

## PACU JALUR: PRESERVING TRADITION AND CULTURAL VALUES IN KUANTAN SINGINGI

Juswandi<sup>1</sup>, Hermansyah<sup>1</sup>, Amanan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Lancang Kuning

Email: [juswandi2010@gmail.com](mailto:juswandi2010@gmail.com), [hermansyah@gmail.com](mailto:hermansyah@gmail.com), [amananpku@gmail.com](mailto:amananpku@gmail.com)

### Abstract

Pacu lane is a tradition that has long developed among the people of Kuantan Singingi. This tradition stores the local wisdom values of the Kuantan people. The aim of this research is: to describe the traditional values of track racing in Kuantan Singingi district, Riau province. This research method is a descriptive qualitative method with a historical and ethnological approach. Data collection was carried out by observation, interviews and documentation studies. Meanwhile, data analysis was carried out by reduction, data presentation and verification. The results of this research found that the values contained in the track racing tradition are as follows: ethical values, magical values, social values, and aesthetic values. These cultural values are the reinforcement of traditions that still exist today in every sub-district in Kuantan Singingi district.

**Keywords:** Traditional values, track racing, Kuantan Singingi

### Abstrak

*Jalur Pacu merupakan tradisi yang sudah lama berkembang di kalangan masyarakat Kuantan Singingi. Tradisi ini menyimpan nilai-nilai kearifan lokal masyarakat Kuantan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah: Mendeskripsikan nilai-nilai tradisional balap lintasan di Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi Provinsi Riau. Metode penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan historis dan etnologis. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi, wawancara dan studi dokumentasi. Sedangkan analisis data dilakukan dengan cara reduksi, penyajian data, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa nilai-nilai yang terkandung dalam tradisi balap lintasan adalah sebagai berikut: nilai etika, nilai magis, nilai sosial, dan nilai estetika. Nilai-nilai budaya tersebut merupakan penguat tradisi yang masih ada hingga saat ini di setiap kecamatan di Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi.*

**Kata Kunci:** Nilai-nilai tradisional, lintasan balap, Kuantan Singingi

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pacu Jalur, a traditional long boat racing event, has been an integral part of the cultural heritage in the Kuantan Singingi area of Riau, Indonesia, for generations. Despite its historical significance and regular occurrence, the younger generation often lacks an

understanding of the traditional values embedded in this practice. While Pacu Jalur is now celebrated frequently, even monthly, in various sub-districts of Kuansing, its deeper cultural meanings remain obscure to many young participants and observers.

Historically, Pacu Jalur is more than just a competition of speed between boats. It is a tradition that embodies the spirit and identity of the Rantau Kuantan community. Each boat, known as a jalur, is manned by approximately 60 individuals, reflecting the communal effort and unity essential to the event. The roots of this tradition can be traced back to the long-standing customs of the Rantau Kuantan people, where it has been preserved and cherished over centuries (Hamidy, 1982:56). Physically, a jalur is a remarkable example of traditional craftsmanship. These long boats, measuring 20 to 30 meters in length with a diameter of 1 to 1.5 meters, are crafted from large trees following elaborate rituals imbued with mystical elements. The creation of a jalur involves not only skilled carpentry but also various cultural and artistic practices. The boats are often adorned with intricate carvings and fine arts, making them unique cultural artifacts. During races, the boats are accompanied by traditional music (rarak), dance, and distinctive attire, further enhancing the cultural spectacle (Hamidy, 1986:22). In modern times, the frequency of Pacu Jalur events has increased, with races taking place almost monthly across Kuantan Singingi. Despite this, the rich cultural values inherent in the tradition are not always conveyed to or understood by the younger generation. This disconnection raises important questions about the transmission of cultural heritage and the role of education in preserving traditional knowledge.

Pacu Jalur encompasses numerous traditional values that are essential to the cultural identity of the Kuantan Singingi community. These values include: The participation of around 60 people per boat highlights the importance of teamwork and collective effort. It teaches the younger generation the value of working together towards a common goal, fostering a sense of community and mutual support. The process of creating a jalur from a large tree involves rituals that signify respect for nature. This aspect of the tradition instills an appreciation for the environment and the resources it provides, emphasizing sustainable practices and conservation. The intricate carvings and artistic elements on the boats reflect the community's rich artistic heritage. Engaging with these elements can inspire young people to value and continue their artistic traditions, preserving cultural expressions unique to their region.

Regularly participating in and witnessing Pacu Jalur helps reinforce a sense of cultural identity and continuity. It connects the younger generation with their ancestry and traditions, ensuring that cultural practices are not lost over time. The rituals and magical elements involved in the creation and racing of the jalur highlight the community's spiritual beliefs. Understanding these aspects can provide insight into the worldview and spiritual practices of their ancestors, fostering a deeper cultural awareness and respect. To bridge the gap between the tradition and the younger generation, efforts must be made to educate and

engage young people in meaningful ways. This can include incorporating the history and cultural significance of Pacu Jalur into school curriculums, organizing workshops and seminars led by cultural experts, and encouraging active participation in the preparation and execution of the events. By doing so, the community can ensure that the traditional values of Pacu Jalur are not only preserved but also appreciated and upheld by future generations.

## 2. METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology with an ethnographic and historical approach, as outlined by Moleong (2019:17). The primary focus of this study is to explore and document the traditional values embedded in the Pacu Jalur tradition in Kuantan Singingi. The methodology is designed to capture the rich cultural heritage and practices associated with this tradition through detailed observation, interviews, and documentation. The data sources for this research are categorized into two types: primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources include firsthand information gathered from observations and interviews with individuals directly involved in or knowledgeable about the Pacu Jalur tradition, such as community members, participants, and spectators of the events. Secondary data sources comprise existing literature, historical records, and previous studies related to the Pacu Jalur tradition and its cultural significance, providing contextual background and supporting the primary data findings.

The selection of informants was conducted using purposive sampling, where samples are chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Additionally, snowball sampling was employed to identify further informants through referrals from initial participants, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the traditional values of Pacu Jalur. The data collection process involved multiple techniques to ensure a thorough examination of the subject matter. Researchers conducted field observations in various sub-districts of Kuantan Singingi that host Pacu Jalur events, focusing on the activities, rituals, and community interactions during the races. Structured and semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of respondents, including race participants, organizers, and spectators, to gather insights into personal experiences, cultural significance, and perceived values of the Pacu Jalur tradition. Additionally, a review of relevant documents, including historical records, photographs, and previous research studies, was undertaken to supplement the primary data and provide a historical context to the findings.

The data analysis process involved several steps to ensure a comprehensive and accurate interpretation of the collected information. The initial step was data reduction, which involved sorting and selecting data relevant to the traditional values of Pacu Jalur, discarding irrelevant or redundant information to focus on the most pertinent data. The reduced data was then organized and presented in a structured format, highlighting key themes and patterns related to the cultural values and significance of the tradition. Finally,

the data was verified through triangulation, comparing information from different sources and drawing conclusions to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

In the context of Indonesian media, the Pacu Jalur tradition holds significant cultural and historical importance. Media coverage of Pacu Jalur events often highlights the vibrant and communal aspects of the races, showcasing the unity and cooperative spirit of the Kuantan Singingi community. However, there is a growing need for media to delve deeper into the traditional values and cultural heritage associated with Pacu Jalur, beyond the surface-level spectacle. Media in Indonesia plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting cultural traditions by documenting and broadcasting events like Pacu Jalur. By providing comprehensive coverage that includes interviews with elders, historians, and cultural practitioners, the media can help bridge the knowledge gap among the younger generation. This coverage not only raises awareness but also educates the public about the significance of maintaining and understanding these cultural practices.

Additionally, in an era dominated by digital media, social platforms offer new opportunities for engaging younger audiences with traditional events. Utilizing social media campaigns, documentaries, and interactive content can enhance the visibility and appreciation of Pacu Jalur, ensuring that its traditional values are preserved and celebrated for future generations. In conclusion, this research method is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the traditional values inherent in Pacu Jalur, utilizing a robust qualitative approach that combines ethnographic and historical perspectives. By leveraging both primary and secondary data sources, and employing comprehensive data collection and analysis techniques, the study aims to document and preserve the cultural heritage of this unique tradition in Kuantan Singingi.

### **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Before the author explains the history of Lane, first discuss the meaning of the word Lane. The meaning of the word "Jalur" in the Malay dialect for the residents of Rantau Kuantan village is quite difficult to define. According to the general Indonesian dictionary in 2000, there is no meaning that really matches the line referred to by the Malay dialect of the people of Rantau Kuantan. However, according to the dictionary, the meaning of the word "lane" is "long thin goods", so what is meant in the dictionary seems to have something to do with the line referred to by the people of Kuantan. The route referred to by the people of Kuantan is indeed a boat measuring approximately 25-30 meters long and approximately 1-1.25 meters wide in the middle. The track is made from a whole piece of wood, without splitting or cutting into pieces and is connected like making a sailboat which is also long and large.

The path as a cultural product has been known to the people of Kuantan for quite a long time. Since when the people of Kuantan became familiar with the route cannot be ascertained. However, it was popularized more or less in the early 1900s. At that time, the

shape of the route was not as beautiful as the current route, because what the people raced were large boats that could be used by residents to transport agricultural produce. The boat is quite large and can accommodate approximately 40 people rowing. This form of route is driven by people in villages along the Kuantan trunk, especially when celebrating Islamic holidays, such as celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, Eid al-Fitr, 1 Muharram and so on. This kind of spur was not originally given as a gift, and was only a way to enliven these big days. After the pacu ends with a meal together with typical community dishes, such as konji anak loba (food in the form of rice porridge) and barobuik jambar (jambar is a form of vase made of bamboo decorated with foods such as godok (made from banana), paniaram (a mixture of flour rice with fried sugar), fruit henna (rice porridge with sugar made into small stones), fruit golek (cake made from fried glutinous rice flour) and so on.

In the following period, paths with animal head motifs were known with carvings, for example in the form of snake heads, crocodile heads, dragon heads and so on. This means that his physical form has changed. The track is decorated with curved shapes on the bow and on the rudder or sheath. Neither the load nor the length is much different from previously known routes. However, the shape of the lane has artistic value which developed according to the tastes and needs of the people at that time. Paths in this form can have 2 functions. Firstly, it is used for racing to celebrate big holidays, and secondly it functions as a vehicle for traditional officials or traditional leaders and datuk-datuk. Apart from that, it is also for the opening ceremony of the runway. If the lane is used for this purpose it is usually decorated. If we compare it with the Path in its initial form, then the path in this period experienced a lot of development. The physical shape of the path appears to be long and stretched overall. The profile is rather slender and has a long bow, has been carved, a rather long rudder has been equipped with a selembayung which functions as a place for the onjai (rhythm control on the rudder) to hang. This form of path is thought to have appeared in 1903. And in this period magical elements began to be used. All routes have charmers or shamans. This is of course in accordance with the development of people's minds who always want to compete to achieve victory. According to the public opinion, the easiest shortcut is to involve supernatural elements. This magical power cannot be separated from the life of the Path which is still used today.

At that time, the Dutch used the runway to celebrate Queen Wilhelmina's birthday, every August 31st, as the Queen's birthday party, and it was held on a large scale. The arrival of this party every year is really looked forward to by the people of Kuantan and is seen as the arrival of the new year. That's why many times the people of Kuantan call the Dutch era lane racing party "Tambaru", which is an abbreviation of New Year. In the following period, the route has developed according to the needs of society and the imagination of craftsmen. In this relationship, it could be said that the form of the Path develops according to the inspiration that arises in each artisan, so that it can produce a great work of art. Both the

shape and quality of the production of the Line are increasingly developing, the shape is becoming more streamlined and artistic. Based on quite a long experience, a good and good track form relatively gives a chance to win. Indeed, every win The dream does not only stem from form alone, because there are many other factors that support it, such as the quality of the wood, type of wood, racing technique, a strong and compact sense of unity and other elements such as suggestions from spectators from each village.

### **Cultural Values in the Pacu Lane Tradition**

Cultural values according to Hamidy (1996:97) explain, there are three value systems that are quite dominant in the life of the Malay community in Riau which are always respected, appreciated and heeded, namely Islam, customs and customs. First, the value system provided by the Islamic religion. This set of values is a value system that is highly regarded by society. The values provided by Islamic teachings are of high quality. Second, the value system provided by custom, which exists in archipelagic areas and several coastal areas on the East coast of Sumatra Island in the Riau area, is not a system that is adopted, except in the form of customs which are not within a legal code, so they are more inclined to just tradition. And third is the traditional value system, a value system in which there is a pattern of harmony between humans and nature. This traditional value system is relatively easy for society to understand because this value system was introduced in the development of social life.

The Riau Malay community is a society that adheres to the teachings of Islam. Anything that goes against religious laws is looked down upon and despicable in the midst of society, morals and human behavior. In Malay society there is an attitude that is often referred to as "self-knowledge", which means that Malay people always measure their own abilities. This attitude is intended to measure the limits of the Malay people's abilities in their work, this is explained by Hamidy (1996: 50) who said, "Regarding property, Malay people do not look at how much it is, but the main thing is the blessing of the property. . Because the culture that most influences the lives of the Malay people is Islam and customs." In looking at customs, the Malay people strictly adhere to their customs and traditions. Because the role of customs is very large in life among society. According to Ghalib (1986:477), "Customs are provisions that regulate behavior and relationships between members of society in all aspects of life". Meanwhile, Tabrani (1986:454) said, "The purpose of custom is to maintain moral harmony, courtesy and honesty as an unwritten force." Customs are seen by the Riau Malay community as a set of norms and sanctions, because they are an ancestral heritage in which there are various regulations that bind members of the community. Custom regulates relationships between individuals, relations between clans and tribes as well as relationships between communities and their leaders. According to Ghalib (1986:478), in general customs in Riau Malay society are divided into three levels, namely: (1) true customs, which are fixed Malay customs, which are based on Islamic law,

(2) customs which are adopted, namely customs made by the king (ruler), datuk, or penghulu, (3). Traditional customs are the result of a consensus determined jointly by community groups.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The research concludes that the Pacu Jalur (track race) tradition is more than just a canoe or boat race; it is an integral part of the cultural and social fabric of the Kuantan Singingi community. Held during various celebratory events, this tradition plays a pivotal role in the lives of the people of Kuantan. The research identifies several key cultural values embedded in the Pacu Jalur tradition that contribute to its enduring significance. Ethical values are deeply ingrained in the Pacu Jalur tradition, emphasizing principles such as honesty, sportsmanship, and communal harmony. These values guide the conduct of participants and organizers, ensuring that the races are conducted fairly and respectfully. The tradition fosters a sense of integrity and ethical behavior, promoting unity and mutual respect among community members. This ethical framework helps maintain the integrity of the tradition and ensures its continued respect and admiration among the locals.

Magical values pertain to the ritualistic and spiritual elements associated with the Pacu Jalur tradition. The preparation of the boats, or jalur, involves various rituals and ceremonies imbued with mystical significance. These rituals are believed to invoke protective and empowering forces, ensuring the safety and success of the participants. The magical values reflect the community's deep-rooted beliefs in the supernatural and its influence on their daily lives. This mystical aspect of the tradition adds a layer of cultural depth and spiritual connection, enriching the overall experience of the event. Social values highlight the communal aspects of the Pacu Jalur tradition. The races are a collective endeavor, requiring the collaboration and cooperation of numerous individuals, from boat builders to rowers and supporters. This collective effort strengthens social bonds and fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity within the community. The tradition also serves as a platform for intergenerational interaction, where elders pass down cultural knowledge and skills to the younger generation. This social cohesion is vital for the preservation of the tradition and the continuity of cultural practices within the community.

Aesthetic values are evident in the elaborate and artistic elements of the Pacu Jalur tradition. The boats are meticulously crafted and adorned with intricate carvings and vibrant colors, reflecting the community's artistic heritage. The races themselves are a visual spectacle, combining the rhythmic movement of the boats with traditional music and dance, creating a captivating and culturally rich experience for spectators. The aesthetic appeal of the tradition not only enhances its visual impact but also showcases the artistic talents and cultural expressions of the Kuantan Singingi people. These cultural values collectively reinforce the Pacu Jalur tradition, ensuring its persistence and relevance in contemporary times. Despite the challenges of modernization and globalization, the Pacu Jalur tradition

remains a vital and cherished aspect of life in every sub-district of Kuantan Singingi Regency. By preserving and promoting these values, the community continues to celebrate and honor their cultural heritage, fostering a strong sense of identity and continuity.

In the broader context of Indonesian media, there is a crucial role in documenting, preserving, and promoting such cultural traditions. Media coverage can enhance public awareness and appreciation of the Pacu Jalur tradition, especially among the younger generation who may be less familiar with its cultural significance. Through detailed reporting, documentaries, and interactive social media content, the media can bridge the knowledge gap and ensure that these traditions are not only celebrated but also understood and valued.

## 5. REFERENCES

- Bogdan dan Biklen. (1990). *Riset Kualitatif untuk Pendidikan: Pengantar dan Metode*. Alih Bahasa oleh Munandir. Jakarta: PAU PPAI Dikti Depdikbud.
- Budhisantoso. (1986). *Masyarakat Melayu Riau dan Kebudayaanannya*. Pekanbaru: Pemerintah Daerah TKI Riau.
- Djahiri, Kosasi, A. (1985). *Strategi Pengajaran Afektif Nilai Moral dan Pendidikan Nilai Moral*. Bandung: Laboratorium Pengajaran PMP-KN IKIP Bandung.
- Englewood Cliffs. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Fraenkel, J.R. (1977). *How to Teach About Values: An Analytic Approach*.
- Hamidy, UU. (1982). *Sikap Orang Melayu Terhadap Tradisinya di Riau*. Pekanbaru: Bumi Pustaka.
- Hamidy, UU. (1982). *Sistem Nilai Masyarakat Pedesaan di Riau*. Pekanbaru: Bumi Pustaka.
- Hamidy, UU. (1996). *Masyarakat Melayu di Riau*. Pusat kajian Melayu Universitas Islam.
- Juswandi, J., & Akbarizan, A. (2023). Peranan Mamak/Paman Terhadap Kemenakan Dalam Adat Perkawinan Masyarakat Kecamatan Kuantan Hilir Seberang Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi. *Ensiklopedia of Journal*, 5(4), 199-204.
- Juswandi, J., Hermansyah, H., & Amanan, A. (2023). Moral Values in the Eid Al-Fitr Tradition in Kotorajo District, Kuantan Hilir Seberang District Kuantan Singingi Regency. *Journal of Humanity Studies*, 2(2), 91-99.
- Koentjaraningrat. (1982). *Manusia dan Kebudayaan di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan.
- Koentjaraningrat. (1984). *Masalah-Masalah Pembangunan Budaya: Bunga Rampai Antropologi Terapan*. Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial (LP3ES).
- Koentjaraningrat. (1985). *Kebudayaan, Mentalitas, dan Pembangunan*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia.
- Lutfi, Muchtar. (1977). *Sejarah Riau*. Pekanbaru: Team Penyusun dan Penulisan sejarah Riau.



- Mutakin, Awan. Dasim Budimansyah. Gurniawan Kamil Pasyah. (2004). *Dinamika Masyarakat Indonesia*. Bandung: PT Genesindo.  
Pekanbaru: UNRI Press.
- Rahman, Elmustian. (2003). *Alam Melayu: Sejumlah Gagasan Menjemput Keagungan*. Pekanbaru: UNRI Press.
- Ralph Linton (1984). *Antropologi, Suatu penyelidikan tentang manusia*. Bandung: Jemmars.
- Soekanto, Soerjono. (1987). *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar*. Jakarta: PT. Rajawali Press.
- Soelaeman, M. Munandar. (2001). *Ilmu Budaya Dasar, Suatu Pengantar*. Bandung: PT Refika Aditama.
- Sumaatmadja, Nursid. (2000). *Manusia Dalam konteks Sosial Budaya dan Lingkungan Hidup*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suwardi, M.S. (2003). *Budaya Melayu Dalam Citra Tamaddun Bahari*.
- Wan Galib. (1986). *Adat Istiadat Pergaulan Orang Melayu Riau*. Pekanbaru: PemdaTK I Riau.
- Nurmalinda, N., & Zulfa, Z. (2023). The Tradition of Child Becungak In Cultural Values In The Kampar Community of Riau Province. *Journal of Humanity Studies*, 2(2), 131-141.
- Zulfa, Z., Nora, D., Yulia, R., & Putra, E. S. I. (2022). Pelestarian Budaya Lokal Dalam Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek Simulasi (PBPS) Pada Generasi Milenial. *Bakaba: Jurnal Sejarah, Kebudayaan dan Kependidikan*, 10(2), 19-23.