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Ecofeminism and Cultural-Value System in Traditional Paddy Farming: A Folklore from West Borneo

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Abstract: *Ne' Balungkur* represents the inherited living value of traditional paddy farming lived by Dayak Kanayatn. Concerning the ecofeminism ideology, this study aims to reveal the existence of women and nature in traditional paddy farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore in relation to the cultural-value system. Enriching the ecofeminism perspective in this study, the community prominent figure of the Dayak Kanayatn community was interviewed to give triangular validity to the data interpretation. Exhibiting comprehensive ecofeminism analysis to show the representation of woman empowerment through Dayak Kanayatn's code of conduct in planting to harvesting paddy is the main contribution of this study. *Ne' Balungkur* demonstrates how women of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe are respected for their roles in traditional paddy farming and cultivation. This woman's role in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore challenges the customary male supremacy in Indonesian agriculture. This study is also able to identify the pattern of the cultural-value system. The pattern of the domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis shows that the current religious system, which blends ritual, custom, and religion into a single thought, has always been entwined with culture and education. Numerous opportunities for incorporating local folklore especially from West Borneo into official educational contexts are suggested by this study.

Key words: ecofeminism, cultural-value system, paddy folklore, *Ne' Balungkur*

Abstrak: *Nenek Balungkur* merepresentasikan warisan nilai hidup berladang padi tradisional yang diyakini oleh masyarakat Dayak Kanayatn. Berkaitan dengan ideologi ekofeminisme, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap eksistensi perempuan dan alam dalam perladangan padi tradisional dalam cerita rakyat *Nenek Balungkur* dalam kaitannya dengan sistem nilai budaya. Untuk memperkaya perspektif ekofeminisme dalam penelitian ini, tokoh masyarakat dari komunitas Dayak Kanayatn diwawancarai untuk memberikan validitas triangulasi pada interpretasi data. Menampilkan analisis ekofeminisme yang komprehensif untuk menunjukkan representasi pemberdayaan perempuan dalam kaitannya

dengan kode etik Dayak Kanayatn dalam menanam hingga memanen padi merupakan kontribusi utama dari penelitian ini. Nenek Balungkur menunjukkan bagaimana perempuan suku Dayak Kanayatn dihormati karena peran mereka dalam pertanian dan budidaya padi secara tradisional. Peran Perempuan dalam cerita Nenek Balungkur ini menantang supremasi adat laki-laki dalam pertanian Indonesia. Penelitian ini juga mampu mengidentifikasi pola sistem nilai budaya. Pola dalam analisis domain, taksonomi, komponensial, dan tema budaya menunjukkan bahwa sistem keagamaan saat ini, yang memadukan ritual, adat, dan agama ke dalam satu pemikiran, selalu terkait dengan budaya dan pendidikan. Banyak peluang untuk memasukkan cerita rakyat khususnya dari Kalimantan Barat ke dalam konteks pendidikan formal disarankan oleh penelitian ini.

Kata kunci: ekofeminisme, sistem-nilai budaya, cerita rakyat tentang padi, Nenek Balungkur

INTRODUCTION

In West Borneo, oral folklore tradition is a unique occurrence (Agung et al., 2024). *Ne' Balungkur* oral story is a very popular folklore in the Dayak Kanayatn community in West Borneo, Indonesia. It represents the ecofeminism point of view in Dayak Kanayatn culture. The idea of ecofeminism holds that patriarchy is in charge of the environment and that women are oppressed and seen as objects (Candraningrum, 2013; Davies et al., 2000; Shiva 2005; Tong & Boots, 2018; Warren & Cheney, 2015). Ecofeminism is a philosophical and social movement that links environmental issues and female empowerment. According to ecofeminism, women and nature are culturally related (Abdelmalik, 1999; Wiyatmi et al., 2017). Ecofeminism is a combination of environmentalism and feminism (Brier, 2020; Mondal & Majumder, 2019; Gaard, 2011; Mallory, 2018). Furthermore, turning to ecocriticism, it critiques the early forms of ecofeminism that attempted to disprove the idea that women and the environment were intertwined, citing the negative stereotypes of "nurturer" and "caregiver" associated with the former. Additionally, ecofeminists aimed to highlight the similarities between women and nature, emphasizing how both were oppressed and vulnerable to male exploitation, appropriation, and domination (Buell, 2011; Justin & Menon, 2022). An example of this can be found in India, where females have traditionally been viewed as less valuable than boys. Shri Paliwal launched the historic Piplantri model campaign to change gender perspectives. Piplantri's groundwater level has risen in tandem with the growth of its trees, and a significant cultural shift has boosted women's position there (Dore, 2021). The concept of women's empowerment and role is consistent with ecofeminism and ecocriticism. This is the core value to explore in this present study by investigating *Ne' Balungkur* folklore.

In this study, *Ne' Balungkur* folklore meets the requirement of connecting women and the environment. The first connection is the representation of women's participation of the main character namely *Ne' Balungkur* or *Balungkur* Grandma. The second connection is the representation of the cultural environment where *Ne' Balungkur* folklore is all about the steps of paddy farming in Dayak Kanayatn's tradition. The community of Dayak Kanayatn considers paddy farming to be a serious set of planting and cultivating series (Barli, 2022; Rahmawati, 2012). This is the typical ideology in Indonesia since the life of agriculture plays an important role (Nikmah et al., 2022; Nugroho, 2021; Wiyatmi, 2019). Moreover, due to its significance in sustaining human life, rice has come to hold a special place in the cultures of the majority of rice-growing nations (Ahuja & Ahuja, 2006). Understanding and clustering the role of women in

nature and society, especially in the traditional Dayak Kanayatn paddy farming which is represented in the story, is the aim of this study on *Ne' Balungkur* folklore. Furthermore, it observes that every stage of its customary paddy cultivation reflects the ingrained cultural value system. Barli (2022) originally specified only thirteen steps for Dayak Kanayatn's traditional paddy farming; these steps have been amended to fifteen in this study after revisiting the story of *Ne' Balungkur* folklore. One of Dayak Kanayatn's most notable representations was thoughtfully interviewed as part of a triangulation process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Folklore is a literary work of culture. Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means (Baxter et al., 2008; Finnegan, 2003; Hutomo, 1991; Richmond & Brunvand, 1969; UNESCO, 1989). The term "folklore" can refer to a variety of "orally transmitted traditions," including material culture. Nevertheless, it is most frequently used to refer to verbal forms like stories, songs, and proverbs, with a focus on the gathering and study of texts (Finnegan, 2003). The existence of folklore in the community is still traceable until the present time.

Folklore is a dialectical relationship between literature and reality which gives a reference for the community in understanding and creating reality (Jones et al., 1986). Considering the oral tradition of Dayak Kanayatn, folklore which is regarded as a story in this community is inherited among generations by verbal narration/ spoken. Since they live communally, the Dayak tribe defines family as the complete extended family because dozens of family members may live in a single long house and folklore may seize their day. Typically, adults tell children this. This kind of folklore belongs to verbal folklore (Baxter et al., 2008; Hutomo, 1991; Richmond & Brunvand, 1969). Referring to Horace, the essential of literary works meets the aspects of dulce at utile which means beautiful and meaningful (Teeuw, 2017). The previous generation uses folklore to teach the value of life (Koski et al., 2016; Wiyatmi, 2019; Zabieliènè, 2010). Reflecting the Dayak Kanayatn's culture, folklore as an oral tradition is used to teach the value of life (Kusnita et al., 2017; Merriam & Mohamad, 2000; Wan et al., 2018). In specific, *Ne' Balungkur* folklore describes the relationship of the prominent character of a woman with God in her search for the best paddy-cultivating technique.

The ideology of the high value of rice in culture is narrated in various folklore in Indonesia such as *Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang*, *Wawacan Dewi Sri*, and *Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Sri* from West Java (Ekajati, 2000; Holil, 2020; Koentjaraningrat, 1984), Dewi Sri or Rice Goddess in Bali (Nastiti, 2020), *Beru Dayang* from North Sumatera; the Story of Paddy from Maluku, and the Origin of Paddy from Madura (Yetti, 2014). The feminine deities of rice are also a feature of social life and culture in some other nations besides Indonesia.

Amaterasu is portrayed as a female deity in the *Kojiki*, a Japanese historical book, and the Sun Goddess is also frequently associated with rice (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1995). The *Khuan Khau*, a supernatural entity that resides in the rice plant and is ALSO in charge of regulating its development and yield, is said to exist in the Vietnamese *Tháy* culture (Hiên et al., 2004). Then, the pan-Indian rice deities *Annapurana* and *Lakshmi* are frequently worshipped with elaborate rituals and feasts (Ahuja & Ahuja, 2006). In Thailand, it is said that rice has a soul of its own,

which is represented by *Mae Phosop*, the goddess and mother of rice which makes Thai farmers bless their rice at each stage of its growth (Berno et al., 2019). The lifestyle of the Khmer people demonstrates their regard and honor for rice, rice seeds, and rice grains. They refer to Preah Me as "Mother God" and refer to rice and rice seeds as *Pră-Me*. She is believed to protect and bless the rice crop (Thanh, 2019).

This study addresses the value of women's empowerment and nature. The woman representation in everyday life of traditional paddy farming in the Dayak Kanayatn community is culturally explored. Comparing the previous studies on oral stories discussing women related to paddy. Following the previous studies, Nastiti (2020) discusses the myth about the origin of paddy and how people come to believe it. Using Sundanese texts, Holil (2020) reveals the socio-ecological perspective underlying the origins of rice and its ceremonies. Anjarwati (2020) with her ethnolinguistic perspective focuses on language use and belief of the Javanese community towards planting paddy activities in East Java. Yetti (2014) explores the motive and human/animal parts of the body that turn into paddy. However, from a geographical standpoint, none of these studies addressed the paddy's origins in West Borneo. Somehow, two studies that deal directly with the cultural and moral values of *Ne' Balungkur* folklore are described (Barli, 2022). Additionally, this study follows Barli (2022), particularly about preserving the stages involved in traditional farming.

Using an ecofeminism approach, this study wants to correlate the woman's role in nature and the cultural-value system on the inherited steps of traditional farming lived by the Dayak Kanayatn community. It explores the value of woman empowerment not only in nature but also in society. The applied domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis in this study enables us to portray the trends and the pattern of the involved woman and nature in ecofeminism and the seven cultural-value system. This study aims to shed light on the role of nature and women in traditional paddy farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore in relation to cultural values. It describes how nature and women fit into *Ne' Balungkur* folklore's steps of traditional farming practices and cultural value systems. Utilizing the updated traditional farming methods of Dayak Kanayatn in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore, which have increased from thirteen to fifteen steps after the recapped narrative, this study attempts to address the following research questions: 1) How is the representation of woman and nature in the fifteen steps of traditional farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore? 2) How is the involvement of the cultural-value system in the fifteen steps of traditional farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore?

Koentjaraningrat (1984) emphasizes that the cultural-value system is a framework of abstract ideas that guide members of a society in determining what should be seen as important and valued in their day-to-day activities. Koentjaraningrat (2005, 2022) emphasizes seven aspects of the cultural-value system namely: 1) language, 2) knowledge system, 3) social organization, 4) live equipment systems and technology, 5) livelihood systems, 6) religion systems, and 7) arts systems. Those aspects are the main taxonomy to reveal the traditional paddy farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore. Respecting the ecofeminism perspective from Abdelmalik (1999) and Wiyatmi et al., (2017), this paper explores the role of woman and nature in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore.

The seven cultural-value system are in line with ecofeminism theory since ecofeminism refers to historical, conceptual, and experiential ways in which sex and gender connect with nature, matter, life, and embodiment (Brier, 2020). Adapting Spradley's (2016) modified domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis model from Santosa (2021), this study explores the domain of stages of paddy traditional farming and ecofeminism on the taxonomy of

culture system. Interviewing an informant from the community prominent figure of the Dayak Kanayatn community in this study gives a significant update to Barli (2022) on the stages of traditional paddy farming in *Ne' Balungkur* folklore. Barli mentioned thirteen stages while this study classifies fifteen stages. Those stages are: 1) *Ngawah* (Marking the land), 2) *Nabas* (Clearing the bushes), 3) *Nabankng* (Cutting down the tree), 4) *Ngarangke* (Sun drying the cut-down bushes and trees), 5) *Nunu* (Burning the land), 6) *Nugal* (Preparing the planting hole), 7) *Manih* (Seeding), 8) *Ngamalo* (Monitoring the planting hole), 9) *Balala* (Locking down the village), 10) *Mipit* (Tasting new paddy), 11) *Matahatn* (Harvesting selectively), 12) *Bahanyi* (Harvesting concurrently), 13) *Ngirit* (Selecting paddy), 14) *Nampi* (Picking out empty paddy), 15) *Nyamur* (Drying harvested paddy).

METHOD

A. Type of Research

This research employed a qualitative methodology because the phenomenal paradigm emphasizes the complexity of the world (Moleong, 2019; Umanailo, 2019). After all, it is highly regarded and ingrained in the socialization of its practitioners and followers. The study aims to understand the phenomenon of women's role in ecofeminism and cultural-value system in West Bornean folklore by using Dayak Kanayatn's local perspective on traditional paddy agriculture to life framework in *Ne' Balungkur* story. *Ne' Balungkur* folklore describes the customs of traditional West Borneo cultivation of rice.

B. Research Subjects

Two informants for research participated in this study. The first informant was a scholar from the local academic community who had published before about *Ne' Balungkur* folklore. The second informant featured a local artist from Dayak Kanayatn. The best name was proposed to be the research's informant based on the recommendations from the Dayak Kanayatn local community, and it came from a famous local artist who works in sculpture and art performance. People admire the glorious artworks that the informant has made. The story of *Ne' Balungkur* folklore was skillfully translated into exceptional artwork by this informant through the creation of a series of cemented reliefs. Located in Ngabang city, right up until the present day, one of West Borneo's sports stadiums has featured exquisite presentations of *Ne' Balungkur* on the Long House. These qualities of the two informants assured the researchers that they were ideal for the study. The first informant provided enlightening information on steps that were absent from *Ne' Balungkur*'s traditional farming practices in her previous publication. The second informant, who was excellent at narrating Dayak Kanayatn's local folklore, confirmed that two more phases of traditional paddy cultivation had to be added to the revision of the first informant's publication on the *Ne' Balungkur*.

C. Research Procedure

The main data of this research was an article of publication from the first informant (Barli, 2022). A face-to-face interview was conducted to gain insight into the procedures involved in traditional paddy cultivating on the *Ne' Balungkur* narrative. Realizing that some steps might be missing, an in-depth interview with a notable Dayak Kanayatn community member as the second informant was carried out as a triangulation procedure. Re-examining the tale of *Ne' Balungkur*

led to the creation of improved steps for Dayak Kanayatn's traditional paddy farming. The established steps were gathered, documented, and transcribed. The two facets of ecofeminism and the seven facets of the cultural-value system were connected to those newly revised phases. Adopting domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis model analysis (Santosa, 2021; Spradley, 2016). Mapping every step of traditional paddy farming on Ne' Balungkur folklore about women and nature as ecofeminist elements, as well as on religion, society, knowledge, language, arts, livelihood, and tools on a cultural-value system, was the method used to analyze the data. Re-interviews with the informants were performed to confirm and double-check the analysis's conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After reviewing *Ne' Balungkur* folklore with the help of two notable informants in this research, the discussion aims to identify the newly revised fifteen steps of traditional paddy farming (previously only thirteen steps from Barli (2022)) and examine how they relate to two aspects of ecofeminism (Abdelmalik, 1999; Wiyatmi et al., 2017) and seven cultural-value system (Koentjaraningrat, 1984). In showing the result, the domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis model (Santosa, 2021; Spradley, 2016) gives a clear mapping of the following findings. The componential table is best pictured in table 1.

Table 1:
The componential table
(adapted from Santosa (2021) & Spradley (2016))

No	Steps of Traditional Paddy Farming in <i>Ne' Balungkur</i> Folklore	Ecofeminism				Cultural-Value System				
		W	N	R	S	K	La	A	Li	T
1	Marking the land (<i>Ngawah</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				
2	Clearing the bushes (<i>Nabas</i>)	✓	✓		✓					✓
3	Cutting down the trees (<i>Nabankng</i>)	✓	✓		✓					✓
4	Sun drying the bushes & trees (<i>Ngarangke</i>)	✓	✓			✓				
5	Burning the sun-dried bushes & tress (<i>Nunu</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				
6	Preparing the planting holes (<i>Nugal</i>)	✓	✓		✓					✓
7	Seeding (<i>Manih</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				
8	Monitoring the planting holes (<i>Ngamalo</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				
9	Locking down the village (<i>Balala</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
10	Testing to taste the new paddy (<i>Mipit</i>)					✓				
11	Selective harvesting (<i>Matahatn</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
12	Concurrent harvesting (<i>Bahanyi</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
13	Separating the paddy from the stalks (<i>Ngirit</i>)	✓	✓			✓				
14	Picking out the empty paddy (<i>Nampi</i>)	✓	✓			✓				✓
15	Sun drying the selected paddy (<i>Nyamur</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓				

*) Ecofeminism aspects:

W : Woman

N : Nature

*) Cultural-Value System

- R : Religious
- S : Society
- K : Knowledge
- La : Language
- A : Arts
- Li : Livelihood
- T : Tools

The folklore of *Ne' Balungkur's* story was analyzed in the context of mapping the componential table to determine how paddy fields are traditionally farmed. The second informant offered the narrative of *Ne' Balungkur* to be discussed in this part. The narrative in this discussion is presented utilizing a procedural theme, starting with the initial stage of preparing the paddy field and concluding with the last stage of harvesting. The componential table is comprehensively explained in the following description.

1. Marking the land (Ngawah)

Marking the land involves the role of women and nature in society and knowledge. When *Ne' Balungkur* wanted to mark the field on the spotted land, she and her community went together. She led the community to choose the best land to be their paddy field. She played as the figure leader in this initial stage of farming paddy.

*The farming season was coming, and Ne' Balungkur and her family were getting ready to open their farm in the hilly area. Before opening the land, she **determined the land** that was **considered suitable for cultivation**.*

Ne' Balungkur used her knowledge by noticing the signs of nature (the stars). She counted on her astrological knowledge. She read the stars to look for the sign as the determiner of the right day to mark the land.

*Ne' Balungkur **watched the stars** at night to look for the sign **indicating the right time** for doing "Ngawah" activity. The stars in the sky at night served **as a benchmark** to estimate the perfect time.*

2. Clearing the bushes (Nabas)

Clearing the bush elaborates on the role of women and nature in society and tools. *Ne' Balungkur* asked her family and the society to clear the land from the bush and other vegetation. They brought their whetstone, machete "*mandau*" and sickle with them. They worked all together to prepare their land.

*On the next morning, they went to their land. They brought **an axe, machete "mandau", sickle, whetstone, "katoro"** (pandan-leaf woven cap), and "*tarinak*" (rattan-woven basket) with them. They worked together to **mow the grass and prune the bush**.*

3. Cutting down the trees (Nabankng)

Cutting down the trees engages the role of women and nature in society and tools. After clearing the bush was finished, *Ne' Balungkur* asked her family to work on their land. They use their hard-cutting tool to cut down the trees on their land.

After “Nabas”, she **led** her family to **cut down the trees** in the spotted field location. Until her family decided they had enough land, **they continued doing it**.

4. Sun drying the bushes and trees (Ngarangke)

Drying the bush and trees after clearing the land occupies the role of woman and nature in knowledge. Ne’ Balungkur tried to find a way how to get rid of the clearing and logging results. She was the one to decide the duration of the sun drying.

Ne’ Balungkur thought that **the wood that had been cut must be dried** for some time ranging from 1 month to 2 months, until the wood **got dry to burn**.

5. Burning the sun-dried bushes and trees (Nunu)

Burning the land is related closely to the role of woman and nature in society, and knowledge. When the time for burning land was right (the log was dried enough to burn), Ne’ Balungkur, her family, and the community went to the land and burned it. She ordered the community to let the charcoal and the combustion dust have to be deposited for a week.

When the time was perfect, Ne’ Balungkur and her family **burned** the dried bush and log. The “Nunu” **charcoal and combustion dust** had to be left for 7 days.

6. Preparing the planting holes (Nugal)

Preparing the planting hole after burning the land has a relationship with the role of women and nature in society and tools. On days 8-10, Ne’ Balungkur and all the community member went to their land to prepare the planting holes. The sharpened wood sticks were used to make the planting holes.

So, on the 8th to 10th day, it was time for Ne’ Balungkur family and the whole community to go to the fields to “Nugal” **make planting holes in the ground with sharpened wood sticks**.

7. Seeding (Manih)

Seeding has a close connection to the role of woman and nature in society, and knowledge. Ne’ Balungkur and the society worked together to seed the planting holes. They buried the seeds of paddy and vegetables. They grew plain rice, sticky rice, some vegetables (corn, gourd, cucumber, spinach, and pumpkin), and turmeric.

When the planting holes were ready, they **seed planting** “manih” plain rice, sticky rice, corn, “gamang” gourd, cucumber, spinach, “perenggi” pumpkin, and turmeric.

8. Monitoring the planting holes (Ngamalo)

Monitoring the planting hole represents the role of women and nature in society and knowledge. To keep the planting seeds safe from weeds and maintain the growth of the seeds, they spent time all day long taking care of all the planting holes. They used their bare hands to pull out every weed.

While waiting for the seeds to grow every day, from morning to evening, Ne' Balungkur with her family *always went to the field to “Ngamalo” control the planted seeds* in “tugalan” the planting holes to keep the growing seeds safe from pests and weeds. When the planted seeds thrive, they *carefully clean or pull out the weeds* that grow between their plants to not disturb the growth of the seeds.

9. Locking down the village (Balala)

Doing “balala” or locking down the village symbolizes the role of women and nature in religion, society, and knowledge. Considering their belief in God and perception of being safe, the society locked down their village in the hope of prosperity on their land. They believed that “Jubata” God would protect them if they respected nature and kept their manner. They knew that it was a good tradition to live for.

The community *performed rituals* to maintain good manners. The whole community kept staying inside the long house. They did not get around, they did not speak carelessly, and they didn't kill any animals. They believed “Jubata” God would protect them and their village by *locking down the village/doing “balala”*.

10. Testing to taste the new paddy (Mipit)

Testing new paddy coincided with the role of women and nature in knowledge. After harvesting the vegetables. Ne' Balungkur checked the yellow ripe paddy on the field. She took two stalks of paddy, the first was the plain rice and the second was the sticky rice. She tasted the grains to check whether they were ready to be harvested or not.

When the paddy turned yellow, the harvest season was close. The corn and vegetables were harvested first. She *grabbed two stalks of paddy*, one of normal rice and the other of sticky rice. She *tasted the grains* to see whether or not they were ripe for harvest.

11. Selective harvesting (Matahatn)

The stage of initial harvesting encompasses the role of woman and nature in society, knowledge, and tools. Ne' Balungkur persuaded neighbors for the selective harvesting together. The purpose was to get the best grains for seeding and have the fresh-new rice. The yellowest paddy was picked by the woman using a rice cutter “katam”.

Ne' Balungkur *encouraged neighbors* to participate in the first round of harvesting. The goals were to have brand-new rice and *have the greatest grains for sowing*. The yellow paddy with the most color was rice-chopped by the woman using “katam” rice cutter.

12. Concurrent harvesting (Bahanyi)

This prime harvesting performs almost similar roles of woman and nature in society, knowledge, and tools as in selective harvesting. Concurrent harvesting begins with having a meal together with the community. It is the Thanksgiving ceremony where new rice is served in plain rice and glutinous rice. Bahanyi is taking the entire harvest. The woman used katam (rice cutter) and brought katoro (rattan basket).

During the harvesting season, Ne' Balungkur did not forget to invite her neighbors to harvest "Bahanyi" their crops, at the same time she made a thanksgiving event for the new rice meal "Ngabati". They took their crops into a "katoro" rattan basket. At home, the new plain rice and "poe" sticky rice were cooked and served.

However, this stage involves religion since it performs a thanksgiving ceremony. Ne' Balungkur got an advice from "Jubata" God. She believed that doing this advice would make an abundant harvest in the following session.

"When holding a Thanksgiving ceremony, please invite all neighbors so they can enjoy the harvest from the fields that you have. Don't forget to give them rice, vegetables, and side dishes when they return to their respective homes, at the end of the Thanksgiving event!" asked Jubata to Ne' Balungkur.

13. Separating paddy from the stalks (Ngirit)

Separating paddy from the stalks indicates the role of woman and nature in knowledge and tools. The rice was separated from the stalks by keep stepping it on a woven mat. Feet became the perfect human-mechanical system to remove the grains.

Ne' Balungkur trampled the paddy to separate the rice grains from the straw.

14. Picking out the empty paddy (Nampi)

Picking out empty paddy meets the role of woman and nature in knowledge and tools. In cleaning and selecting the whole grains from the empty ones, a *nyero* (Dayaknese) or *tampah* (Javanese) large round woven bamboo was used to fly the whole grains into the air.

They made a "nyero" large round woven bamboo to remove the empty paddy by flying them into the air.

15. Sun drying the selected paddy (Nyamur)

Sun drying the paddy copes with the role of woman and nature in knowledge and tools. The clean grains were sun dried from 9 to noon. This is believed as the best time to get the full sun before raining because, in West Borneo, the weather is almost unpredictable.

The selected grains were sun-dried. The activity of sun drying the selected paddy was done by the woman between 9 to noon.

CONCLUSION

Understanding the role of women in nature and society is achieved by examining the stages of traditional paddy farming as they are portrayed in *Ne' Balungkur folklore*. Based on the insights provided by the two informants, the story was revisited and triangulated, allowing this study to update those steps of traditional paddy farming into fifteen steps. Carefully examining all the findings, this study found that *Ne' Balungkur* empowered other women as well as her agricultural society. *Ne' Balungkur* represented that she as a woman played a key part in all phases of traditional paddy farming in *Ne' Balungkur folklore*. She was the matriarch leader of the whole extended family and the society in the village. Through successful harvesting, her expertise in

cultivating the rainforest paddy field provided prosperity to the community. Her ethereal connection to the "Jubata" God, who recommended a gratitude ritual to celebrate the arrival of newly harvested rice, demonstrated her cultural influence on the community.

Due to the intimacy with nature, the Dayak Kanayatn community is known for having a harmonious relationship with God (Olendo et al., 2022). It is a living value that the society (Dayak Kanayatn community) respects nature. In *Ne' Balungkur* folklore, the Dayak Kanayatn civilization values the emancipation of women highly in leading traditional paddy farming. It against predominantly men's territory in Indonesian agriculture (Akter et al., 2017). This folklore does excellent work of illustrating the importance of women and nature as the core tenets of ecofeminism (Abdelmalik, 1999; Wiyatmi et al., 2017) especially when *Ne' Balungkur* located the area to establish a paddy field (*Ngawah*) and figured out all the calculating strategies of preparing the planting holes (*Nugal*).

Examining the similarities between the cultural-value system and the componential table, the pattern indicates that the current religious system has always been intertwined with culture and education. The steps of locking down the village (*Balala*) and concurrent harvesting (*Bahanyi*) integrated ritual, custom, and belief into a single idea. In the meantime, tools utilized in traditional paddy farming were identified as a means to understand society more comprehensively and discover their intended purpose. These tools are represented in clearing the bushes (*Nabas*), cutting down the trees (*Nabankng*), preparing the planting holes (*Nugal*), selective harvesting (*Matahatn*), and picking out the empty paddy (*Nampi*). Farmers cultivate unprofitable rice fields in hilly areas using conventional equipment since it is less expensive (Pakiding & Tahendrika, 2023). *Ne' Balungkur* folklore included representations of many customary tools, such as the machete (*mandau*), rice cutter (*katam*), sharpened wood stick, rattan-woven basket (*tarinak*), and large round woven bamboo (*nyero*).

Ne' Balungkur folklore proves that there is a transfer of knowledge of traditional paddy farming in the Dayak Kanayatn community. Folklore is thought of as an oral tradition that is utilized to educate the value of life (Kusnita et al., 2017; Merriam & Mohamad, 2000; Wan et al., 2018); in this context, teaching value in the Dayak Kanayatn's community. Unlike previous scholars who looked into the possibilities of designing folklore for educational settings (Agung et al., 2024; Ellisafny, 2019; Gholson & Stumpf, 2005; Peabody, 2021; Satinem, 2015; Sepota, 2018; & Sujidin et al., 2019), the setting of this present study is socio-cultural, therefore it has little to do with formal education folklore. Pryor & Bowman (2016) narrate a persistent theme over the ages that highlights the fundamental goals of folklore and education: to strengthen the learner and advance the community. The students living in West Borneo are exposed to a rich heritage of oral folklore from the Dayak and Malay tribes, which is passed down orally (Agung et al., 2024). This study implies that oral traditions, such as folklore, can be modified for use in formal educational settings, particularly in West Borneo and other regions having a rich oral folklore culture.

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