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The Value Of Local Wisdom Of Sasi In Clove Plants In Sepa Country Amahai District Central Maluku Regency

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the value process and application of clove plant sasi in Negeri Sepa and to find out the economic, social and environmental aspects of the clove plant sasi of the Negri Sepa community. This research is a qualitative research. This research was carried out for 1 month, namely in October – November 2023. The location of this research was carried out in Negeri Sepa, Amahai District, Central Maluku Regency. The sample in this research were 15 clove farmers in Negeri Sepa. Data collection techniques use interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions/verification. The results of the research show that the value and application of the sasi custom to clove plants among the people of Negeri Sepa aims to preserve one of the legacies handed down from their ancestors that exists to this day, besides that, the community also believes that with this sasi tradition they can protect forest products or clove plants from thieves. With the implementation of sasi which is still maintained in Negeri Sepa, Amahai sub-district, natural resources can be directly conserved so that they do not become extinct and can be used by the next generation. The economic, social and environmental aspects of clove plantations in Negeri Sepa have different functions. The economic aspect "includes the community's efforts to meet life's needs. The social aspect includes sasi reducing the potential for theft. And the environmental aspect can be seen from the existence of well-maintained land in Cengkeh Hamlet so that the surrounding environmental ecosystem and people's lives become orderly and better.

Keywords : Local Wisdom: Sasi and Cloves production from sepa country amahai districthb central Maluku regency

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INTRODUCTION

One of the regions in the Maluku Province known for producing high-quality cloves is Central Maluku Regency. According to the 2022 BPS data, Central Maluku Regency is the second-largest producer of cloves in the Maluku Province. (BPS, 2022). The following are the production data of plantation crops (tons) in Central Maluku Regency from 2019 to 2022:

Table 1. Clove Production Data in Central Maluku Regency for the Years 2021-2022 (Tons)

Year	Total Production (Tons)
2019	13.786
2020	17.304
2021	19.482
2022	20.805

Source: Central Maluku Regency BPS, 2022

Table 1 shows that from 2019 to 2022, clove production in Central Maluku Regency has been continuously increasing. In 2019, clove production in Central Maluku Regency was 13,786 tons, then increased to 17,304 tons in 2020, further increased to 19,482 tons in 2021, and experienced another increase to 20,805 tons in 2022.

Table 2. Clove Production (Tons) Data in Amahai Subdistrict for the Year 2022

Country (Subdistrict)	Production Quantity (Tons)
Banda Baru	9,7
Haruku	490,0
Hatuhenu	81,6
Hollo	4,4
Makariki	81,6
Nua Nea	234,0
Nuweletetu	490,9
Rutah	238,4
Sehati	198,1
Sepa	2.005,6

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Soahuku	145,8
Tamilouw	1.521,2
Yafila	40,6
Yainelo	49,6

Source: Central Maluku Regency BPS, 2022

Administratively, the area of Sepa is located in the Amahai Subdistrict, Central Maluku Regency, Maluku Province. The majority of the population practices Islam. Sepa itself is known to have a forest area of 520,000 hectares. Approximately 80% of the population in Sepa Village are indigenous inhabitants.

The population sustains itself through agriculture. The types of crops cultivated by the people of Sepa range from perennial crops such as cloves, coconuts, durians to monthly crops like sweet potatoes, cassava, bananas, and many others. The forests in Sepa are still closely tied to customary law, such as traditional restrictions (sasi adat) on the community's crops. However, not all types of crops are subject to these restrictions; sasi only applies to cloves and coconuts.

The community of Negeri Sepa is a traditional community deeply rooted in customary law, one of which is "sasi". In Negeri Sepa, "sasi" is only applied to land, and it only pertains to two types of crops: cloves and coconuts; it does not apply to other crops or marine products. The process of "sasi" in Negeri Sepa involves prohibiting the harvest of garden produce for a specified period. If individuals violate this rule, they will face social and customary sanctions. If they refuse to comply with these sanctions, they will be expelled from Negeri Sepa, along with their families, including spouses and children. In Negeri Sepa, the implementation of "sasi" for cloves is still practiced by the community and regulated by the customary government or village elders, meaning that the village elders have a significant role in the implementation of "sasi", from its initiation to its conclusion. If someone steals crops that are under "sasi", they may face sanctions according to the rules established in Negeri Sepa, Amahai Subdistrict. Apart from its customary aspect, the tradition of "sasi" in the village of Sepa can also be observed in its economic, social, and environmental aspects.

The conditions described above have attracted researchers to examine how the indigenous community implements the "sasi" system for cloves, as well as the customary rules and regulations regarding clove cultivation. Based on the discussion above, this

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research is compelling to be investigated with the title "Local Wisdom: Sasi and Clove Production in Negeri Sepa, Amahai Subdistrict, Central Maluku Regency.".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study conducted over the course of one month, specifically from October to November 2023. The research location is in Negeri Sepa, Amahai Subdistrict, Central Maluku Regency. The sample for this study consists of 15 clove farmers in Negeri Sepa. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identity of Respondents from the Community of Negeri Sepa

The identity of the respondents from the community of Negeri Sepa to be discussed in this research includes age, gender, highest level of education, and occupation, presented as follows:

Age

Age is one of the crucial factors in farming. The physical ability of farmers to manage their agricultural activities is greatly influenced by their age. Productive age is considered to be below 65 years old. Farmers within this productive age range are deemed to have good capabilities in managing organic rice farming businesses due to their strong physical abilities. However, farmers above 65 years old are believed to experience a decline in physical abilities, leading to suboptimal management of farming activities (Agung, 2018). The identity of clove farmer respondents based on age can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Respondents Based on Age

Age	Number of farmers (people)	Percentage (%)
27 – 30 Tahun	3	20
32 – 45 Tahun	7	46.67
59 – 68 Tahun	5	33.33
Total	15	100

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Based on Table 4, it is known that the majority of respondents are aged 32-45 years old, totaling 7 individuals. Then, there are 5 respondents aged 59-68 years old, and 3 respondents aged 27-30 years old. From these results, it is evident that the majority of clove farmers in Negeri Sepa are still within the productive age range, with the youngest being 27 years old. The number of productive respondents is more than 70%, while the number of non-productive respondents is 30%.

Productive farmers may not always achieve higher production than those who are no longer productive because farming is the main occupation for non-productive farmers. On the other hand, many of the productive farmers consider farming as a side job, so the results obtained by non-productive farmers can be higher than those of productive farmers. Although the productive age is considered to be below 65, it is found that some respondents still enforce "sasi" even though they are categorized as no longer productive. This is because they perceive farming as their only source of livelihood, despite their physical limitations.

Gender

Gender indirectly affects organic rice farming efforts. Female farmers tend to be less efficient in carrying out farming activities due to their lower physical capabilities compared to males. Female farmers may be less efficient in the utilization of production factors compared to male farmers (Agung, 2018). The identity of clove farmer respondents based on gender can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	The number of farmers (people)	Percentage (%)
Male	15	100
Total	15	100

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2023

Based on Table 5, it is known that all respondents are male, totaling 15 individuals (100%). On average, in Negeri Sepa, the task of maintaining cloves is dominated by males. This is because males are considered the backbone of the family and are needed more for tasks such as land preparation, maintenance, irrigation, harvesting, post-harvesting activities, and their physical strength is generally stronger compared to females. Besides these factors, there is also a belief still held today that women are

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prohibited from entering the garden and engaging in any activities while menstruating, as it is believed that the presence and activities of menstruating women in the garden will lead to suboptimal plant growth and yields.

In Sepa, cloves are cultivated from older clove seedlings, commonly referred to as "cengkeh polong". Irrigation, such as land preparation, typically does not require irrigation like in vegetable farming and other crops. This is because in Sepa, clove planting mostly occurs directly in existing clove gardens where clove trees are already producing. The process of seedling propagation is carried out on empty land or usually covering the remains of dead clove trees. The process involves placing prepared clove seedlings on empty land, then covering them with wood waste from previous pruning. They are then left until the shoots emerge before being transferred to polybags and finally planted in the clove garden. For harvesting, mature cloves are identified by fully formed but unopened flower heads. After harvesting, the post-harvest process involves separating the cloves from the stems, sun-drying them until they are dry. Afterwards, they are either sold immediately or stored in sacks.

Highest Level of Education

The level of education of farmers is one of the factors that influence the success of organic rice farming. The higher the level of education of farmers, the easier it is for them to accept new technological innovations, enabling them to improve and develop their farming practices (Agung, 2018). The identity of clove farmer respondents based on their highest level of education can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Respondents Based on Highest Level of Education

Highest Level of Education	Number of Farmers (people)	Percentage (%)
SD	5	33.33
SMP	5	33.33
SMA	3	20
S1	2	13,34
Total	15	100

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2023

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Based on Table 6, it is known that the majority of respondents have completed their education up to elementary school (SD) with 5 individuals (33.33%) and junior high school (SMP) with 5 individuals (33.33%). Additionally, there are 3 respondents (20%) with a high school diploma (SMA) and 2 respondents (13.34%) with a bachelor's degree (S1). The most common educational attainment among clove farmers in Negeri Sepa is elementary and high school level education, totaling 10 individuals. Most farmers with an elementary school education choose clove farming because it is more profitable. Their level of education does not significantly affect their clove farming activities because cultivating cloves is generally considered easy, and for them, education is not crucial for understanding clove cultivation traditions, as they have learned these practices from generation to generation. Farmers with higher education, such as a bachelor's or high school diploma, often choose farming either to continue their family's profession or to utilize inherited agricultural land. For those with a bachelor's degree, clove farming serves as a long-term investment while they are still seeking permanent employment; they utilize their free time to engage in clove farming. Despite the generally low level of education among clove farmers in Negeri Sepa, their enthusiasm for learning and sharing knowledge about clove farming is strong, as evidenced by their active participation in farmer groups and their willingness to share knowledge with one another.

The value of clove sasi

The maintenance of clove sasi in Negeri Sepa is still upheld to this day. The preservation of this tradition is crucial for preserving local culture and its important role and functions in providing guidance for the community to address existing issues. The continued existence of the sasi tradition demonstrates the community's willingness to respect, preserve, and uphold it. The community's attitude toward preserving and maintaining the sasi tradition is aimed at protecting the plants from the disturbances caused by irresponsible individuals (thieves).

During an interview with the Chief of Negeri Sepa regarding the clove sasi tradition, he explained that: "In Negeri Sepa, the community believes that the most effective way to safeguard goods or crops until harvest is through tradition. The sasi tradition practiced by the Sepa community is very useful in protecting clove plants from theft. Prohibition signs are placed on each plant (coconut leaves for coconut trees and red cloth for nutmeg trees), indicating that the plant is under sasi. Therefore, everyone knows that the plant has been prohibited from being harvested, even the locals cannot simply take cloves that

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are under sasi, before they are opened" (Interview Results, November 10, 2023).

Furthermore, during an interview with the Kewang (Traditional Leader) of Negeri Sepa, Mr. M, regarding the clove sasi tradition, he explained that: "The people of Negeri Sepa adhere strongly to the sasi tradition, believing that its purpose is very positive. This tradition has been passed down since their ancestors, and from then until now, it has been considered as a law to preserve future agricultural yields. It is a way to preserve and uphold what has become customary in Negeri Sepa, and this is one of the community institution's programs, with rules approved by religious leaders, traditional leaders, Soa (Council of Elders), and the government" (Interview Results, November 10, 2023).

Based on the interviews presented, it can be concluded that the sasi tradition is believed by the community to be a rule that preserves forest resources. Sasi educates and shapes the attitudes and behaviors of the community in maintaining the social order, including efforts to distribute income from natural resources evenly among all members or residents of a community or between different regions.

Gasperz (2018) explains that in neighboring villages, there are different sasi systems depending on the agreements between communities and the customary rules established by the village government, as well as the types of natural resources being subjected to sasi. Additionally, each village in Maluku has its own rules regarding land boundaries and maritime boundaries that are regulated by sasi. Therefore, communities preserve and conserve these natural resources through sasi. This is because sasi (local wisdom) aims to prohibit the community from engaging in theft or unauthorized extraction (Nendissa, 2014).

Sasi embodies normative values that serve as guidelines for communities, and it has a positive impact on maintaining the sustainability of natural resources. Without sasi laws, there would be widespread exploitation that could disrupt the availability of natural resources. Inter-community competition for natural resources sometimes leads to conflicts between villages, prompting the establishment of regulations for the utilization and management of these resources in the form of sasi. Sasi is established with the aim of enabling communities to manage marine resources and plantation yields wisely and to distribute them fairly in accordance with established rules. Additionally, its goal is to maintain a balance between nature, humans, and the spiritual world, as those who violate sasi regulations may face spiritual and community sanctions (Damardjati and Kusrini, 2015).

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The Implementation of Clove Sasi

The planning and implementation stages of clove sasi in Negeri Sepa are marked by a closing ceremony, signifying the commencement of the prohibition. This is done by placing sasi signs, typically wooden stakes tied with young coconut leaves, at the boundaries of the restricted area, as well as on the plants themselves. Eventually, a ceremony is held to lift the sasi prohibition, where the sasi signs are removed through a traditional ceremony, indicating the end of the prohibition. After this ceremony, the owner can then harvest the mature cloves. There are two types of closing and opening ceremonies for sasi:

1. The closing and opening ceremonies according to tradition. The implementation of the closing ceremony of sasi can be outlined as follows: usually on the first or second day prior to the ceremony, notification is given by the chief of the traditional leader and the "kewang" children to the entire community. Thus, each individual or family has prepared their needs for the duration of the sasi closure period.
2. The tradition of "closing ceremony of sasi." On the designated day, the head of the traditional leader usually holds a meeting with the entire village community. The traditional leader begins the tabaos (calling) and immediately blows a tahuri shell or conch shell, producing a melodious yet mystical sound. At that moment, the traditional leader and the kewang children commence their duties as forest guardians. The forests and seas are declared closed. The sasi period typically lasts as long as determined by the king, his staff, and the Negei Sepa community, who agree on when the sasi will be lifted.

Sasi is implemented for a duration of 3 to 6 months to ensure that the cloves subjected to sasi can yield satisfactory results. When it's time for harvest, the community must first report to the head of the council of elders to create a statement confirming that the clove trees under sasi are ready for harvest. Only after this statement is issued can the community harvest the produce from their village. The enforcement of sasi for 3-6 months is intended to ensure that the cloves mature on time so that the resulting products at harvest are satisfactory and can be sustained for future generations (Fatma et al., 2015).

In its implementation, sasi tends to be more legalistic rather than purely traditional, where sasi is used as a means to make policies regarding the harvesting of marine and agricultural resources. However, in general, sasi functions within the community as a form of traditional ethics. Sasi is not related to rituals concerning birth, marriage, death, and

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inheritance; instead, it tends to be taboo and an obligation for every individual and the community in managing their natural resources (Oase, 2016).

The continued participation of community members in upholding the sasi tradition is due to their awareness of maintaining harmony with nature, similar to how their ancestors practiced sasi in the past. Besides the community's attachment to traditional culture, they also directly experience the benefits of implementing sasi in their lives.

The Economic, Social, and Environmental Aspects of Sasi in Clove Plantations in Negeri Sepa.

Economic Aspect

Sasi aims to maintain the overall quality and quantity of production. Its implementation allows land-based natural resources to thrive and maintain their quality. Local wisdom in sasi can influence clove production. The clove production results in Negeri Sepa can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Clove Production under Sasi Arrangement

Year	Average Production/kg
2018	900 kg
2019	1100 kg
2020	1300 kg
2021	1500 kg
2022	>1500 kg

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

According to the research findings, out of the 5 years under sasi, the highest production was in 2022, with more than 1500 kg per year. The local wisdom of sasi implemented by Negeri Sepa undoubtedly enhances the economic value of the community. The income of clove farmers from each harvest, derived from the production quantity multiplied by the selling price, can be seen in Table 8.

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Table 8. Income of Clove Farmers in Negeri Sepa

Respondents	Production and Harvest Results	
	Dried Cloves (kg)	Sales Yield (Rp 178.000/kg)
1	15	Rp. 2.670.000
2	17	Rp. 3.026.000
3	15	Rp. 2.670.000
4	20	Rp. 3.560.000
5	20	Rp. 3.560.000
6	19	Rp. 3.382.000
7	25	Rp. 2.670.000
8	16	Rp. 2.848.000
9	25	Rp. 4.450.000
10	18	Rp. 3.204.000
11	17	Rp. 3.026.000
12	15	Rp. 2.670.000
13	15	Rp. 2.670.000
14	20	Rp. 3.560.000
15	25	Rp. 4.450.000

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2023

The community in Negeri Sepa predominantly engages in agriculture as their primary livelihood. The proceeds from the clove harvest are typically sold and serve as the main source of income for households. This income is used not only for food expenses but also for education, healthcare, savings, and even business capital.

Production activity is defined as the process of generating output using specific production techniques to process or transform inputs (Isyariansyah, 2018). The local wisdom of clove sasi can enhance clove production in Negeri Sepa, followed by the improvement of the community's economy. This is because the efforts undertaken by the Negeri Sepa community to preserve and protect natural resources as a source of livelihood through the ritual tradition of sasi aim to achieve a higher yield of clove harvest as desired. Since the people of Negeri Sepa have various needs to sustain their lives such as food, drink, clothing, housing, health, and education, the sustainability of natural

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resources must be maintained and protected to ensure their continued availability and the generation of value-added products to meet the needs of the community.

Clove sasi is implemented to meet the financial needs of children's education for farmers and daily living expenses. Good quality will increase income and also maintain the sustainability of clove commodities to ensure abundant yields. The economic aspect plays a crucial role in society for its continuity as it is one of the main reasons behind the implementation of sasi in Negeri Sepa.

In line with the research by Fatma et al. (2015), this economic aspect is crucial because the harvest yields have economic value that can be sold at appropriate prices. These results are sold to local consumers who purchase the community's harvest. The income generated from selling cloves is used to meet household needs, including food consumption, children's education, healthcare, home improvement, and business capital.

Social Aspect

The social aspect manifested in the tradition of sasi is expressed in the form of mutual assistance and support among families without coercion. For example, the yield from sasi cengkeh is shared with relatives or neighbors. This spirit of kinship and togetherness ultimately fosters a sense of mutual help, assistance, and appreciation among each other, from the preparation to the completion of the sasi implementation.

Sharing blessings with both newcomers during the clove season and local residents who do not have clove plantations but are employed as clove harvesters, besides distributing blessings, the existence of sasi can reduce the potential for theft, thus enabling the community to enhance the value of honesty.

In line with Martenci's research (2018), the social aspect closely relates to the function of sasi. The existence of sasi can reduce the potential for theft, and with sasi in place, the community can uphold moral values such as honesty, obedience to rules, and discipline regarding timely harvesting methods.

While Fatma et al. (2015) explain that sasi is important not only as a cultural heritage but also because it serves to preserve the sustainability of clove plants, both in terms of quantity and quality, which can support their long-term livelihoods. Many communities are concerned about the theft of their harvests due to the high level of theft and the lack of supervision in their villages, leading to a lack of awareness among the community about considering the quantity and quality of the yields obtained in the long run. This indicates that communities now implement sasi not only to preserve and sustain

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the commodity (social aspect).

Environmental Aspect

The environmental aspect of this study discusses how the presence of sasi helps maintain clove plantation areas. According to the Secretary of Negeri Sepa, Mr. Abdullah, based on repeated experiences, well-maintained clove plantations positively affect the production of cloves. Therefore, besides the owners of these clove plantations directly cleaning their lands, there are also services available for land cleaning, allowing landowners to manage their lands more efficiently without having to do it routinely. Additionally, cooperation or mutual assistance among the people of Negeri Sepa in implementing sasi has been agreed upon. Cooperation involves joint efforts to accomplish or create something for better results. Mutual assistance is carried out by informing community members about the activities and timing of implementation. During mutual assistance activities, individuals work together and collaborate to provide necessities and complete tasks collectively.

In line with Aarce's research (2021), the tendency towards decreasing environmental carrying capacity and diminishing availability of natural resources, as well as declining environmental quality, is keenly felt in the absence of sasi measures. Generally speaking, it can be said that all types of natural resources and their environmental components should be managed according to their carrying capacity. Systems for regulating allocation (land use) and integrated management of local terrestrial ecosystems, complete with customary institutions, ensure that these local systems function effectively. Until now, only a very small portion of these local systems is known to modern scientific knowledge worldwide.

Local wisdom regarding the customary tradition of sasi, which is still prevalent in most villages in Maluku, regulates the sustainability of utilization of specific areas and biological species. Sasi entails a prohibition on exploiting natural resources in a certain area for a period, typically ranging from six months to one year (Lerebulan et al., 2019). Its purpose is to preserve the environment and ensure higher quality and abundance of resources in the future. The essence of sasi is highly noble for the welfare of communities and the conservation of natural resources. Therefore, there is a need for environmental management efforts and utilization of the environment, which cannot be separated from environmental permits, environmental risk analysis, as well as efforts to mitigate environmental pollution and uphold environmental functions. This signifies that sasi

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serves as a restoration of environmental functions and maintenance, and enforcement of the law in accordance with regulations governing traditional wisdom. Environmental sustainability, ensured by community welfare and conservation of natural resources, is thus paramount (Tehupeiroy, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The value and application of sasi customs in clove plantations among the people of Negeri Sepa aim to preserve one of the ancestral legacies from the past to the present. Additionally, the community believes that this sasi tradition can protect the forest produce or clove plants from theft. With the enforcement of sasi laws still upheld in Negeri Sepa, Amahai district, natural resources can be preserved directly, preventing them from extinction and ensuring they can be utilized by future generations. The economic, social, and environmental aspects of sasi in clove plantations in Negeri Sepa serve different functions. The economic aspect involves the community's efforts to meet their livelihood needs. The social aspect encompasses sasi's role in reducing the potential for theft and preserving culture. The environmental aspect is evident in the well-maintained clove plantation lands under sasi, which contributes to the orderly ecosystem of the surrounding environment and improves the livelihoods of the community.

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