

Okup Tradition on Karo Community

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Abstract: Every traditional community has diversity in their own tradition as a cultural wealth. The tradition was passed down from generation to generation and comprehend various aspects in people's life. Karo ethnic also has these traditions. One of them is a tradition which is related to health, it called as okup. Okup is a treatment tradition which utilizing the various efficacy of herbs in the form of spices and limes by evaporation. Therapeutic tradition by okup in nowadays is not lost, even now its use is developing. This tradition belongs to the Karo ethnic group, but now its users are not only in Karo ethnic. Some parties actually use it as a business opportunity by developing and changing in several ways. A health tradition called as Okup is still persists and is used as a healthy therapy.

1 INTRODUCTION

Oral tradition is traditional cultural activities from a group of people who have been passed down from generation to generation, whether that tradition in the form of oral or a form that is not verbal. There are several characteristics of the oral tradition:

- a. Is a cultural activity, custom, or cultural in a form of oral, partly verbal and not verbal. In this case, whether or not there is an orality in the form of cultural activities, the habit can be classified in the oral tradition as the habit or cultural habit or cultural activity is derived with oral media by fulfilling other characteristics as described below.
- b. Have activities or events as the context for their use. This characteristic is very important to differentiate oral tradition from oral literature and oral folklore. Oral tradition must have certain events and therefore an understanding of the oral tradition must be linked or dependent on the context of the event. Because oral tradition are bound to the context of events, oral tradition have events and situations. Fable become an oral tradition if there is a storytelling show: Mantra become an oral tradition if there is an mantra's tradition
- c. Can be observed and watched. In connection on the oral tradition characteristic above must be able to be shown or displayed or can be seen by people in a particular context of events. This

characteristic implies that oral tradition has actors and viewers who demonstrate the oral tradition; that there is an audience.

- d. Traditional. This characteristic is also underline to identify a habit whether it is including oral tradition or not. Traditional features implies that oral tradition must have ethnic heritage element, both purely ethnic and new creations with ethnic elements. A revitalized tradition most likely to live with new version that undergoes a transformation in accordance with the times, but the ethnic elements is still appear. If it's tracked its origin, we can find the origin or the history of that oral tradition on ethnic groups in this archipelago. Indeed, the puzzle tradition can be found in Javanese and Batak ethnic group, but if a tradition of puzzles is shown, one can trace which version of the puzzle tradition is displayed, both in terms of the formula of the equipment of the characters and the context.
- e. Inherited from generation to generation. The oral tradition is inherited from one generation reflect the inheritance observed from grandfather / grandmother to father / mother and to the children. Oral tradition is inheritance from ancestors which passed down at least 3 generation ago. Batak opera that was founded in 1920s include as oral traditions because they have been passed down more than 3 generations even though opera was originally a European tradition. Therefore in addition to the ethnic

- elements possessed by oral tradition, the inheritance of the oral tradition with indicators of this generations are also needs to be understood.
- f. Delivery process from “mouth to ear”. This characteristic makes the habit or non-verbal culture classified as oral tradition because of that non-verbal culture, like customs, conveyed by the parents from the mouth by speaking to their children’s ears by listening to it. The delivery through by talking (mouth) and listening (ear) in the study of linguistics is called oral delivery. Therefore, the tradition that conveyed, given, socialized, and passed down orally called as oral tradition. The process of delivery above depict that oral tradition is a face to face communication process. Direct meeting is needed by face to face between the speaker and listener.
 - g. Contains cultural values and norms. The ancestors pass on the education (values) and the rules (norms) to their offspring, which is useful in managing the lives of future generations. Values and norms that are useful in managing people’s lives are values and norms of wisdom. Therefore, the oral tradition as ancestral heritage have cultural values and norms in the form of local wisdom or a wisdom that useful to the local community, which might be empowered for other communities.
 - h. Has versions. As a tradition that delivered orally in oral tradition potentially has a different form called variant or version. If the difference is small it is called as a variant, if there is a big difference even beyond language and form, it is called as version. The difference in the ability of the perpetrators of oral tradition will lead to the differences in the oral tradition itself. In the concept of oral tradition studies, variant and version are considered as a wealth of tradition, which is interesting to study in terms of oral philology to find out the origin and the process of developing the oral tradition.
 - i. Belong together to particular community. Because of its oral and anonymous nature, oral tradition is belong to all people collectively. All members of the community feel that they have an oral tradition so that everyone has the right to the oral tradition. However, in the form of its revitalization with new transformations the oral tradition have the potential to be individually owned.
 - j. Potentially revitalized and appointed as a source of cultural industry. There is an assumption that

cultural revitalization requires lots of funds, but with the concept of the cultural industry, oral tradition can be used as a source of creative industry such as the business of making liquid organic fertilizer as a transformation of the tradition of making manure. Likewise filmmaking from folklore has potential to increase people’s economy (Sibarani, 2012).

Every community, especially in the countryside has a tradition that becomes its cultural wealth. The tradition carried out continuously. However, there is also a tradition that have been lost. The survival of the implementation of a tradition is basically caused by the wishes and needs of the community (Ginting, 2012)

Karo ethnic is one of ethnic group which exist in Indonesia and has many oral traditions that distinguish it from other ethnic groups. Karo ethnic oral tradition is still maintained properly until now. Although there are some that have been eroded due to influence of the entry of foreign culture, religion, and technology. However, there is a lot of oral tradition increasingly popular due to the foreign cultural and technology, such as *okup*. Okup or okup is one of Karo ethnic oral tradition to maintaining a healthy body by using steam to sweat from the body.

2 DISCUSSION

In Sociology anthropology dictionary (2001), “tradition declared as a custom, a hereditary habit (from ancestors) which is still being carried out.

Edward in Soedjito (1985) said “Tradition is *Traditium*, that is passed on (transmitted) from the past to the present.” Likewise, the tradition of medical treatment / health care *okup* which is owned by Karo ethnic. This medical tradition have been passed down from the ancestors. Okup from the beginning believed to be very effective therapy. The ability and knowledge about the efficacy of various spices of lime and some other ingredients is a remarkable being from a tradition that grows and develops in traditional Karo ethnicity.

Okup tradition usually done to people who have just given birth but have finished the postpartum, to people who feel their bodies are not fit, and also people who have chronic disease, sometimes healthy people do this *okup* tradition to increase fitness. In the past, *okup* was made with very simple equipment, those are: *okup* herb, herb cooking place, and stoves for cooking potions. The ingredients come from plants that are easily obtained because

they are growing around their living environment. At this time *okup* tradition has undergone major changes due to the touch of modernization. We can find the houses that are used for *okup* business in a way that is different from the original tradition and some of the equipment used also has major changes. *Okup* has become a form a business that can increase income and can also reap considerable profits and can also be a business that opens jobs. Plus, humans now want to live practically and instantly, given their busyness and routines also the urgency of body health. Even though there are differences between the past *okup* and the *okup* that are used as business, but still have values of an oral tradition that aimed at obtaining health.

In this discussion section will be discussed the ingredient of *okup*, how to make *okup*, how (using *okup*) traditionally and modern (after revitalization).

Traditional *okup*

a. *Okup* ingredients

1. Lime (*rimo mungkur*)
2. Orange forest (*rimo kerangen/wood*)
3. King orange (*rimo raja*)
4. Master orange (*rimo tuan*)
5. Spin orange (*rimo putur*)
6. Spice hundred (*rempah ratus, nilam kering / fresh*)
7. Betel (*belo*)
8. Red sugar cane
9. Young pineapple
10. Finger root
11. Java ginger
12. Turmeric
13. Red ginger
14. Galangal
15. *Zingiber zerumbet* (medical plant of the ginger family)
16. Water
17. Lemongrass fragrant
18. *Zingiber officinale* (medical plant of the ginger family)

b. *Okup* making equipment

1. Big pot (30cm in diameter)
2. Wooden spoon
3. Stove

c. *Okup* use equipment

1. Mat 1.20 – 1.50 meters wide
2. Seat (higher than stove)
3. Two thick blanket / cloth
4. Sarong

d. How to make *Okup*

1. All types of the oranges are cut thin (if the oranges are small, just cut in half)
2. Minced sticks and sugarcane stems are cut 10-15cm long and then crushed
3. Betel, patchouli, and spices hundred cleaned with water
4. Finger root, Java ginger, galangal, red ginger, turmeric, zingiber zerumbet cleaned with water and then crushed
5. Young pineapple peeled and then cut into small pieces
6. All the ingredients above are put into a pot and then added 10cm of water above the ingredients that have been put into the pot.
7. Cooked on a stove with medium heat for about 40 minutes or after the substances in the mixture mix with water

e. How to use *Okup*

The person who is going to *okup* just wear a sarong that will be used. Next, the *okup* ingredients that have been cooked immediately placed before the person who will be in *okup* and has been seated on the chair that has been provided. Then, take a mat and circle it around the person who is going to have the *okup* concoction. Then, take a blanket and thick cloth to cover the top of the mat and go beyond the head of the person who will get the *okup*. Make sure that there is no gaps that can release the steam. Next, the person who get the *okup* opened the lid of the pot which contained the *okup* concoction to enjoy the steam that was removed from the mixture while putting on the sarong he was wearing. This uses a wooden spoon so that steam returns more. This is done 20-30 minutes or until the person who get the *okup* feels enough sweat coming out from his body. This activity usually done in 4 days in a row with using same ingredients (ingredients don't need to be replaced)

Okup present time

Okup in nowadays is more practically. Where we can find houses that becomes a business place *okup*. This is happens because the busyness of the people work but the urgency of health is also needed. Therefore, some people initiate to open *okup* business so people who want get an *okup* no longer bother to collect or cook, and to prepare the place for *okup* use. Now they just come to *okup*'s house.

The ingredients that *okup* use in the present time are also same with the *okup*'s ingredients traditionally, only now sometime there is something that adds to the aroma of therapy. Likewise the

making it is still the same. Only in the use of *okup* concoction is not using circle mats covered with blanket / thick cloth. *Okup's* houses providing a room measuring 1.5 x 2m without ventilation but with adequate lighting. Steam is flowed from the pot to cook the ingredients by using a pipe into the room used for *okup*. The concoction remained on the stove with a set fire. The person who get the *okup* enter the room and close the door tightly. Usually the person who get the *okup* wear sarong that is not very thick and usually provided by the business owner. The sarong which is not too thick is used so that the steam of the *okup* concoction can still feel the skin of the body. After feeling enough sweat the person who get the *okup* can leave that room. Generally, the person who come to the *okup* house is not coming 4 days in a row, but they adjust their times and needs.

Okup benefits

- a. Relieve back pain
- b. Neutralize blood sugar levels
- c. Increase body resistance from the threat of various diseases
- d. Beautify body shape, smooth and rejuvenate the skin
- e. Refresh the body
- f. Facilitate blood circulation
- g. Prevent hypertension
- h. Lower cholesterol levels
- i. Reduce fat levels
- j. Healthy hearts and lungs
- k. Arouse appetite
- l. Relieve dizziness and cure the flu
- m. Restore maternal health after child birth

Okup is currently growing. This can be seen from the rapid development of *Okup* business in several cities outside Karo's land. The users are not only from Karo ethnic. Thus it can be said that this *okup* tradition is in line with the development of time not only to survive. However, it experienced several changes in terms of raw materials and manufacturing techniques and their use. This treatment tradition is also open a good business opportunity for some people. This can be seen from the business development run by certain circles from simple facilities to facilities that look more elite. The owner of business is no longer monopolized by the Karo ethnic group. Some of the *okup* business now are already owned by other ethnic groups outside the Karo ethnic group.

3 CONCLUSION

Okup tradition on Karo Ethnic is a tradition that inherited from generation to generation who still retain their traditional values. Along with the development of this *okup* tradition experienced changes and developments both in provision of potions, ways of processing, and also how to use them, but the concoction of natural ingredients is still a top priority. The benefits of this herb tradition are still intended maintain and increase the body health. Besides, *okup* tradition is also a business opportunity that is able to create jobs and increase the income.

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