

The uniqueness of the *pepaccur* tradition in strengthening social ties in Lampung

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ABSTRACT

Article History

Submitted:

December 9, 2024

Accepted:

April 12, 2025

Published:

April 23, 2025

As cultural homogenization grows and local identities begin to fade, preserving oral traditions plays a more vital role in keeping communities connected. This study aims to examine the uniqueness and relevance of the *pepaccur* tradition in strengthening social ties within the Lampung community. This research employs a qualitative methodology with an ethnographic approach. Data were gathered through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with traditional practitioners, and a review of relevant literature. The analysis was conducted using interactive analysis techniques to explore the symbolic meanings and social functions embedded in the tradition. The findings indicate that *pepaccur* serves not only as a medium of customary communication but also as a unifying instrument that bridges diverse social groups through shared values, mutual respect, and cooperation. These findings have implications for social science education by highlighting the pedagogical value of integrating local traditions to promote understanding of social cohesion, identity, and cultural sustainability. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on *pepaccur* as a culturally embedded practice that contributes to the theoretical and practical discourse on local wisdom as a foundation for social harmony in multicultural settings.

Keywords: local wisdom, *pepaccur* tradition, social cohesion, social science education

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity, with each region possessing unique traditions that shape the social identity of its people (Koentjaraningrat, 2020). In Lampung, cultural heritage remains central to community life, particularly through traditional ceremonies that strengthen social ties and reinforce shared values (Hadikusuma, 2014). One such tradition is *pepaccur*, an oral tradition commonly performed during weddings, traditional inaugurations, and other ceremonial events (Effendi, 2001). This tradition involves the recitation of moral advice,

religious values, and messages of unity, symbolizing respect and communal harmony in Lampung society.

From a sociolinguistic standpoint, Lampung society is composed of two major cultural groups, Pepadun and Peminggir Pesisir, who speak distinct dialects, A (api) and O (nyo), respectively (Margaretha, 2017; Nurdin & Ng, 2013). The *pepacur* tradition in this study specifically focuses on the O dialect variant, which is prevalent in the Abung and Tulang Bawang communities. Although this oral tradition continues to be practiced, its cultural significance is gradually diminishing due to modernization, urbanization, and generational value shifts.

Existing literature has explored *pepacur* mostly from linguistic, anthropological, or cultural preservation perspectives (Ratnaningsih, 2019; Hasanah, 2021; Harum et al., 2022). However, few studies have examined *pepacur* as a pedagogical instrument within the scope of Social Science Education. There is a research gap concerning how such local traditions function as mechanisms for cultivating social cohesion, communal identity, and values-based learning. This gap presents an opportunity to conceptualize *pepacur* not merely as a performance, but as a source of indigenous knowledge with educational relevance, especially in fostering character education and pluralistic awareness among younger generations.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the social function of the *pepacur* tradition and its role in strengthening social cohesion within the multicultural setting of Lampung society. It further seeks to examine how values embedded in this oral tradition can be integrated into social science education to enhance students' understanding of community harmony, cultural identity, and social responsibility.

This research is theoretically grounded in the perspective that traditional rituals are not only cultural expressions but also active processes of knowledge transmission and social integration (Fakhrurozi et al., 2021; Koentjaraningrat, 2020). By analyzing *pepacur* through this lens, this study proposes that local traditions can contribute meaningfully to educational discourses that emphasize identity-building and value-based learning.

The originality of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach that combines cultural analysis with educational perspectives. It offers a novel understanding of *pepacur* as a living tradition that can serve both as a medium for cultural preservation and as a didactic resource in social science education. This contributes to broader scholarly conversations on how indigenous knowledge systems can inform curriculum development in diverse and multicultural societies.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research in this article uses descriptive qualitative methodology to deeply understand the *Pepacur* tradition as a cultural heritage of the Lampung community in strengthening social ties among its people (Miles, Mathew B., & Huberman, 1994; Moleong, 2009). This research was conducted in Lampung Province, focusing on indigenous communities located in the regions of Abung and Tulang Bawang. These areas were selected because they are still actively practicing the *pepacur* tradition, particularly in the "O" dialect variant that is distinctively used by the coastal Lampung communities. The choice of location is based on the relevance of the *pepacur* tradition, which remains vibrant and plays a significant role in various customary ceremonies such as weddings, the welcoming of honored guests, and the resolution of social conflicts. Moreover, the people of Lampung are known for their multicultural composition, comprising diverse ethnic groups, making the preservation of local traditions like *pepacur* essential in maintaining social cohesion, fostering solidarity, and strengthening cultural identity. Amid the waves of

modernization and shifting values among the younger generation, this tradition has transformed in both form and meaning, positioning the region as a rich context for further study.

In an effort to gain a deep understanding of the implementation and meaning of the *pepaccur* tradition, this study involved several informants selected through purposive sampling. The informants included traditional leaders, community figures, village elders, and cultural practitioners directly involved in the execution of the *pepaccur* tradition. The criteria for informant selection included having direct experience in performing or witnessing the *pepaccur* tradition, being recognized by the community as custodians or inheritors of customary values, and being able to provide in-depth information on the symbolism, social values, and preservation challenges of the tradition. The insights gathered from these informants form an essential foundation for understanding the social function, educational value, and evolving dynamics of the *pepaccur* tradition in contemporary Lampung society. Data collection was conducted through literature studies from various sources, such as relevant books, journals, and articles, to explore the history, elements, and values in this tradition (Pudentia, 1998; Sugiyono, 2016). In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with traditional leaders, elders, and cultural actors to obtain first-hand perspectives on the implementation, inherited values, and challenges in preserving the tradition.

The research also involved participatory observation, where the author took part in several *pepaccur* traditional ceremonies, such as traditional weddings and welcoming guests of honour, to directly understand the elements of the tradition, including the art of storytelling, traditional clothing, and the social interactions that occur (Nazir, 2013; Sugiyono, 2016). Documentation through photographs, videos, and field notes is also carried out to record in detail the stages of customary implementation (Nasution, 2023). Documentation will provide an overview of how the *pepaccur* tradition complements the traditional activities and processions of the Lampung community in carrying out their traditional ritual processes. The data obtained was analysed descriptively by identifying key themes, such as the uniqueness of customary elements, social values, and social ties as well as the challenges of preserving this tradition. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of *pepaccur* and offer useful insights for the general public and related parties in preserving this local culture.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pepaccur as a Medium for Cultural Identity Formation

The findings indicate that *pepaccur* serves as a medium for preserving and shaping the cultural identity of the Lampung people (Ahyar, 1986). As part of traditional ceremonies, this oral tradition functions as a platform through which communities transmit and safeguard cultural values to the younger generation. Through the *pepaccur* ritual, customary symbols—such as traditional clothing, local language, and music—are introduced, taught, and passed down (Ratnaningsih, 2019).

More than just a ceremonial performance, *pepaccur* plays a vital role in forming and maintaining the cultural identity of the Lampung community. Embedded within a hereditary tradition, *pepaccur* represents a rich cultural heritage containing values, norms, and ethics inherited from ancestors (Karsiwan et al., 2021). In each event, it reflects cultural richness through the use of the Lampung language, traditional attire, and music that accompanies the ritual (Ratnaningsih & Irawan, 2010). These elements serve not only as cultural symbols but also as

pedagogical tools that engage the younger generation early on (Rothenbuhler, 1998). Consequently, *pepaccur* becomes a key instrument in maintaining cultural continuity in a society increasingly influenced by modernization and globalization (Bahrul Ulumi, 2018). The preservation of oral traditions such as hahiwang in West Lampung demonstrates that local values can be maintained through documentation and intergenerational education (Alya Parangu & Salim, 2018).

Through active participation in *pepaccur*, the Lampung people affirm their collective identity and cultural awareness. It is not merely a form of celebration but also a process of cultural socialization that transmits customary values, delineates social structures, and defines individual roles within society (Udin, 1995). Furthermore, this tradition strengthens communal bonds, as every individual plays a role in the event, whether by preparing, participating, or observing (Keesing, 2018). Hence, *pepaccur* functions not only as a traditional ceremony but also as a tangible and dynamic manifestation of the cultural identity of the Lampung people, which remains resilient amid contemporary social challenges (Ratnaningsih & Irawan, 2010). The Kuntara Raja Niti manuscript has served as a normative guide for the Lampung community in shaping their behavior and actions within social life (Ayuha & Karsiwan, 2020).

This significance was echoed in an interview with a traditional leader who remarked, "*Pepacur* is not merely a ceremony, but a cultural legacy that instills noble values in our children and grandchildren. Through *Pepacur*, they come to know the roots of Lampung culture" (Sabarudin, 2010). Similar to the *pepaccur* tradition, the Wayak tradition in West Lampung also utilizes oral poetry as a medium for communicating moral and cultural values (Armina, 2014).

Strengthening Social Bonds Through Cooperation and Mutual Aid

The *Pepacur* tradition plays a significant role in strengthening social relations among the Lampung community through the mechanisms of cooperation and gotong royong (Hasanah, 2021). The implementation of this ceremony involves various community members, from nuclear families to neighbors and relatives, working together to prepare and carry out the event. Gotong royong, a core value in Indonesian culture, is manifest in every aspect of this tradition, including the provision of ceremonial materials, logistical preparations, and the traditional roles played by different individuals. Each member of the community has a specific role, and this collective participation fosters a sense of community and interdependence (Suparlan, 2004).

Table 1. Some forms of cooperation are involved in the *pepacur* ceremony

Aspects of Cooperation	Role
Logistics Preparation	Community members work together to prepare ceremony equipment
Implementation of the Ceremony	Each family member has a special task
Traditional Music	Community groups prepare musical instruments
Ceremony Guide	Traditional leaders lead the ritual

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025.

These various forms of cooperation serve to build strong social ties and reinforce social relations among community members. The cooperation process not only strengthens individual relationships but also acts as a means of fostering familiarity and a stronger sense of community.

This is particularly significant in a multicultural society like Lampung, where diverse ethnic and social groups coexist, making cooperation a vital element in maintaining social harmony. The female version of the hahiwang oral tradition reveals the significant role of women as guardians of customary and moral values within the community” (Gufron, 2017).

The findings from this study highlight the importance of the *pepaccur* tradition in strengthening social cohesion in Lampung through cooperation and gotong royong. The various roles played by community members in the preparation and execution of the ceremony, as shown in Table 1, contribute to a shared sense of responsibility and collective effort. This cooperation not only reinforces the bonds between individuals but also reaffirms the existing social structures by reminding participants of the significance of working together to achieve common goals (Mumuh & Bambang, 2014). The sagata tradition, also in the form of oral poetry, reflects a cultural expression pattern similar to *pepaccur* in shaping local identity (Karsiwan et al., 2022).

Social cohesion is further enhanced because these traditions facilitate direct social interactions, which help reduce tension and mitigate potential conflicts through shared involvement in meaningful and sacred ceremonies (Pahrudin & Hidayat, 2007). In Lampung's multicultural society, where numerous ethnic and social groups coexist, the *pepaccur* tradition acts as a platform for overcoming differences. It promotes solidarity, expressed through *gotong royong*, which unites people from various backgrounds (Achroni, 2008; Nurdin & Ng, 2013). Changes in the structure and use of hahiwang illustrate how oral traditions adapt to contemporary contexts (Karsiwan & Sari, 2024). Oral traditions in the form of ballads such as Gubalan show how local communities convey social criticism through cultural narratives (Lestari et al., 2024).

The findings align with previous research on the role of traditional ceremonies in fostering social ties (Janthaluck & Ounjit, 2012). By involving multiple segments of the community, from families to neighbors and the broader public, *pepaccur* serves as an essential means of strengthening the social fabric and enhancing the social capital of Lampung society. The active participation of each community member, whether in preparing ceremonial needs or performing traditional duties, ensures that the event's success is a shared responsibility, further fostering a sense of belonging. In multiethnic societies, oral traditions can serve as a bridge for interaction between groups through shared collective values (Muslim, 2013).

This study also demonstrates how such traditions can be a response to the challenges posed by modernity in a multicultural context. While many modern societies face fragmentation and individualism, the communal aspects of the *pepaccur* tradition promote collective values that can counterbalance these trends. By reinforcing the importance of cooperation and mutual aid, the *pepaccur* tradition serves as a cultural foundation for preserving social unity and strengthening community resilience. The segata buhaga sasimbatan tradition is a form of customary poetry actualized by Lampung youth to express aspirations and moral values (Sutarno & Diana, 2021).

While this study highlights the importance of *pepaccur* in social cohesion, future research could explore several areas to deepen understanding. First, examining the long-term effects of participation in such traditions on individual attitudes toward cooperation and social responsibility could provide valuable insights. Additionally, exploring the specific impact of *pepaccur* on different demographic groups, such as youth, women, and elderly members of the community, would help illuminate the varying roles these groups play in maintaining social cohesion. Finally,

comparative studies with other regions or traditions practicing gotong royong could offer broader perspectives on the role of traditional practices in modern society.

***Pepaccur* as a Means of Resolving Social Conflicts**

The *pepaccur* tradition plays a significant role in resolving social conflicts within Lampung society. Based on the findings from interviews and field observations, *pepaccur* is frequently utilized as a conflict resolution tool, often facilitated by traditional leaders (*pemangku adat*). These leaders mediate disputes between individuals or groups through a ceremony that emphasizes peace, mutual respect, and the restoration of harmony. The ceremony employs various symbolic elements, such as prayers, traditional music, and the honoring of ancestors, which together create an environment conducive to reconciliation (Angelin, 2015). The preservation of Lampung culture through student organizations highlights the importance of involving the younger generation in maintaining cultural identity (Suranti, 2023).

This approach to conflict resolution stands in contrast to formal legal mechanisms, as it focuses on traditional values that prioritize social harmony over legal procedures. In Lampung, conflict resolution through *adat* is often seen as more effective, as it appeals to the spiritual and cultural aspects of the community, which are more readily accepted than formal interventions (Pahrudin & Hidayat, 2007). The ceremony provides a space where disputing parties can engage in dialogue under the guidance of traditional leaders, fostering a sense of mutual respect. This ritual is particularly significant in a multicultural society like Lampung, where diverse ethnic and social groups coexist. Through this collective participation, *pepaccur* not only addresses immediate conflicts but also reinforces the importance of unity, respect for cultural heritage, and social cohesion (Ratnaningsih, 2019).

Moreover, the ceremony's role in conflict resolution extends beyond mediation to include the restoration of social balance. Involving all segments of the community, the *pepaccur* ceremony serves as a forum for community members to reconcile their differences, thereby reinforcing relationships that may have been disrupted by prior conflicts. As one informant noted, "When there is conflict in the community, the *pepaccur* ceremony is often used to restore harmony. Through customary symbols, disputing parties are reconciled and reminded of the importance of harmony." This finding supports the view that the ceremony, while deeply rooted in tradition, plays an essential role in maintaining social stability and harmony in Lampung society.

The significance of *pepaccur* as a tool for conflict resolution lies in its ability to blend cultural practices with social needs. Unlike formal legal processes, which can be seen as impersonal or disconnected from the community's values, *pepaccur* resonates with the cultural identity of the people. By addressing disputes through shared rituals and collective participation, the tradition reinforces the idea that social stability is best maintained through cooperation and respect for tradition. This process ultimately helps to prevent further tensions and conflicts, fostering a more cohesive society.

Pepaccur serves not only as a cultural ceremony that strengthens social bonds but also as an effective means of resolving conflicts. By involving the community in a collective, culturally significant process, *pepaccur* contributes to the restoration of harmony, the preservation of social structures, and the reinforcement of social cohesion. These findings highlight the importance of traditional practices like *pepaccur* in maintaining peace and stability in a diverse and multicultural society.

Adaptation of the *Pepaccur* Tradition in the Face of Modernisation

In line with the passage of time and the influence of modernisation, the implementation of the *pepaccur* tradition has undergone several significant changes, both in terms of ritual practices and symbolic meanings (Ratnaningsih & Irawan, 2010). Historically, *pepaccur* was performed in its entirety, strictly adhering to traditional customs, including the use of full traditional attire, indigenous musical instruments, and ceremonial processions that spanned several days. Today, however, many aspects of the tradition have been simplified or modified to align with the realities of modern life.

For instance, the duration of the ceremony, which was once extended over several days, is now often reduced to just a few hours to accommodate the busy schedules and time limitations of modern participants. Similarly, traditional musical instruments such as the gamelan or bamboo flute, which were once predominant, are now frequently replaced or supplemented by modern instruments like keyboards and electronic sound systems.

Another evident transformation can be seen in ceremonial attire. In the past, participants wore complete traditional garments as prescribed by ancestral customs. Currently, many opt to blend traditional elements with contemporary clothing, resulting in a more practical and accessible expression of cultural identity. This change is driven not only by considerations of efficiency and convenience but also reflects broader patterns of cultural adaptation to the increasingly complex socio-economic dynamics of Lampung society (Effendi, 2001; Sedyawati, 1996).

Despite these various modifications, the essence of *pepaccur*—as a symbol of communal togetherness and respect for tradition—remains intact. These transformations illustrate that the tradition continues to be relevant in contemporary society, maintaining its foundational values while adapting to the demands of the modern era (Darsita, 2006).

Research findings also indicate that although the *Pepaccur* tradition is still practiced, there have been notable shifts in its implementation, particularly regarding modernisation. Some traditional elements have been either modified or gradually abandoned. For example, musical performances that were once entirely delivered by traditional artists are now partially replaced by modern sound technologies. These changes highlight a dynamic process of cultural continuity and transformation, demonstrating how traditional practices evolve in response to changing societal contexts.

Table 2. Changes in the Implementation of the *Pepaccur* Tradition:

Tradition Aspects	Before (Traditional)	Now (Modern)
Accompanying Music	Traditional musical instruments (gamelan, flute)	Combination of traditional and modern musical instruments
Clothing	Complete traditional clothing	Modern clothing with a touch of tradition
Duration of Ceremony	Lasts for several days, following the procession and stages of the traditional ceremony.	Shortened to a few hours

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025.

Table 2 illustrates several changes that have occurred in the implementation of the *pepaccur* tradition. Despite these changes, the essence of the tradition—the preservation of social harmony and cohesion—remains intact. *Pepaccur* is a traditional ceremonial practice of the

Lampung people, serving as a form of respect and an expression of gratitude. It has long been an integral part of the cultural life of both the Saibatin and Pepadun indigenous communities (Ratnaningsih, 2019; Udin, 1995).

This tradition is performed on various significant occasions, including weddings, childbirths, the welcoming of distinguished guests, and the resolution of customary disputes. Each ritual involves rich oral traditions in the form of philosophical rhymes or poetic expressions, traditional attire such as the siger (traditional headdress) and golden kopiah (skullcap), the use of gamelan (traditional musical instruments), and the serving of signature dishes like seruit, which symbolizes unity and togetherness.

Beyond being a cultural expression, *pepacur* functions as a medium to strengthen social bonds by promoting values such as harmony, cooperation, reverence for ancestors, and the preservation of cultural identity (Fakhrurozi et al., 2021). Through *pepacur*, the Lampung community is taught to maintain positive interpersonal relationships, collaborate in every ceremonial process, and uphold noble values across generations (Sutarno & Pera Diana, 2021). Furthermore, this tradition serves as a platform for intergenerational interaction, conflict resolution, and the reinforcement of community solidarity, rendering it highly relevant in the context of modern societal dynamics.

However, challenges in preserving this tradition have emerged, particularly due to the declining interest of younger generations in local cultural heritage amidst rapid modernization. To address this issue, various initiatives have been undertaken, such as integrating *pepacur* values into educational curricula, promoting the tradition through cultural festivals, and preserving its practices through digital documentation to ensure its transmission to future generations (Fakhrurozi et al., 2021; Ratnaningsih & Irawan, 2010).

Thus, *pepacur* is not merely a reflection of the Lampung people's cultural identity but also a vital heritage that plays a significant role in maintaining social cohesion and community harmony. It serves as a reminder that in the face of globalization, local cultural values continue to hold relevance as the foundation for a harmonious and sustainable social life.

CONCLUSION

The *pepacur* tradition has been proven to play a role in strengthening social cohesion within the Lampung community through cultural communication, conflict resolution, and the preservation of collective identity, thus addressing the research question regarding its social function in a multicultural society. This study emphasizes the importance of *pepacur* as a form of oral literature that not only conveys moral and religious values but also holds didactic potential in social science education, which constitutes both the strength and novelty of this research. However, the study is limited to a qualitative approach within a specific regional context and does not yet include quantitative engagement from the younger generation, making the findings less generalizable. Therefore, future research is recommended to explore the tangible impact of youth participation in the *pepacur* tradition through quantitative methods or comparative studies with similar oral traditions in other regions, as an effort to broaden the understanding and preservation of local culture in a global context.

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