

# Culture Bound Syndrome Of Latah Javanese Women With The Analysis Of Cultural Determinism Anthropological Psychology In The Plantation Area Of Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan

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# Culture Bound Syndrome Of Latah Javanese Women With The Analysis Of Cultural Determinism Anthropological Psychology In The Plantation Area Of Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan

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<sup>2</sup> **Abstract.** This research is a qualitative research with an ethnographic approach that explores the relationship between Javanese Woman Latah Personality Disorder and plantation culture in Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan. This study reveals the characteristics of Latah's personality disorder, the background of Latah's personality disorder, and the cultural influences of Javanese women's social life in plantations which are factors that cause personality disorders. Through data collection techniques utilizing participatory observation (life in) and unstructured interviews that focus on exploring the life history of women who experience Latah, the results obtained are that several women experience the Latah type (echopraxia) in the form of surprising behavior by imitating the movements of people who were surprising him. There is also a Latah type (echolalia) with a form of surprising behavior accompanied by repeated words. This action turned out to be related to community life in enclave plantations, and full of stratification

**Keywords:** Latah, Javanese woman, Cultural determinism

## 1. Introduction

Personality disorders are one of the topics of discussion on mental health that continue to receive attention from various scientific disciplines. This is inseparable from this problem which is still considered typical in the community due to the lack of comprehensive education, information, and handling. Anthropology data findings see that some people view personality disorders still with conventional thinking foundations and associate them with something irrational. Personality disorders are considered a form of sanctions given by ancestral spirits and other supernatural beings for certain actions committed by the individual. Personality disorders are also often considered a result of conflicts in social life. The suffering that the individual is forced to accept for the "sent" of magical powers from people who do not like him, whether due to heartache, jealousy, political differences, or competition in economic activity.

Personality disorder in a psychological view is considered a personality condition that is rigid and overpowers self-control, So that it affects the function of the personality itself and even causes psychiatric symptoms that cause suffering for the individual and the social environment. [1] Some things that are considered to be factors that cause personality disorders are genetic factors, temperamental factors, biological factors, and psychoanalytic factors. It's just that a diagnosis related to the characteristics of personality disorders and also the causative factors

must follow the path of a psychiatric diagnosis by a psychiatrist or psychologist, and can't just be guessed like what has been happening in the community [2]

Personality disorders that occur in the community are not only in the form of universal personality disorders such as Paranoid, Schizoid, Borderline, Anti-social and so on, but also some that are localized and only occur in certain areas such as Koro in men in China, Amuk in China. Malays, Mesu to Javanese men in Kisaran and personality disorder Latah is dominantly experienced by Javanese women. This form of personality disorder is in the form of surprising behavior and then continues to verbal and non-verbal responses. Usually, Latah is expressed by conveying dirty words spontaneously or doing actions suddenly. Not infrequently the response expressed by Latah can hurt himself or the people around him at the time [3]

Researchers in health, psychiatry, or psychology more often focus attention on Latah only on verbal and nonverbal responses. sufferer Latah, then associate it with neurotic or psychological disorders. To understand this personality to recognize the characteristics and factors that cause personality disorders from the perspective of Psychological Anthropology, which focuses on psychosocial studies of the local culture where the sufferer lives and interacts. Personality disorder Latah occurs in Plantation Javanese women who live in the Plantation Village of Pangarungan, Labuhan Batu Selatan Regency. This thing that is often overlooked but needs to be understood coherently is the culture of community life in an enclave, full of stratification, and a feudal nuanced system indicated to play a role in creating pressure on the individual psyche and lead to the emergence of personality disorders that are locality.

## **2. Method**

This type of research is qualitative research with an Anthropological Psychology approach. The Psychological Anthropology approach is always used to reveal the psychological phenomena of society by focusing on the repertoire of local cultural patterns. Because psychological phenomena manifest local cultural patterns that live and are passed down from generation to generation, it would be more appropriate if examined in the realm of thinking, concepts, and concepts. and scientific theory of Anthropology[4]

The method that will be used in this research is the ethnographic method. Researchers use this method to see social phenomena and local culture in detail by being part (life in) of the local community to find a cultural pattern that influences the appearance of abnormal Latah forms of behavior Javanese woman at the plantation area. Then in the process of collecting data using direct observation techniques (participatory observation), in-depth interviews (deep interviews) in an unstructured manner in the form of living with the community being studied (life in) and tracing information in the life history of the object under study[5]

The data collected was then analyzed following the stages of Spradley's ethnographic data analysis [6], namely: (1) Domain analysis was carried out to obtain a general and holistic picture of the cultural patterns of the daily life of Javanese woman in plantation area. Furthermore, (2) taxonomic analysis was carried out after the first step was carried out. This analysis was carried out by collecting the results of observation of participation in activities and unstructured interviews and documentation related to the domains studied. Then (3) the component analysis

carried out is to look for differences or contrasts and decide which fields should be studied in-depth related to the research. Then (4), The theme analysis becomes the final part of the relationship between various domains (results of interviews and observations). Theme analysis is a step to holistically understand the "phenomenon" being studied and its interpretation. So that drawing conclusions about Latah personality disorder and the factors that cause it can be described

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **Characteristics of Latah experienced by Javanese women in the plantation area of Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan Regency**

Latah has four types, namely, Colalia, Ecoproxia, Coprolalia, and Automatic Obedience. Latah Colalia is a talkative reaction in which the sufferer repeats the words of others spontaneously. Talkative Ecoproxia is a talkative reaction in which the sufferer imitates the behavior of others spontaneously. Latah Coprolalia is where the sufferer emits taboo or dirty words when surprised. Latah Automatic Obedience is a talkative reaction that takes orders from people. This type of talkative is considered the most dangerous and very detrimental to the sufferer. Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by the team on several informants who are talkative sufferers, the characteristics of talkative personality disorder in Javanese women in Pangarungan Village are described below:

##### **1) Latah Colalia**

Based on direct interviews with the informant I named Mak Inah (full name disguised). The informant is a Javanese woman who works as a plantation worker with her husband. The state of talkativeness experienced is not due to birth or genetic factors. The informant did not have relatives or family who were talkative before. Mak Inah (51) said that the talkativeness experienced at this time arose because his foreman had been surprised by his foreman and not because of an intentional element. Since that day, the informant said that he was more easily surprised when surprised by others, unlike before, when was not too easily surprised. Latah's personality disorder experienced since the age of 30 years. The talkativeness experienced by the informant was still limited to following the words of the people who surprised him. Starting with just ordinary surprise and forgetting to mention something, the informant spontaneously said and over time stuck with him.

The state of Latah Colalia was also experienced by informant II named Mak Yuyun (48). One of the Javanese women who worked as a trader opened a small shop. The talkative state has been experienced about 10 years ago and has not disappeared until now. The informant said that in his family he was the only one who was talkative, so the informant believed that being talkative was not due to factors from his family. The talkativeness experienced by the informant could not appear suddenly, but other people surprised him. The informant said that the first time he experienced the shock was when the workers and the foreman had surprised him. Since then the informant felt more easily surprised. The talkativeness experienced by the informant was still limited to the words conveyed by the person who surprised him and the informant automatically imitated and conveyed the same words.

##### **2) Latah Coprolalia**

The characteristic of talkative Coprolalia is a type of talkative state where the patient is surprised to say harsh words or taboo words that connote sexuality and genitals. These

words are considered by local people as obscene and disrespectful words. However, in the context of the symptoms experienced by talkative people, it is considered something that does not mean to demean others and tends to be a joke. As experienced by Mbah Aing (57) and Mak Ningsih (54) who are the third and fourth informants in this study.

Based on the results of interviews conducted with Mbah Aing (57), information was obtained that the informant had long experienced the Latah state, namely since he was 35 years old. The words he said when he was talkative were not intentional, he also regretted the words he said afterward. The words that are often mentioned by the informants lead to elements of sensuality such as male genitalia which in the local language is called Kont\*1, and female genitalia which in the local language is called Pep\*k. However, the informant said that this was not intentional, because when the informant was not surprised, he never mentioned it at all. The informant is a retired plantation worker who was also with her husband, but a few years later her husband died and she was the only one working alone. The talkative state experienced by the informant started from a colleague who had a higher position in his work structure as a technical foreman. So that until now he has not been able to get rid of the talkative disorder and feels ashamed because he has to convey these taboo words.

This talkative situation was also experienced by an informant named Mak Ningsih (54) at the age of 35 years. The informant works as a Household Assistant (ART) in one of the Foreman's houses. This talkative situation began when the foreman came home and surprised him when the informant was in his room when he was alone. Before the incident, the informant admitted that he had never experienced being talkative at all, but what has happened so far is that the talkative state always leads to the delivery of impolite remarks, especially related to swear words.

### 3) Ecoproxia

This talkative state is different from the previous talkative state, where the informant not only uttered words as a result of his shock but also followed the behavior or behavior of other people who surprised him. This was experienced by an informant named Mak Juni (45) who works as a traveling herbalist in the plantation area. There is no family of informants who experience talkativeness like him. The informant said that he began to feel talkative since selling herbal medicine 7 years ago. The talkative state began when he was surprised by one of the buyers but with harsh and discriminatory words. So that the shock continues in the form of talkative until now which will follow the words and actions of the person who surprised him.

Based on the search results on informants who are talkative, there is no talkative characteristic that leads to the form of Latah Automatic Obedience, which is a talkative reaction in which the talkative person will spontaneously obey the orders of the person who surprised him. This type of talkative is considered the most dangerous and very detrimental to the sufferer. This is because often people with talkative feel do not realize that they have done that command which tends to hurt the hearts of others around them.

### **The background of the occurrence of Latah in Javanese women in the Plantation area of Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan Regency**

Latah is not a behavior of madness or the perpetrator is a mentally ill person, but solely as an act (behavior) that appears in individuals because they lose control over themselves when surprised. Talkative individuals only express lingual forms that are considered taboo (words that refer to male or female genitalia) when their consciousness decreases, due to clapping, falling on an object, or a noise. The individual concerned will apologize for his impoliteness when his consciousness recovers. In addition, talkative individuals will be able to live normally and live side by side with other people, performing daily activities well in society. Based on the results of interviews conducted with informants who are talkative, the researcher analyzes that the emergence of different talkative characteristics is based on different historical backgrounds. The whole story does start from being surprised by other people, but the surprising pattern that is carried out will have an impact on the differences in the characteristics of the talkative which are described by the researchers below

#### **1) The background of the Latah Colalia case.**

Based on the results of interviews, this case occurred to informants who had been surprised by other people who had a higher structure in the plantation community. Informants Mak Inah (51) and Mak Yuyun (48) were surprised by someone who was the Foreman on the Plantation. This position has a higher position than workers or ordinary people. The informant said that the shock made him feel angry, but he was reluctant to express it because, in the end, he would only lose a level of power. The feeling of anger had to be hidden because it could have an impact on the social life and work life of the informant. The dominance of structures or levels in the plantation area does not seem to be felt that way. The informants stated that they had never experienced any oppression from the Foreman who had a higher position than them. However, from interviews with informants, the power possessed by the Foreman influences the limits of action of the workers or oil palm farmers. Power provides a sense of submission that makes freedom to express anger impossible.

#### **2) The background of the Copralalia Latah Case.**

Based on the results of interviews conducted with informants that the reason behind the informants being talkative is that they were surprised by other people, but related to disrespectful or taboo words conveyed when they were talkative was because there was an element of harassment experienced by the two informants. Mbah Aing (57) said that since she became a widow, she has often experienced harassment in the form of shock accompanied by physical touch which is not polite by a foreman, but the informant did not dare to say it. Sometimes the Foreman also often provokes stories with nuances of sexuality. Sometimes even carried away by dreams that lead to that intimacy. So when surprised by the foreman, what is imagined in the speech when speaking is related to the genitals. This was also experienced by Mbak Ningsih (54) who said that the abuse was also experienced by her employer who is also one of the foremen. According to the informant, when he was surprised, he was in a room that was provided for household assistants (ART), so it would be very disrespectful for the employer to enter his room, even if only to surprise him.

The power possessed by the foreman as one of the higher structures in the plantation community is also normative which regulates for the lower order to express or convey the disrespectful things experienced, as experienced by the informants. The informants did not dare to reprimand and convey such immoral things. Although for the foreman this is considered a natural thing in social relations.

### 3) Background of the Latah Ecoproxia Case-Based

In the interview with the informant Mak Juni (45), it was found that there were differences in the background from other talkative cases. The informant's job as a herbal medicine seller who goes around makes the informant interact a lot or get along with the community. However, closeness in the association makes the informant experience actions that lead to *bullying* against his short physical characteristics. This situation for the buyers of herbal medicine may be considered a joke. However, this situation has an impact on an unpleasant feeling for the informant. Informants cannot express their frustration with the treatment of the joke because it will have an impact on the purchasing power of consumers which will certainly decrease. This is because the friendly and joking attitude that characterizes the informant is one of the supporters of his many herbal medicine subscriptions. So that feeling of irritation and anger when surprised by other people unknowingly, becomes compliance for the informant to follow the behavior of the person who surprised him.

Latah can be transmitted through association. Latah can have both good and bad effects. But usually this talkative tends to harm the sufferer, for example, in public places he is made a joke or humiliated. The occurrence of continuous talkative will also make the sufferer experience severe fatigue. While on the bright side, the patient is prioritized by friends, friends, or the community because he can entertain. [7] Talkativeness cannot be cured but it can be reduced. Latah can be reduced if the sufferer is not continuously surprised or toyed with by people. In addition, reducing talkativeness can also be done by consulting a therapist, psychiatrist, or doctor. The condition severity of the talkative turned out to be influenced by age. As you get older, the severity of the talk will decrease.

### Local cultural patterns that influence the occurrence of Latah among Javanese women in the Plantation area of Pangarungan Village, South Labuhan Batu Regency

Pangarungan Village is one of the oil palm plantation areas in South Labuhan Batu. The majority of the people in this village are Javanese immigrants who have lived and worked in the plantation area for generations. Some work as foremen but more dominantly work as farm laborers. The cultural homogeneity that surrounds the social system of the local community makes social life in this village very distinctive from the Javanese way of life. In terms of the complexity of norms and ethics, Javanese society regulates their interactions through two principles, namely the principle of harmony and the principle of respect. These two principles then regulate and guide that all forms of interaction that lead to open conflicts must be prevented, to maintain harmony [7]

The principle of social life through the philosophy of life that is always taught is "<sup>1</sup>Trima yen ketaman, Sakserik sameng dumadi, Tri legawa nalangsa srah ing Barthara (sincere to lose without regret, patient if the heart is hurt by others, the third is to be open-minded while

surrendering to God). Where there is an emphasis on prioritizing patience when hurt by others and submitting vengeance to God Almighty. An attitude that is taught to uphold the value of spirituality in every problem of life. The values in this philosophy of life strengthen the personality characteristics of the Javanese, especially in Pangarungan Village, maintaining social unity takes precedence over feelings. This then became a contributing factor where the informants did not dare to express anger or discomfort as a result of the treatment of others towards them. So they prefer to suppress the overflow by accepting the situation they are experiencing. Harmony and peace in social life are considered more to be upheld than anything[8]

The talkative situation experienced by the informants is also inseparable from the characteristic factors of the plantation community which are like an enclave and in which some unwritten rules and norms must be obeyed [9]. Mainly related to attitudes towards a higher order (structure) in work on plantations as well as those who have a higher social status in the community. Informants who experienced unpleasant conditions were forced to accept this social compliance without a fight. This is because the resistance carried out from a lower order to a higher order is considered to only bring more complicated problems, especially those related to work. The community is more receptive to the information conveyed by the higher order than the opinions or voices of the farm workers.

#### **4. Conclusion**

As for the conclusions from the results of the research related to Latah personality disorder in Javanese women which were analyzed with the perspective of cultural determinism in the plantation area of Pangarungan Village, Labuhan Batu Selatan, among others, (1) The characteristics of talkativeness experienced by Javanese women in this village were Latah Colalia which was motivated by not expressing anger when surprised by a person who has a higher social status in society. (2) Then the characteristics of Latah Coprolalia which are motivated by the shock that have elements of sexual harassment but cannot be expressed on the person concerned because they have a higher status in society, and (3) the talkative characteristic of Ecoproxia which is motivated by feelings of anger that cannot be poured out on the person who surprised him. , because of the strong association in society. But none of the talkative women in this village suffer from Automatic Obedience.

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