' character is highly significant. Islamic boarding school has formal and non-formal school to mold the younger generation effectively. An integrated curriculum between formal and non-formal curricula is helpful in character value education, especially religious character. Thus, the role of religion in building students' ethics and morals is very influential. The influence of religion or belief as the foundation of educating children is very significant (Anriani et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the impact of children's cooperative level in education has good results. Their level of cooperation can be seen in schools and the community (Chatathicoon et al., 2022). Religious beliefs significantly influence the motivation behind educating children/students in Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools persist and progress in Indonesia due to their commitment to educating children and students. A strong belief in the value of education drives this commitment.

The Peresean custom is an ethnic Sasak practice on the Indonesian island of Lombok. This tradition is characterized by its singularity: the battling of two warriors / Pepadu in an arena where the public can observe. From ancient periods to the present, this tradition has existed for a very long time. The strategic position of Lombok to become a global halal tourism destination encourages its citizens to propagate the Peresean practice. Therefore, this research will analyze why the Peresean tradition is still preserved from the past to the present by the Sasak people and NTB residents in general.

How to interpret the motivations contained in this Peresean tradition and thorough analysis of the values education implied in the Peresean practice of the Sasak tribe on Lombok Island, Indonesia.

2. Method

This research applies qualitative methods using ethnography approaches. This research is located in West Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia, specifically toward Sasak people practicing the Peresean tradition. This research was conducted in 2022-2023, employing thorough interviews and documentation. The data collection was conducted in locations usually holding Peresean competition activities. The location is usually in a village field, town square, or meeting building/meeting hall. The study sites represent Regencies in NTB Province during the research data gathering, such as East Lombok, Central Lombok, West Lombok, North Lombok, and Mataram City. Data is taken from events, traditional processes, and the whole traditional activities (Gall et al., 2003).

The technique for collecting data is to use in-depth interviews with *Pepadu*/fighters, Sasak traditional leaders, religious leaders, community leaders, and visitors who directly witness the Peresean fighting tradition. To maintain the respondents' confidentiality, we use initials for these names. We use (TA) for Religious Leaders, (TM) is used for Community Leaders, *Pepadu*/fighters (PU), for Spectators/Visitors (PN). The collected data comprises responses from participants related to inquiries concerning the motivation behind the adoption of Peresean, as well as queries about the educational principles derived from the Peresean traditions. Data were taken directly to predetermined respondents' representatives. And then, data were analyzed, conforming to the predetermined formulation of problems. After obtaining data, we processed the data to summarize it. After that, the data were interpreted according to the context of the situation, performed coding, made illustrations, concluding, and finally, we conducted verification for the results conclusions (Miles et al., 2014; Fraser, 2004)

3. Result and discussion

- **Process of Peresean Tradition**

Peresean is one of the Sasak ethnical traditional games, played or the hassle between two men using two tools, a rattan stick (*Penjalin*) and a shield made of thick and hard buffalo skin or in the Sasak language; it is called *Ende* as shown in figure 1. The fighter in Peresean is usually called a *Pepadu*, as shown in Figure 2, and the referee is called a *Pakembar*. In the Peresean game, there are two referees: the referee who leads the match, or *Pakembar Tengak*, and the referee who looks for *Pepadu* standing on the edge of the arena, or what is called *Pakembar Sedi*, as shown in Figure 3. The tradition, a game passed down from generation to generation by the Sasak people, is still preserved by the Sasak people, both on the Lombok Island and by residents of the Sasak **tribe** outside the island. In this study, the authors found the results of experience and motivation in performing the *Peresean* tradition. The experience gained is the spirit of courage, the value of sportsmanship, and friendship. And the motivation that develops in this Peresean tradition is to preserve ancestral culture or the Sasak **people** culture in Lombok.



Figure 1. Rattan Stick (Penjalin) and Shield (Ende) in Peresean tradition



Figure 2. Fighter (Pepadu) in Peresean tradition



Figure 3. Two referees (*Pekembar Tengk dan Pekembar Sedi*) in Peresean tradition

- **Motivation for Peresean Tradition**

This Peresean match is an exciting Sasak **tribe** tradition. The Peresean practice appears to exhibit elements of violence due to its inclusion of combative encounters or contests among adolescent or brave males. The courageous individuals situated in the Peresean are commonly referred to as *Pepadu*. This tradition appears filled with violence, yet it encompasses a significant amount of value-based education within its framework. The Peresean fighting tradition has endured until now due to its established regulations, provisions, and procedures. Some important rules are that *Pepadu* cannot hit his opponent on the bottom of the leg and thigh. Yet, they may strike the opponent to the back, head, and shoulders, protected by an *Ende*/shield. After their fight, the *Pepadu* embraced each other, meaning they forgave each other because this was just a friendly fight. So, this Peresean tradition is motivated by the urge to preserve Sasak culture from ancient times to the present, which contains a lot of values-education. As explained by one of the Leaders Community, TM1:

"So, basically, we try to keep the Sasak culture alive as a way to honor our ancestors and their traditions. About the Peresean tradition, it's really interesting! It seems like this tradition has a lot of violence in it. Even though there's a lot of violence, there are still some good values and lessons to be learned from it. This tradition seems full of violence. However, behind the violence, it has goodness/values education that one can take as a lesson. In Peresean, people value things like bravery, resilience, forgiving each

other, and being a good sport when they fight. This motivation to preserve Sasak culture has made the traditions of the Sasak people able to be performed until now. The motivation for preserving this culture must be understood to take its good value."

Long ago, the Sasak kings held the Peresean tradition of training troops for war. In addition to training in battle, the elders of the Sasak **tribe** taught the youths in the old days for mental and physical tests by fighting regularly. So that when there is a war, they are equipped with skills when fighting the enemy. The *Pepadu* are given agility, courage, and toughness to fight in a duel. Back in the old days, the people would hold the Peresean tradition as part of praying for rain. The ancients who believed in animism believed that the Peresean practice was a way to pray for rain during the dry season. As explained by Leader Community, TM2:

"The reason behind the Peresean tradition is that it was originally used to request rain during the dry season in ancient times. And the blood that drops from the Pepadu is actually a symbol of the Sasak youth's determination to pray for rain. Besides requesting rain, this tradition also helps the Sasak youth develop their agility, courage, and toughness in protecting their ethnic community. We, the Sasak people, hold our cultural motivation strong. It's what keeps our tradition going continue."

The motivation for preserving the Peresean cultural tradition is implemented today in the celebration of National Holidays. The Peresean practice today is held on national holidays or Sasak Traditional Days. The Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia (HUT RI) is among the Commemoration of National holidays. The Indonesian Independence Day is held every August 17 every year and is festive by the Peresean tradition. The *Bau Nyale* celebration in the Sasak **tribe** is usually held in February and gets more festive by Peresean fights before and after *Bau Nyale*. And the locals often have it when welcoming domestic or foreign tourist guests. As reported by Leader Community TM3:

"At present, the Peresean tradition commemorates Indonesia's national holidays. The days include the Republic of Indonesia Anniversary every August 17, commemorating Youth Pledge Day, Pancasila Day, and so on. The Peresean tradition is also held when commemorating traditional or religious holidays. One of them is the Sasak culture holiday, Bau Nyale Day. The main motivation is that the Sasak's younger generation still recalls this Peresean tradition."

This Peresean tradition is driven by the motivation to preserve culture and beliefs. The implementation of cultural preservation can be seen from the Peresean performance carried out from the past to the present by involving all groups. All people are involved, young and old, because it is a typical tradition of the Sasak **tribe** in Lombok. This tradition is still exhibited to welcome foreign or domestic tourists when visiting Lombok Island. The research regarding motivation in encouraging cultural preservation has been reported by Iswatiningsih (2019). Religious or belief motivation also propels us to continue performing cultural traditions (Ismail, 2020). Religious or belief foundations motivate the formation of values education or a good character strongly affected by education. Religious or faith motivation is a strong foundation or ground in forming children and people's values education. (Manan, 2019).

Motivational boosts are highly influential in performing activities or cultural traditions. Sobry and Tety (2021) have studied the custom of visiting holy or sacred tombs in the

Sasak **tribe** Lombok which is motivated by religious belief. Their findings indicate that this religious motivation is a form of their gratitude for being given health, starting from departing until coming back home to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. The visitors' motivation strongly influences travel interest in visiting sacred or sacred places. This belief or religious motivation is crucial in visiting sacred sites (Thomas et al., 2018). A person's motivation may increase or change on their way to a pilgrimage to a sacred or holy place, but the primary motivation will still be remembered. This change in motivation depends on the experience gained while at the destination (Collins-Kreiner, 2018; Collins-Kreiner & Gatrell, 2006).

- **Educate the spirit of courage and toughness.**

A fighter in the Peresean tradition of the Sasak **tribe**, Lombok is known as *Pepadu*. *Pepadu* means that a man from the Sasak people is brave and mighty. This tradition is a symbol of the youngsters' courage in fighting. This Peresean tradition tests the youngsters' courage and toughness among the knights. The spirit of courage or patriotism is instilled in this Peresean tradition. This spirit of courage is nurtured to produce brave men or knights who can fight for the nation and religion, especially the youth. As expressed by Religious Leaders (TA1) in the following:

*"Courage is a favorable value that is honed in the Peresean tradition. This spirit inspires others to be brave and stand up to defend their people, religion, and nation against colonialism. This tradition used to be a traditional ceremony where soldiers would celebrate their victory after defeating the enemy on the battlefield. So, we still keep it alive today to inspire young people to have the courage to defend their **tribe**, nation, and religion."*

In the old times, kings ordered Peresean fights to express pleasure because they had won a duel. Aside from being entertainment for kings and people in the past, they used Peresean to prepare troops ready to compete during the war. Thus, kings trained selected troops with this Peresean before going to war. The Sasak people hold Peresean to train agility and courage to fight enemies during battle. Practicing this dexterity is prepared to expel the invaders. As conveyed by Religious Leaders (TA2):

"The legend has it that the Peresean tradition was used to train young men who became soldiers for war. They are trained for pre-war duels or train elite troops for one-on-one duels. So that the troops are ready mentally to fight with courage, expertise, and strong energy, this spirit of courage is the value that drives the Peresean tradition until now".

The spirit of courage in the Peresean tradition is embedded in three characteristics. These three traits are *Wirase* character, a fighter or *Pepadu* must be able to process and control his feelings when fighting Peresean. Second, *Wirame* character is that a fighter/*Pepadu* must be able to adjust his movements or body movements to remain stable or not nervous so that when they fight, they can move around like dancing along with the music beat. The third is *Wirage*, meaning a healthy and robust physique or reasonable condition so that before competing, a referee will ask about his health: whether he is physically and mentally ready to fight. One of the Religious Leaders (TA3) explains these characteristics as follows:

"In performing the Peresean traditional game, a fighter or Pepadu must have at least three characteristics. These three characteristics make a Pepadu can manage through the

matches well. These three characteristics are Wirase, Wirame, and Wiragw. Wirasa, in short, means that the fighter's feelings must be calm, not confused or mixed up. The second characteristic is Wirame, which means a fighter moves or floats to the music rhythm so that he relaxes and enjoys fighting. Third, the Wirage characteristic is that a fighter must be physically fit before fighting. Thus, a Pepadu must first check his health with the doctor before fighting."

- **Educating for Sportsmanship**

This Peresean tradition upholds sportsmanship values. The practice has its set of rules. There are dress codes, batting rules, and court rules. The dress code here is to wear traditional clothes with a head cover and a shield or *Ende*. At the same time, the court rules are that the Peresean game begins when the gong sound is turned on. Then the players can start to strike each other. The fighter may not hit under the stomach or groin area. And the rules for the match time are from morning or afternoon and must end when it's time to enter evening or sunset. The field referee sets all game rules. These rules are a form of sportsmanship in performing the Peresean tradition. As expressed by fighters (PU1):

"The Peresean tradition has rules or is not recklessly strike the man in front of you. The Pepadu can only start matches or fight when the gong sounds. If there is no signal from the judge/referee, the fighting round cannot be started. The field referee set all the fighting rules. During a fight, the referee can stop the fighter when it is time to rest. Because this is just a game, the judges must continue to arrange it from the beginning to the end of the fight."

In this Peresean tradition, two people become referees or *Pekembar*. The dress code is that fighters take off their upper clothes when appointed as Pepadu/fighters and only use pants/Sarong up to their knees and head coverings/headbands. Each fighter is given an *Ende*/shield of 1 meter x 1 meter for protection and a bat made of rattan with a size of 1 meter. The organizer prepared the *Pepadu* from each village representative or directly appointed by village representatives from the audience at the event. It means that the audience can also become *Pepadu*. As stated by fighters (PU2) follows:

"The clothes worn by fighters are undressed upper body by wearing traditional trousers/sarongs and head ties. It's better to wear traditional Sarongs or typical sarongs from their region as a fighter's trademark. Each fighter is given an ende/shield to fend off or self-protection and a rattan bat of about 1 meter in size. Pepadu rules are flexible, meaning villages can nominate their respective fighters, and judges/Pekembar can appoint spectators with Peresean fighting abilities".

The most important rule in the Peresean tradition is not allowed to hit the lower abdomen/genitals. The highest point in Peresean is if the fighter can hit the opponent's head and bleed. If the opponent bleeds, the game/match is stopped, which means the Pepadu who bleeds automatically loses. Bleeding from the head automatically indicates the game is over, and the winner is the one who can hit the head. After the game ends, both fighters can forgive and embrace each other. The fighters agreed there would be no revenge or retribution after the game. The sportsmanship and values of following all the rules make this traditional game without grudges among these Peresean fighters. As said by fighters (PU3):

"Before the Pepadu brawl began, The committee and judges took a stand, To explain the game's rules, So all the fighters knew the aim. So, all participants or Pepadu must follow the rules of the game. This Peresean tradition activity has a high score or point. If the Pepadu hits the head and bleeds, the one who succeeds becomes the winner. After knowing the winners and losers, the fighters shake hands and embrace to forgive each other. It means there is no revenge or holding grudges of wanting to get even because this is just a tradition to entertain people. It is a sportsmanship value of the fighters or participants".

- **Establish familiarity and kinship between religions and community members.**

A Peresean tradition is a cultural event that invites residents from other villages, inter-villages, and inter-regencies to attend. This tradition is a form of hospitality among people from different villages, districts, and religious services. Lombok has many religions, among which the most followers are Islam and Hinduism. There are also Christianity, Buddhism, and others. As stated by Visitors (PN1):

"This Peresean tradition is not only performed by the Muslim Sasak people but also by the Hindu Sasak people. When people or residents of different religions, villages, and regencies gather, they become more bonding and harmonious through this Peresean tradition. Because when they witnessed the event, they greeted and spoke to each other between the audience and the Peresean players".

The Peresean tradition serves as an occasion for individuals to acquaint themselves with one another, familiarize themselves with local customs, learn the everyday language of neighboring villages, and gain insight into other ethnic practices. Because this Peresean activity can bring hundreds or even thousands of people in the community into one place, with many community members getting to know each other, they will become more bonding and foster kinship among residents. Citizens of all ages may attend this Peresean tradition, both young and old. And most of the audience is young men. Many young people know their potential spouse when they participate in watching the Peresean tradition and then head to the wedding. As conveyed by Visitors (PN2):

"It's amazing how strong the sense of kinship is during the Peresean event! You can feel a real connection with someone after meeting them at an event, having a good chat, and getting to know them while sitting in the audience. It's a way for people from different villages to learn about each other's traditions, languages, and accents by spending time together and getting to know each other. Some people might find their true love while watching Peresean. They might want to get to know their potential partners better and see if they're marriage material."

The experience gained in attending the Peresean tradition is that the people would establish bonds among themselves. This familiarity could lead to matchmaking for the youngsters to each other. At the same time, for mature people, this event demonstrates a lot of cooperation among those already familiar. This collaboration may be in business cooperation, collaborating ideas or exchanging ideas conforming to their profession, mutual sharing of ideas or experiences in processing agriculture or animal husbandry because many people from the farmers and breeders community participated in the Peresean event. As stated by Visitors (PN3):

"The residents who watch Peresean can communicate while enjoying the fighter matches. They exchange ideas, experiences, or thoughts in pursuing their profession."

Once the Peresean audience gets to know each other and becomes comfortable, they'll share their thoughts and feelings openly. So basically, people can connect to form business partnerships, share ideas, and help each other

Research on forming character education values in societal traditions is exciting to study. Subki (2022) researched the practice of sowing coins in the newborn baby hair-cutting ceremony procession. This research examines and explores the motivation and character education built in the Sasak Lombok tradition. Among the constructed values are educating for hard work, sharing with others, and establishing family relationships. Nuruddin (2022) has reported the *Peraq Api* tradition in establishing character building. The character education obtained concerns the community environment, the value of a belief in culture, and responsibility. The value of character education can also be built through mutual cooperation activities. In addition to cooperation, a sharing characteristic is nurtured through giving alms or *Infaq* to the poor and needy (Rejeki, 2020).

Society can use tradition in the form of culture to instill character values. Tradition is a repeating habit that people always do so that it sticks in their minds (Aisyah, 2018). Some values of education that can be seen in everyday life are doing good to parents and other people, always telling the truth, always keeping word when promised, and being trustworthy when getting trust (Suyatno et al., 2020). Training children to get used to doing good is excellent from an early age. This good habit can be practiced at school or home (Apriani & Sari, 2020). Character education can be used through the media of historical stories. Good historical stories and idol figures play a crucial role in forming children's character from an early age (Diansyah & Magdalena, 2019).

4. Conclusion

The Peresean tradition is a Sasak tribe tradition in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara province, which has been around for a long time and is still happening today. Two fighters/Pepadu using gears like *Ende*/shield as the protection and rattan stick as a bat plays this tradition. In this Peresean battle, the referee/Pakembar guides the fighter. This research thoroughly analyses the motivation and values of education implied within the Peresean tradition. The research result indicates that the most important motivation is to preserve Sasak culture, which has been going on for a long time. And nowadays, this cultural motivation is introduced in welcoming domestic and foreign tourist guests. Additionally, it is held on Indonesian national birthdays and religious or Sasak holidays. In ancient times, the Peresean tradition was based on the motivation of belief, specifically to ask for rain, especially during the dry season. The values education behind violence in the Peresean practice is to establish closeness and kinship between religions and community members. Second, is the value of sportsmanship in battle. Third, the value of increasing the spirit of courage and resilience for Sasak youth in defending tribe, religion, and country from colonialism. The combination of values-education and motivation has preserved this Peresean tradition in the Sasak tribe until now. The expected result of this study is to contribute to the conservation and advancement of Peresean, to enhance its appeal to visitors. The improvement and progression of this tradition can be facilitated through the provision of support from various stakeholders, including the community, religious leaders, community leaders, and the government.

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