



Exploring the dynamic role and cultural meaning of the 'Berasan' in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu Province

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ABSTRACT

The 'Berasan' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu Province shows significant dynamics in its development. Because it is a cultural system of community life, this tradition is important to understand so that it is widely known and studied in depth by experts, both within and outside Bengkulu Province. This study aims to describe the dynamics of the 'berasan' culture related to its history, system, ceremonial structure, meaning, and shifting patterns of variation in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu Province. This study uses an ethnographic survey method and a qualitative approach. Data collection from informants (who meet the requirements for the study of oral traditions) through interviews and documentation in the form of words, sentences, symbolic actions, and objects or equipment used as well as secondary data, such as texts, traditional manuscripts, and videos of the 'Berasan' procession. Data analysis techniques are carried out through the stages of listening, viewing, and recording as well as transcribing, analyzing, and interpreting data according to the problem and drawing conclusions. The results of the research "Dynamics of the 'Berasan' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu province" can be stated that: (1) the history of the origins of the 'berasan' tradition as a hereditary legacy from ancestors or since the existence of the ancestors of the Rejang tribe in Bengkulu; (2) the 'berasan' tradition system as an essential procession in Rejang traditional weddings; as a continuation of the introductory relationship between the man (bachelor) and the woman (girl), (3) the structure of the 'berasan' tradition is a deliberation process to formalize the engagement through a meeting of the man's family with the woman's family, witnessed by traditional figures, village heads, and religious scholars, in order to decide various matters

related to the implementation of the 'marriage contract' and the wedding party, (4) the meaning of 'berasan' as a symbol of the value of the certainty of the relationship between the man (bachelor) and the woman (girl), a symbol of commitment to silaturahmi in perpetuating the relationship between the two new families, and a symbol of 'respect' as a form of appreciation for the woman's family, and (5) there is a pattern of variation in the shift in the 'berasan' tradition (culture), such as (a) simplification of the procession time (flexibility), (b) simplification of the use of symbolic equipment (such as tools), (c) shift in the use of language (from Rejang to Indonesian), and (d) differences in the use of technology and (e) variations in the rules for implementing the tradition 'berasan' in various places, in Bengkulu



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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between culture and humans cannot be separated. Yondri et al. (2016: 139) explain that culture is the result of interactions between individuals and their environment. Culture is divided into three forms: ideas, artifacts, and activities (Frank, 2014: 3). Culture in the form of ideas refers to the ideology or beliefs that exist within a community. Culture in the form of artifacts consists of objects made by humans, such as musical instruments, weapons, traditional clothing, and art. Culture as an activity consists of patterned actions found within a community, such as customs and traditions. Thus, culture is all the results of ideas, artifacts, and human activities in social life (Bascom, 1984; Koentjaraningrat, 2003: 186).

Among these, culture in the form of activities plays an important role in strengthening societal identity, especially through traditions. The cultural diversity possessed by Indonesia's various ethnic groups has given rise to numerous traditions in society. This diversity is a valuable potential that deserves continuous exploration and development, including the values embedded within. The values inherent in a society's culture are crucial in guiding the lives of its members. These traditional values serve to direct and regulate individual life conduct. Tradition is a form of culture reflecting values and norms passed down through generations. Setiyadi (2016) explains that traditions encompass not only customs but also values that benefit everyday life. People believe that traditions function as guidelines in

navigating life. Therefore, cultural continuity through tradition is essential to building a solid foundation for societal sustainability.

Each tradition carries symbolic meaning expressed through language. Language serves as a medium in both spoken and written forms. Customs practiced by community groups across generations and transmitted orally are called oral traditions. These traditions develop among community groups in the form of rhymes, stories, songs, and so forth (Gusti et al., 2021). Oral traditions closely relate to community customs, serving to entertain or provide guidance through meaningful and noble values.

Concerning oral traditions and customs, Bengkulu Province is a region rich in cultural diversity. This is supported by the many ethnic groups inhabiting the Bengkulu region, especially the Rejang Tribe. The Rejang Tribe is the oldest and largest tribe in Bengkulu, spread across several districts, such as Lebong, Rejang Lebong, Kepahiang, Central Bengkulu, and North Bengkulu. One Rejang custom closely related to oral traditions is the '*berasan*' tradition. The '*berasan*' tradition is a process of deliberation (negotiation) in Rejang traditional weddings and serves as the initial stage (opener) before the main procession, namely the '*marriage contract*' and wedding reception, also known as the '*Berasan*' tradition.

Among the Rejang ethnic community who continue to uphold this tradition, the '*berasan*' tradition remains an active cultural practice in wedding ceremonies. This study aims to explore the truth, how this tradition is still maintained according to the prevailing system (*pakem*) amidst the influx of modern culture. This research also examines the system and structure of the '*Berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings, highlighting the noble values contained within. This study is important for maintaining and preserving oral traditions, particularly the '*Berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu. Culture is a community identity that must be preserved. To support efforts to preserve oral traditions, this research examines in depth: (1) the historical origins of the *tasas* tradition, (2) the *tasas* tradition system in wedding customs, (3) the processional structure (stages) of the *tasas* tradition, (4) the meaning of the values of the *tasas* tradition, and (5) shifts in the patterns of the *tasas* tradition. These five aspects are important in efforts to preserve the culture of the Rejang tribe from the erosion of modernization.

The Rejang tribe's traditional wedding procession includes several stages, beginning with '*mete/besenteak*' (courtship), '*medeak*' (proposal or declaration of intention), '*bekulo*' (deliberation), '*betunang*' (engagement), '*sembeak sujud*' (*sungkeman*), and ending with '*bimbang*' (wedding feast). Among these stages, the '*Berasan*' procession is a central cultural event. As a distinctive cultural element, the '*Berasan*' tradition is practiced in several districts (Kepahiang, Rejang Lebong, Lebong, parts of Central Bengkulu, and parts of

North Bengkulu known as the Rejang Coast), where the Rejang tribe dominates. Therefore, preserving the Rejang traditional wedding tradition is very important.

However, with the passage of time and the rapid changes of modernization, this tradition has undergone a shift in its implementation. This phenomenon is caused by the increasing number of ethnic immigrants, which has led to numerous inter-tribal marriages, resulting in a blending of wedding customs. As a result, some Rejang people have gradually begun to reduce the traditional wedding system in their processions. Another contributing factor is the waning interest of the younger generation due to a lack of information about Rejang traditional weddings, leading to a shift to the national system. This situation raises concerns that modernization could erode the traditional system. Although in terms of its meaning, this tradition is very important in equipping the younger generation to instill ethical values (customary values and manners) in their lives. Samsiyah (2019) states that oral traditions in community cultural processions have the potential to increase students' understanding of local wisdom and internalize literary and cultural literacy. Society is essentially a group of people with a culture they consider to be the same and within it there are community leaders (Kusnadi, 2017). On the other hand, Selo Sumardjan (in Yulianti, 2022) states that society is a group of people living within shared traditions and producing culture. The characteristics of this society include living together in groups, producing culture, experiencing change, interacting with each other, having leadership, and exhibiting social stratification. These societal activities are nothing more than the dynamics of societal culture.

The dynamic process of change that occurs in a community environment in carrying out culture (customs) is called dynamics. Santoso (2004) describes that dynamics is a movement that occurs in society reciprocally, behavior, and interaction between community members. Therefore, dynamics can be interpreted as dynamic (regular) changes in community culture. The relationship between dynamics and community culture is that cultural events must be managed dynamically and in accordance with the provisions of the community. Martono (2011) stated that in the dynamics of life, community culture that experiences change can be distinguished by three factors: social factors, psychological factors, and cultural factors. Specifically, cultural factors are related to local community habits. The broader and more open the local community system is traditionally, the more it will impact the life of the community. This community cultural system (tradition) can take the form of rules of life, such as customary legal institutions. The traditional (customary) wedding activities of the Rejang tribe, as outlined in the Rejang Customary Law Regulation at the Badan Musyawarah Adat (BMA) in Rejang Lebong

Regency, are customary institutions. The function of customary institutions is to regulate customary community activities from the district level down to the village level under customary leaders. Based on customary communities, this serves as a stratification distinction within customary communities (such as the existence of customary leaders, customary leaders, customary figures, customary practitioners) (Ra'uf et al., 2014).

Traditions (customs) are customs in society that are carried out from generation to generation. The implementation of these traditions varies among ethnic groups in Indonesia. Traditions as a cultural heritage from generation to generation must be properly preserved. So that they can be used to realize the ideas of indigenous communities in instilling cultural values that are meaningful for life. Thus, traditions enrich the soul of society as a moral system to judge what is right or wrong, good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant (Dewi, 2019). For example, the tradition of 'berasan' in the wedding customs of the Rejang tribe in Bengkulu has a deep philosophical meaning as part of cultural events, such as polite silaturahmi behavior in starting life, namely a symbol of acceptance, a symbol of respect, and a symbol of the unity of two new families in a household. This means that the cultural system in indigenous communities, such as wedding traditions, contains meaningful values for community life. In this case, Koentjaraningrat (in Nurlambang, 2014:4), groups seven elements that differentiate the culture of a region's society in forming a value system, such as religion, kinship, knowledge system, language, art, livelihood, and technology. One of the distinguishing elements of culture, namely the knowledge system, can be used to build the historical value of a culture (tradition). As stated by Nurlambang et al. (2014:1) that history (historical) as an interpretation of ideas is a human thought process to understand events from the past according to the time frame, facts, and causality or to reveal when, why, and how the event (traditional event) occurred according to the facts. Related to the knowledge system that humans have in understanding the history of the origins of a community's culture, the tradition of 'berasan' in Rejang traditional weddings is useful for building the traditional values and manners of the Rejang people (Ra'uf et al., 2014).

Parmono's (2018) research highlights the importance of collaboration between policymakers to preserve the 'berasan' tradition as part of the Rejang tribe's cultural heritage, as it embodies noble values and rich local wisdom. This research seeks to delve deeper into these noble values and preserve local wisdom. Rustam (2015) also emphasizes that 'berasan' is not simply a tradition, but rather a symbol of acceptance, respect, and unity between two new families, culminating in marriage.

According to Kardiman (2004), in Rejang wedding customs, there are several ceremonial stages before the wedding procession, including *mediak*,

bekulo, *betunang*, and *sembeak sujud*. The tradition of '*sembah sujud*' is an expression of human gratitude to God and the respect of the bride and groom to their in-laws, which strengthens family and community ties. These pre-wedding stages emphasize the importance of Rejang wedding customs, where wedding customs embody human dignity. A complete traditional wedding procession reflects the social status of the family holding the ceremony.

In the series of traditional Rejang wedding processions, there are stages, including the welcoming stage (*tegur sapa*), the deliberation process of '*bekulo*' (*berasan*), and the process of handing over the bride and groom to the *penghulu*. Studying the systems, stages, values, and patterns that develop in the '*berasan*' tradition from a socio-cultural perspective is very important to understand its function in community interactions. The '*berasan*' tradition itself is a process of deliberation between traditional leaders and community leaders of the Rejang tribe, specifically the handover of the prospective bride and groom in the Rejang traditional wedding procession in Bengkulu. This study gathers insights from community figures and observes the actual cultural wedding practices.

Several related studies have investigated aspects of the Rejang tribe's marriage customs, particularly the tradition of *beasen bekulo* (deliberation to reach consensus). First, Eriantika, Maihasni, and Anggreta (2014) examined the process of *beasen bekulo* in the marriage practices of the Rejang tribe in Taba Sating Village, Tebat Karai District, Kepahiang Regency, Bengkulu. Their findings show that the implementation of *beasen bekulo* consists of several stages: (a) depositing money; (b) application, which includes *semeluak asen* (evaluating the prospective son-in-law's language skills, intelligence, and neatness), *temetoa asen* (the man delivering money along with goods requested by the woman), *jemejai asen* (decision-making or finalizing the results of consensus from both parties); and (c) determining the date of the event. Furthermore, the *beasen bekulo* tradition conveys meaningful values such as (a) pride and prestige for the family carrying out the ritual, and (b) strengthening harmonious relations between the families involved.

Second, Devi (2017) explored the forms of marriage traditions of the Rejang ethnic group in Pondok Kelapa District, Central Bengkulu Regency. The study revealed that (1) the Rejang people adhere to their customary laws, which are guided by ancestral traditions; however, residence dispersion has led to shifts and changes in some traditions. (2) The Rejang marriage customs are conducted through several series, including *midiak*, *bekulo*, engagement, *sembeak sujud*, *majok bakea sematen melandai*, *basen asuak-basuak*, and *basen kutei*. (3) The forms of marriage encompass (a) ordinary marriages, which begin with *asen/perasaan* according to *bekulo* custom; (b) discordant and mat

exchange marriages (*mengebalau*), where the death of one party involves replacement by a relative; and (c) forced marriages.

Third, Mabrursyah and Supin (2023) investigated the traditional pre-marriage processions of the Rejang tribe in Rejang Lebong Regency from a hadith perspective. Their research identified several customary steps: *mediak*, *bekulo*, *betunang*, *sembeak sujud*, *majok sematen* or *bekea mengenyan*, deliberations on residence after marriage, and determination of inherited asset status. The study also suggested that these traditional customs align with Islamic teachings, for instance: (a) '*mediak*' corresponds to '*ta'aruf*', the introduction between prospective brides and grooms; (b) '*bekulo*' and '*betunang*' resemble sermon activities; (c) '*sembeak sujud*' instills ethics and customs in communication for prospective couples; and (d) determining the place of residence for the bride and groom, agreed upon through deliberation.

As a guideline in this research, several opening questions were asked, as follows: (1) what is the history of the origins of the '*berasan*' (*bekulo*) tradition?, (2) what is the system of the '*berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings?, (3) what is the structure of the '*berasan*' (*bekulo*) traditional procession?, (4) what is the meaning of the '*berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings?, and (5) how did the shift in the pattern of the '*berasan*' tradition occur?

METHOD

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with an ethnographic framework to explore the meanings and cultural values inherent in the Rejang traditional marriage system in Bengkulu. This research was designed as a qualitative ethnographic field study, using in-depth, context-specific observation techniques to understand social practices, rather than a broad survey approach. Specifically, it aims to uncover the symbolic messages and cultural meanings embedded in the '*Berasan*' tradition within a social context as a truly natural phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2014).

The field study was conducted from May to August 2024, in several locations, namely in Talang Baru I Village and Suka Negeri Village, Topos District, Lebong Regency, and in Talang Benih Village, Curup District, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Province. In addition, data collection in this study was carried out through the direct involvement of community members through interviews and document reviews. To enrich the quality of the data and ensure a diversity of perspectives, this study involved several informants, including two primary informants (traditional leaders) who met the informant characteristics requirements (Mr. Amirudin, 68 years old, and Mr. Burhanudin, 60 years old) as well as to test the validity of the data, as well as secondary informants from community members; women, the younger

generation, traditional leaders, village heads, and local religious leaders. This diversity facilitates data triangulation to increase the depth and breadth of insight into the meaning of cultural dynamics (Samarin, 1988:24-29; BMA Rejang, 2014).

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document recording techniques. This was used to capture verbal expressions, actions, symbolic objects, and cultural artifacts related to the 'Berasan' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in various places in the community. An interview guide was developed to explore key 'thematic' aspects, such as history, traditional systems, the structure (processional arrangement) of the tradition, the meaning of cultural values, and the dynamics of changes in tradition in practice over time. Systematic observation and documentation techniques (through traditional manuscript documents and videos of wedding processions) were used to complete the data on the dynamics of the 'Berasan' tradition (Mahsun, 1995: 105-107).

Data analysis used qualitative stages proposed by Moleong (2021), which were adapted for ethnographic research, through the following steps: (1) observing and recording and asking questions related to the 'Berasan' traditional procession, (2) classifying and grouping data according to the problem, (3) simplifying and tabulating data, (4) analyzing and verifying data, (5) interpreting data according to the problem formulation related to the history of 'berasan', the traditional system, the structure of the traditional procession, the meaning of cultural significance, and the dynamics of the shifting patterns of the 'berasan' tradition, and (6) synthesizing the findings into a coherent narrative, and (7) concluding the results to answer the research problems and objectives. Prior to data collection, ethical protocols were followed, including obtaining approval from the community (traditional leaders) and maintaining confidentiality. Cultural sensitivity was upheld by respecting local customs and obtaining permission from the community and local leaders throughout the research.

FINDINGS

Based on the research results; "Dynamics of the 'Berasan' tradition in Rejang Traditional Marriage in Bengkulu" obtained through interviews from primary data sources, namely informants who are representatives; traditional leaders, village heads, religious leaders, representatives of Rejang community leaders and from secondary data sources; obtained through direct observation, the 'berasan' procession in Talang Baru I Village, Topos District, Lebong Regency, and through documents in the form of manuscripts on Rejang Traditional Marriage Law (in the 'Badan Musyawarah Adat') in Rejang

Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Province, then specifically can be described in the following table.

Table 1. Description of the Dynamic Data of the 'Berasan' Tradition in Rejang Traditional Weddings in Bengkulu

No	Aspects of Findings	Core Description
1	History of the Origins of the 'Berasan' Tradition, the wedding custom of the Rejang tribe.	According to history, the Berasan Tradition began when the ancestors (ninik puyang) of the Rejang tribe existed, which was passed down from generation to generation. In BMA RL, this tradition has existed since the ancestors of the Rejang tribe existed, and even human ancestors.
2	The traditional 'Berasan' system is part of the Rejang tribe's wedding customs.	The Berasan tradition (Perasanan or also known as basen, beasen bekulo) is one of the traditional sequences in the wedding customs of the Rejang tribe (ethnicity) in Bengkulu. As part of the continued efforts to introduce relationships (mete/besenteak) between the bachelor and the inner girl mediak towards an engagement agreement and marriage contract.
3	The structure of the 'Berasan' traditional procession in the Rejang tribe's wedding customs.	The traditional Berasan procession is carried out to validate the engagement of a bachelor and a girl as a continuation of their relationship agreement (mediak) through a meeting of two families (in deliberation/negotiation) between representatives of the bachelor's family and the girl's family witnessed by the traditional leader (batin), traditional leaders; the RT head/village head (Rajo), and the imam/ulama (syarak) as well as relatives and relatives of the prospective bride and groom's families to discuss/agree on various important matters leading up to the marriage contract and wedding party.
4	The meaning of the traditional value of 'Berasan' in the wedding customs of the Rejang tribe.	The meaning of the traditional value of Berasan is specifically a symbol of 'respect or appreciation' for the family of the woman who receives the proposal (confirmation of the engagement). As a form of fulfillment of the promise of continuity of the relationship (agreement) between the bachelor and his girl, especially from the male side of the family to move towards marriage in building a household through Berasan or perasanan (bekulo) as a marriage custom of the Rejang tribe.
5	The shifting pattern of the 'berasan' tradition in the Rejang tribe's wedding customs according to the development of the times.	In the current "berasan" tradition, there have been shifts in traditional patterns caused by societal and contemporary developments. These shifts include a simplification of the procession, a growing tolerance for language use due to cultural differences, changes in equipment used to meet current needs, and differences in the rules of the "berasan" tradition in Rejang Lebong Regency and elsewhere.

Source: Interviews with representatives of traditional leaders, village officials, religious leaders, and community leaders from the Rejang tribe.

Based on the specifications of the data findings above, five answers to the research problems can be put forward, including (1) the history of the origins of the 'berasan' (*beasen/bekulo*) tradition as a hereditary legacy from ancestors or since the existence of the ancestors of the Rejang tribe in Bengkulu, (2) the 'berasan' tradition system as a continuation of the introductory relationship between the man and the woman in the form of formalizing the engagement in a Rejang traditional wedding, (3) the structure of the 'berasan' tradition procession is a process of deliberation (negotiation) between the man's family and the woman's family witnessed by the traditional leader, traditional leaders, and religious figures (*Kutei, Rajo, and Syara*) and relatives, in order to determine various matters related to the implementation of the 'marriage contract' and wedding party; (4) the meaning of the 'berasan' tradition, which serves as (a) a symbol of *trust* in the relationship between a bachelor and a maiden, (b) a symbol of the *relationship* between two new families, and (c) a symbol of *respect* for the woman's family, and (5) the existence of variations in the shifting patterns of the 'berasan' tradition due to developments over time (modernization). To explain the findings of this research, the following analysis is presented.

The History of the Origins of the 'Berasan' Tradition in Rejang Traditional Weddings

The history of the origins of the 'Berasan' tradition in the Rejang Traditional Wedding in Bengkulu Province begins with a description contained in the "*Lepeak Hukum Adat Jang Kabupaten Rejang Lebong*" Badan Musyawarah Adat Rejang Lebong (Ra'uf et al., 2014:17-26). It is explained that historically, the origins of the 'Berasan' tradition began with the human desire to live together between a man and a woman which was legalized through marriage customs (*marriage contract*) in order to form a new household. As a family couple based on 'religious law' (in this case Islam) and government regulations, in order to become a family that is *sakinah, mawadah, warahmah*. According to the historical origins of the 'berasan' tradition, this tradition has existed since the time of the ancestors (*ninik puyang*) of the Rejang tribe and even since the existence of human ancestors. This traditional activity (in the *BMA Rejang Lebong*), is described as having existed and been passed down from generation to generation from their ancestors, since the beginning of the Rejang tribe. The results of confirmation with sources regarding the historical origins of the 'Berasan' (*Basen/Bekulo*) tradition, as quoted below:

It started with the association between a bachelor and a girl who felt mutual affection for each other, so the bachelor asked for help from a close friend of the girl to convey what was in his heart to the girl. With the help of the girl's friend, who is thought to be able to keep the secrets of their relationship, the girl's friend, Dean, is even like the director in the stage story who helps the relationship between the boy and the girl become closer. So that in the end,

their relationship, the bachelor and the girl, became a strong agreement to establish a more harmonious household relationship. As a result of the agreement of affection as good intentions between the bachelor and the girl, the girl's close friends then conveyed the good intentions to the girl's parents. Acceptance by the girl's parents (because the girl has also conveyed their agreement to both of them), is usually followed by a meeting between the male's family (through his trusted person or representative) with the female's family (also through representatives, namely the 3 traditional umbrellas; the kutei chairman (traditional chairman), Rajo (village head/rt chairman), and what is known as the berasan tradition (basen/beasen/bekulo) (edited from Ra'uf, et al., 2014).

The description explains that in the history of the origins of the '*berasan*' tradition as part of the Rejang tribe's wedding customs, it has been carried out from generation to generation from their ancestors or since the ancestors of the Rejang tribe. It is explained that the tradition began with a meeting of a young man and a young woman who had developed affection and agreed to continue their relationship to the household level. To convey the plans or agreements of the young man and the young woman, a meeting was held between the family of the man (*the young man*) and the family of the woman (*the young woman*) in a traditional '*Berasan*' meeting (referred to as '*bekulo biasa*' or '*bekulo baik*').

The 'Berasan' Tradition System in Rejang Traditional Weddings

The "*berasan*" tradition, as part of Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu, is outlined in Regional Regulation No. 2 of 2007 concerning Rejang Customary Law in Rejang Lebong Regency. This customary law is implemented by traditional officials or institutions, which are used to regulate and manage community interests. Within this series of activities, the duties of traditional institutions or institutions are regulated in Regent Regulation No. 27. Traditional officials, through their institutions, will implement community interests, one of which concerns the implementation of Rejang traditional weddings. This means that, according to custom, Rejang traditional weddings must comply with these legal regulations. The Rejang Lebong BMA (Ra'uf, et al., 2014) states that the "*berasan*" tradition is part of the Rejang traditional wedding system in Bengkulu Province. Strengthened by the findings of Mabrursyah and Supian (2023:93), that there are several stages of the procession before the Rejang traditional wedding, especially in Rejang Lebong Regency, including '*media'k*', '*bekulo*', '*betunang*', and '*sembeak sujud*' as well as '*mojok sematen/bekea mengenyang*', including the proposal system and gifts from the groom to the bride. The stages before this wedding tradition

show the urgency of the meaning of a wedding for the Rejang tribe, especially in the Rejang Lebong community as something very important (sacred).

Based on literature sources and confirmation from sources, the 'Berasan' (basen/bekulo) tradition can be described as an important part of the Rejang traditional marriage system in Bengkulu, as described below:

*The 'Berasan' Tradition is part of the traditional marriage system of the Rejang tribe in Bengkulu. This traditional marriage system is carried out in several stages, including: **First**, the stages resulting from an agreement or follow-up from an introductory relationship (mete/besenteak) between the bachelor and the girl, as a way of finding a future husband or wife following the wishes of the prospective bride and groom themselves, towards a better relationship, namely marriage (which is called the mediak tradition), as an effort to avoid dishonorable actions when dating. **Second**, the next stage after the agreement in mediak, namely the berasan/perasaan (beasen/bekulo) tradition, is a traditional Rejang marriage negotiation or deliberation activity to reach an agreement made by both parties, namely representatives of the male family and representatives of the female family to formalize the engagement and agreement on several things that will be held before/during/after the marriage contract and wedding party (begiang). **Third**, engagement agreement stage (betunang) and continued with the delivery of gifts in the form of wedding assistance from the man's family (can be delivered at the wedding or depending on the agreement or before the wedding ceremony), **Fourth**, the traditional stages of the marriage contract (in which there is the sembeak sujud (sungkeman) tradition as a form of procession of apologizing to the prospective bride and groom to their parents) is a procession that continues the engagement stage in front of the headman or ratification of the official relationship as the bride and groom; husband and wife. at the Religious Affairs Office or inauguration according to the government system and delivery of dowry, dowry, **Fifth**, the stage of the wedding party (timbang adat/bimbang gedang) is a celebration and inauguration event of the wedding which is carried out by the bride and groom joining together to become husband and wife and is attended by family, relatives and friends with a joint banquet.*

From the description above, it can be stated that the 'Berasan' ('basen/bekulo') tradition is an important part of the Rejang traditional wedding system in Bengkulu. As part of the Rejang traditional wedding system, the 'Berasan' tradition is one of the initial stages of the procession before the wedding takes place, in addition to other traditional processions. First, the initial stages in the traditional wedding procession in sequence, include the 'mediak' traditional stage (ta'aruf in Islamic society), which is a form of relationship between a young man and a young woman who, after reaching stability in determining their choice, agree to continue the relationship to the

level of building a household. Then, the stage of the 'betunang' (engagement) tradition is an initial procession before marriage (*can be done before or after the 'berasan' tradition*) which is intended to formalize the relationship between a bachelor and a girl in an official bond (*engagement*) so that it has the power of 'customary law' because it is agreed upon by the parents of both parties and the traditional leader (traditional leader).

Second, the initial stage before the next wedding ceremony, namely the 'berasan' ('basen/bekulo') tradition is a deliberation (negotiation) procession to discuss the continuation of the agreement on the introduction ('mediak') and engagement ('betunang') relationship (*if it has been done*) or to formalize the engagement ('betunang') (*if it has not been done*), between representatives of the male family (*bujang*) and representatives of the female family (*gadis*), witnessed by three traditional leaders ('Kutei, Rajo and Syara'). This procession is carried out to determine various things such as determining the time of the 'marriage contract' and wedding party, gifts, dowry, and dowry in the traditional wedding procession later. Through the 'berasan' tradition, directly or indirectly, the formalization of the engagement of the young man and the young woman has occurred. Through the 'berasan' tradition, the relationship between the young man and the young woman has the power of customary law. Because, this matter has been agreed upon through deliberation between the bachelor's family and the girl's family, involving the traditional leader, traditional leaders, religious figures and the general public. By performing the "berasan" tradition, the girl's marriage is closed to other men who wish to propose, both according to tradition and religion. This means that it is closed to other men who wish to propose to the girl until they have decided to separate. Therefore, until the "marriage contract" is performed, their parents (both parties) and the community jointly supervise the prospective bride and groom to ensure their engagement is not broken. This is because the "berasan" tradition has been agreed upon until the "marriage contract" or wedding ceremony.

Third, several other stages in the procession after the "berasan" tradition will be carried out, but they are based on mutual agreement between the two families, such as delivering gifts and other things. This means that after the engagement agreement (*betunang*), and after a deliberation agreeing to continue the marriage through "berasan," this will be proven by giving items as a sign of the engagement, such as an engagement ring, cloth, clothing, and sufficient food, as well as financial assistance for the wedding celebration, including financing the marriage contract. This stage is witnessed by both parties and three traditional leaders ('Kutei, Rajo, and Syara'), as well as relatives and friends. Then, it concludes with prayer and enjoying a meal together. One of the next stages in the traditional wedding system is the tradition of *sembeak sujud* ('*sungkeman*'), a procession of apologizing from the

bride and groom to their parents and family for any impolite behavior. This is a form of instilling ethical manners for the bride and groom to their parents and family, especially in daily communication (this part of the tradition can be omitted). However, if requested, it can be held before or after the '*marriage contract*'.

Fourth, as a further stage after the '*berasan*' tradition in the Rejang traditional marriage system, the '*marriage contract*' is a procession that validates the husband-wife relationship according to religion and government. This procession is usually accompanied by the '*sembiak sujud*' (prostration) or '*sungkeman*' tradition. Although not all Rejang ethnic groups practice this tradition, it is the tradition of apologizing for the bride and groom to their parents and family. This procession does not require a specific time but can be part of the '*marriage contract*' procession (either before or after). The meaning that can be taken is that the '*sembiak sujud*' (*sungkeman*) tradition instills ethics and manners in behavior and communication for the bride and groom with their parents and family. Fifth, the final stage in the Rejang traditional marriage system, namely the traditional wedding party (*bimbang adat/bimbang gedang*). The tradition of wedding celebration ceremonies has now undergone a shift to suit the circumstances of the times, such as being held through a national wedding party system.

Structure of the '*Berasan*' Traditional Procession in Rejang Traditional Weddings

The Structure of the '*Berasan*' Tradition Procession is held as a form of formalization of the engagement and continuation of the introductory relationship (*mediak*) between the bachelor and the girl which essentially continues the '*agreement*' to move towards the household level. So the tradition of '*Berasan*' aims for good. The tradition of '*Berasan*' is a procession before the wedding party tradition, a meeting for deliberation (negotiation) between the two families; between representatives of the male family (the bachelor) comes to the female family (the girl) which in this case is represented or witnessed by three traditional leaders; *Kutei* (traditional leader or *Batin*), *Rajo* (Village Head or RT Head), and *Syara*' (religious leader; Imam or cleric) as well as the extended family of both parties and friends and relatives. The initial structure of the stages of the '*Berasan*' tradition procession according to sources in Talang Baru 1 Village, Topos District, Lebong Regency has specializations, the following is a description:

The initial procession of the berasan tradition begins by using three terms, namely (a) giving goods (meltok barang) usually in the form of cloth, money, and handkerchiefs, (b) a confirmation visit (menyuluak) which is a visit from the man's family to the woman's family to negotiate to legalize the engagement relationship and agree on requests for money for event

assistance, dowry, and the exact date of the marriage contract and wedding procession (including sanctions), and (c) handing over a symbol of arrival (hantaran) in the form of betel sekapur (five pieces of betel leaf, gambier, lime and areca nuts are placed in a betel basket (makei boko'a) and wrapped in a handkerchief to make it neat and five tobacco leaves are now replaced with several packs of cigarettes. (Sources: The results of interview)

In addition to the description of the initial procession of the 'berasan' tradition above, the following also explains the stages of the 'berasan' tradition procession in the Rejang traditional wedding found in Talang Benih Village, Curup District, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Province. The stages of the procession include (a) Batin asks the MC to start the event, (b) The MC asks permission from *Kutei* (Customary Leader), *Rajo* (Village Head, RT Head), and *Syara* (religious leader) to open the event, (c) The MC opens the event, reads the program and asks someone to read the *tilawah* (reading of the 'al-quran' by a *tilawah*), (d) The MC hands over the procession to the Customary Leader (*Kutei*), (e) The customary leader greets the representative of the groom's side for the purpose of his arrival and invites him to convey his intentions, (f) The representative of the groom's family asks permission to meet the *Kutei* (*Batin*), *Rajo* (Village Head/RT Head/Customary Leader), and *Syara'* (religious leader/Imam/Ulama) (in turns) by bringing/handing over an object as a symbol in the form of Sekapur Sirih to be tasted as a sign that the event can be started by conveying the purpose of their arrival, all receive and taste the sekapur sirih, (g) The representative of the woman's family in this case is represented by the Traditional Leader (*batin*) to lead the *berasan* event, (h) The traditional procession of 'berasan' ('bekulo/beasen') begins, but this activity is carried out in different ways in different places, such as in certain places it is led by a representative of the male side while in other places it is led by the traditional leader as a representative of the female side. The tradition of 'berasan' as a procession before the wedding tradition begins with formalizing the engagement ('*betunang*') between the young man and the young woman (and its sanctions) through deliberation (negotiation) by conveying an agreement that will be followed up, such as an agreement on the dowry (money assistance to the woman), the time of the marriage contract along with the dowry (dowry) and the time of the wedding party ('*bimbang adat* or *bimbang besar*'), (i) After all the provisions in the 'berasan' tradition have been agreed upon, the Traditional Leader (*batin*) reports the results to the King (Village Head) regarding the results of the agreement, (j) the Traditional Leader ('*Kutei*' or '*Batin*') returns the matter to the host and asks someone to lead the prayer, (k) the Ulama leads the prayer for the safety of the 'berasan' event, and (l) the host closes the event and (m) continues with enjoying a meal (banquet) together.

Based on the arrangement of the traditional procession of the rice ceremony in the Rejang tribe wedding above, it can be stated that the urgency of the main arrangement of the rice ceremony (*basen/bekulo*) includes (1) opening by the master of ceremonies, (2) speech by the *kutei* (traditional leader) representing the woman's family, (3) speech conveying the intention from the representative of the man's family, (4) implementation of rice ceremony (a form of traditional deliberation or negotiation to determine, decide on the official engagement and implementation of the wedding, by agreeing on the rice ceremony costs for the working committee, the amount of gifts, dowry (*beleket*), date/time of the marriage contract and wedding party (*bimbang gedang*) by both parties, (5) reading of prayers by religious/faith leaders, (6) closing by the master of ceremonies and followed by a meal together. Several principal matters related to the equipment used in the traditional rice ceremony procession conveyed by the traditional leader (*Kutei/batin*) include (a) the traditional leader (*batin*) conveying the rice ceremony costs for the working staff, (b) agreement on the amount of the celebration assistance or dowry money, (c) determining the date of the marriage contract ceremony and wedding reception, (d) agreement on the costs of KUA matters related to the '*marriage contract*', (e) agreement on the dowry ('*maskawin*'), and a set of clothes for the bride (usually agreed upon by the two prospective brides and grooms).

Besides that, one important thing that needs to be considered in the traditional procession of '*berasan*', namely the sanctions that must be obeyed by both parties who have negotiated (*bekulo*). In the Rejang Lebong Traditional Consultative Body (BMA) (2014) sanctions have been determined for both parties who have agreed on several provisions for organizing traditional wedding ceremonies based on the results of deliberation or '*berasan*' ('*bekulo*'), namely (1) if there is a cancellation of '*persasan*' caused by the man for illogical reasons, then the dowry money that has been given will not be returned (forfeited), (2) if the cancellation of '*persasan*' occurs from the woman for illogical reasons, then the dowry money is returned double, and (3) if the cancellation occurs not at the will of both parties, for example one of them dies, goes crazy, and others, then the dowry money is decided through deliberation (after the event/incident) by both parties.

Several greetings in the form of words (proof of welcome) for the opening of the traditional '*berasan*' event, such as greetings from representatives of the male family and representatives of the female family, *Kutei* (traditional leader), and *Rajo* (village head), as described in the following translation.

Male Representative :

Asalammualaikum. Terimo kasiak bik tmimo keme neak pio. Keme teko minoi memang sengajo nien karno ade klok madeak, ade klok mramok

tentang asen anak kutai keme desa Tlang Blau 1 ngen anak kutai suka negeri pio. Supayo keme coa limau, minoi ptunyuk kumu moi ipe keme lok tmapok lakeak yo. Supayo asen do bik ade nam meket.

(Assalamualaikum. Thank you for accepting us here. We came on purpose because there is something to be discussed, there is something to be resolved about the agreement between our villagers of Talang Baru 1 village and the villagers of Suka Negeri here. So that we do not get lost, we ask for guidance on where we should go. So that the existing agreement can be implemented.

(Source: The observation at a wedding event in the Rejang tribe)

Customary Leader/Rajo:

Silakan ba kumu smapei kecek ne ngen pihak kluargo tun pio, keme mizin keme mlei perlindungan amen kumu lok temau kliargo tun pio keme dmuo supayo hmaneu kumu be coa do gen alang pangoa lacea.

(Please convey your words to your family here, we permit you, we protect if you want to meet your family, we pray that your journey will be smooth and smooth.)

The opening remarks began with the male family representative asking permission to start the *Berasan* (*perasanan/bekulo*) from the three traditional umbrellas, namely the traditional leader (*kutei/batin*) traditional leader; neighborhood head, village head (*Rajo*), the religious leaders; *Iman*, *Ulama* (*syara'*) are usually representatives of the female family who permit to start *berasan* to representatives of the male family. The following is photo evidence of the activities of the male representatives with three traditional umbrellas (*Kutei*, *Rajo*, and *Syara'*) and several equipment used in the traditional felting procession that took place in Suka Negeri Village, District. Topos, Kab. Lebong.



Figure 1. The initial procession of the *Berasan* tradition, when the male representative of the family asks for permission three traditional umbrellas (*Kutei, Rajo, Syara'*) to start the *perasanan* (*basen / bekulo*) in Suka Negeri Village, District. Topos, Kab. Lebong, 2024



Figure 2. Complete whiting equipment in a basket (*boko'a*) to be tasted by the three traditional umbrellas (*Kutei, Rajo, and Syara'*) as a sign of the legal start of *berasan*. In Suka Negeri Village, District. Topos, Kab. Lebong, 2024.

The activities and equipment in the photo above are physical forms (traditional *Berasan* processions and equipment used in Rejang tribal wedding customs) carried out by the Rejang tribal community in Kab. Lebong, Bengkulu. This is following the description of the traditional *Berasan* procession described in the manuscript/ text "*Lepeak Hukum Adat Rejang*" BMA Rejang Lebong (2014). The following is a fragment of the words used by the male family representative to start the traditional Rejang wedding '*Berasan*' procession.

Susun Teneak Bekulo (*Berasan in Rejangness*)

Sesuai dengan janyei pada demingeu gik sudo, pado malem yo basen meduo Kutei samei lak temtep bilei malem, kiro-kiro abeak jam 19.00 malem yo keme kune pihak calon penganten bik telunguk kete nak umeak calon bisanne, mako turwei batin pihak semulen betanye magea kete tamu gik ade, kirone gik ade kuat-kuat te kune pihak calon penganten gik ati sapiene gik lak mae minae. (Mako o kulo antaro tamu gik menjawab ne cigei kulo ade gik tinga ne. Nak ipe gik nemet bik deu kulo temot gik lek timoane, kunyeu si menotoa, gik lak teko ulesne bik ade kete nak pio), kaleu cigei kulo saut dengan alangne kaleu kumu lak begutek dengan begoyo. Bi

buleak kulo. Terimo kasih magea kumu sado gik hadir, teine cigei kulo ade sakutne igei, ite lak begutek.

Dengan mengucep Assalamualaikum Wr. Wb., tuwei bhatin pihak selawie min kokoa iben aleu mai madep Rajo. Tuwei bhatin pihak selawie, mulei mengecek magea Rajo, Assalammualaikum Wr.Wb. dio Rajo, kune ku'oak semeakku merawe, kune pa'ak memeakku jemunyung, senajak dengan senajei mai madep Rajo, dio ade iben picik nik, uku ade minae kelak, pinang piyaknelus ade kulo lak nupang mengecek, seati uku melanyut katoku yo, lak minai tulung Rajo semuko ibenku yo.

Kaleu awie'o nadeak Rajo, terimo kasih dengan suko betuweak magea kumu iben kumu uku temimo, jano kirone ade gik lak kenecek, kecek ke ba, kaleu kulo ade gik senapiene sapie ke ba.

Tuwe bhatin mengecek, terimo kasih suko betuweak bagea kumu Rajo, pertama kecek ne uku lak bekinai magea Rajo, lak minai izin nak ipe pertama kaleu co'a de saut dengan alang ite lak mukak acara basen pada demalam yo, kene uku bik temnei dengan tamu te gik ade yo gik sapie, padeak ne gik lak teko bi sapie kete, cigei kulo ade gik nemet igei. Ijei'o izin ku yo Rajo a de ba: (1) minai izin lak mukak acara, (2) minai izin lak mema'ak' meneak simeak (iben pena'ak), (3) minai izin lak temtep bilei ngen malem, kaleu pasen yo be sawang, (4) minai izin lak betuk panitia kerjo, (5) Minai izin lak samapie semeak sujud (kaleu kaleu ade kinae semapie semeak sujud).

Berasan Procession Schedule

(Berasan in the Rejang tradition)

Following the promise of the past week, tonight we are praying to set the day and night. around 7 o'clock this evening, we from the bridegroom's side (male) have all gathered at the bridegroom's house. Then the inner leader/work leader/committee leader of the female side asks the guests who are there, if there are still friends from the groom's side (male) who have not arrived and want to come here (then among the guests there were those who answered that there was nothing left behind. Many of those who were waiting were already seated, those who still wanted to come let them catch up later, those who wanted to come seemed to be all here, if there are no more obstacles, maybe you want to start. You can too. Thank you to everyone who attended. it seems that there are no more obstacles, and we want to start.

By saying Assalamualakum wr wb, the head of the inner head/head of work/head of the family committee of the women's side brought a "bokoa" (basket) containing betel leaves to the King. The inner leader/head of work/head of the female family committee began to speak to the King. Assalamualaikum Wr Wb. King, from afar, I don't know where to go, from near, I pray, deliberately facing the King, this is Sirih and betel nut, I have

a wish and also want to speak, before I continue my words, please ask the King to like my Sirih.

If that's the case, said the King, thank you, and I will accept the betel with joy. If there is anything you want to discuss and convey, please discuss and convey it.

The inner leader/committee said, thank you to the King, first I want to ask the King, I want to ask for permission if there are no obstacles we will start the Berasan event tonight, I have already asked our guests who have arrived, they said they have all arrived and there is nothing to wait for. So, the permission that I ask the King, is: (1) ask for permission to open the event, (2) ask for permission to say who greets, (3) ask for permission to set the day and night if later this will be successful, (4) ask for permission to form a work committee, and (5) ask for permission to deliver the prostration (if there is a request to deliver the prostration).

Based on an excerpt from the script of the "berasan" procession, the activities are described, starting with a representative of the male family (bujang) asking permission to begin the "berasan" ceremony. He brings a small basket filled with betel lime. He then invites the three traditional leaders (Kutei, Rajo, and Syara') to taste it, marking the official start of the "berasan" ceremony.

The Meaning of the 'Berasan' Tradition in Rejang Traditional Weddings

The 'Berasan' traditional procession aims to achieve goodness in the continuity of the relationship between the introduction of a bachelor and a girl towards engagement in forming a household. The continuation of the relationship was agreed upon in a traditional meeting through a meeting of representatives from the two families, namely representatives of the male family (bujang) and the female family (gadis) witnessed by three traditional umbrellas (Kutei, Rajo, Syara') to discuss and seek agreement on all the needs and requirements used to lead to the marriage contract and wedding party. On the one hand, this traditional meeting is very sacred because the procession is witnessed by both the family and the traditional umbrella, namely the *Kutai Chairman* (traditional chairman/committee chairman/work chairman, inner), *Rajo* (traditional leader; village head/RW head/RT head), and *Syara'* (religious leader; Imam/Ulama) as well as friends and relatives so it has an important meaning for the prospective bride and groom and both families, especially the woman's family. This berasan procession has been observed in Suka Negeri Village, District. Topos, Lebong Regency. This is almost no different from tradition 'beasen bekulo' which is a traditional deliberation meeting to determine the time for carrying out the marriage contract and the wedding procession and bringing together the two respective families of the parents of

the prospective bride and groom, which is held in the Rejang tribe community in Taba Sating village, Kec. Tebat Karai, Kab. Kepahiang, Bengkulu Province.

The tradition of '*berasan*' has an important meaning, especially for the continuation of the life of the person who carries it out (the bride and groom), which contains useful cultural values. Several important activities can be put forward in this '*berasan*' tradition starting from (1) the '*betunang*' (engagement) procession which is a symbol of the meaning of trust/certainty, for the woman, that because of the value of mutual trust between the bachelor and the girl, they agree to establish a more definite relationship in a bond of formalization of 'engagement' which is usually marked by the giving of gold ('*tukarcin*'), (2) the '*berasan*' procession, which is marked by the presence of the man's family (bachelor) to the woman's family (girl) to convey the intention of continuing the will of their child who has been friends and established a relationship is a symbol of the meaning of friendship, that the meeting of the two families is intended as a form of perpetuating the relationship of two new families which has the value of building new hopes as a form of the value of 'certainty' in establishing a '*silaturahmi*' relationship, and (3) through the tradition of '*berasan*' which is marked by an agreement to bring equipment or dowry items from the man's family, such as (a) '*berasan money*' (*tiang bebeko*) as costs for '*Kutei, Rajo, and Syara*', (b) '*kapur sirih*' equipment for the three traditional leaders, (c) a cigarette reception ('*penghalau nyamu*'), (d) complete food and fruit as gifts, and (e) an agreement on the amount of dowry money, (f) dowry ('*maskawin*') and (g) a set of clothes for the bride (given during the '*marriage contract*' and willingness to pay the '*marriage contract*' costs for the KUA), as well as determining the time for the '*marriage contract*' and the wedding party ('*bimbang gedang*') which is a symbol of the value of '*respect*' and the value of '*appreciation*' for the woman's family (*gadis*). Because, getting a prospective in-law (male family) who is responsible.

Variations in Shifting Patterns (Simplification or Change) in the '*Berasan*' Tradition

As time goes by (modernization), the implementation of the '*berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu has also experienced variations in shifting patterns (either in the form of simplification, change or differences). This occurs due to the community's enthusiasm for adapting to global changes and maintaining these traditions. Essentially, the '*berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings is carried out for the common good and is therefore maintained by the community. Therefore, variations in shifting patterns, changes, or differences in the implementation of the '*berasan*' tradition do not constitute significant control. Rather, they represent an effort to modernize the existing traditional ceremonies within the community. Some forms of variation in the shifting pattern in the implementation of the '*berasan*' tradition, in the form of: (a) simplification of

the procession (both in terms of efficiency and flexibility); previously it was longer and more complicated, involving many stages and rituals, such as the event starting with the reading of 'Kalamullah' as a form of integration of Islamic religious values and now tends to be simpler and shorter, adapting to a more practical modern lifestyle. In this case, there is a simplification of the order of the implementation of the event; (b) simplification of the time of the procession (efficiency) of the 'berasan' tradition, previously determined based on traditional calculations with discussions involving both parties, while now it is adjusted to the busyness of the bride and groom, and (c) shift in the use of language, previously the entire procession (all series of events) used the Rejang language while now it is often mixed with Indonesian or other regional languages because of the attention to the 'berasan' participants present, (d) simplification of the use of traditional equipment such as five tobacco leaves replaced with several packs of kretek or filter cigarettes, and (e) simplification of the use of technology, previously it had to be done through direct conversation (communication) while now it can use telephones and mobile phones and other social media. In addition, previously it was rarely documented while now it is often recorded in video form and takes up a lot of time and space because of the group photo procession.

Besides the variation in the pattern of equipment shifts, there is also a shift in (f) simplification of language use as a form of tolerance, such as because cultural differences between the two prospective brides and grooms give rise to language mixing and even shift to using Indonesian, as well as (g) shifts or differences in the system of rules and procedures for implementing the 'berasan' tradition. Activities in Rejang Lebong Regency are based on the '*Perda Hukum Adat Rejang dan Peraturan Bupati*' to carry out the duties of the ***Badan Musyarah Adat suku Rejang***, while in Lebong Regency they follow local rules (locality) as has been done for a long time. Besides that, in terms of the system (1) the visit of the male party (bujang) to the female party (gadis) or the meeting of the two (before the marriage contract), previously it had to be accompanied by parents, now it is determined by the agreement of both and (2) in terms of giving equipment, previously the male party (bujang) gave a small keris (*keris petik*) to the female party (gadis) to protect themselves because in the past there were often incidents, now there are no more, and (3) the gift of '*kapur sirih*' must be placed in a special '*bokor asli*' ('*boko'a*') which can now be wrapped neatly in cloth without reducing its meaning. These are some of the things related to variations in the shifting procession patterns, which do not prevent the tradition from being carried out. Because, it is in accordance with the agreement and developments in its implementation.

DISCUSSION

Based on the core findings of the research problem of the five aspects of the *Cultural Dynamics of 'Berasan' in Rejang Traditional Weddings in Bengkulu*, it can be stated that the history of the origins of the 'Berasan' tradition as part of Rejang traditional weddings in Bengkulu province is a hereditary legacy from their ancestors or has existed since the ancestors of the Rejang tribe. It is explained that the tradition began with a meeting of a young man and a girl who made an introduction and grew to develop affection and agreed to continue their relationship to the next level. To achieve good goals, as a form of formalization of the engagement between a bachelor and a girl, a meeting is held between representatives of the male family (bachelor) and the female family (girl) in a tradition of 'Berasan' (called ordinary basen/bekulo or good basen/bekulo). This is in line with the opinion of Nurlambang et al (2014:1) that the tradition of berasan as a history is a thought process that humans strive to understand past events within a time frame, facts, and causality, especially in revealing the factual truth of the occurrence of events. Bascom (1984) emphasized that the origin of the 'berasan' tradition system as part of the folk culture, folklore, and life of the community, in this case the Rejang tribe. Because, as a cultural system (community tradition), the tradition system in Rejang traditional marriage, especially the 'Berasan' tradition continues to be carried out, understood together, developed, and even internalized and preserved through the process of practicing important (sacred) values that exist in the community, according to the needs and developments of the times. Dananjaja (1984) emphasized that the Rejang tribe has had a cultural system (tradition), namely the 'berasan' tradition as part of the culture that has been passed down from generation to generation as a shared property from generation to generation (at least two generations) passed down from generation to generation in the life of its community.

The 'Berasan' tradition system as part of the cultural system in Rejang traditional marriage in Bengkulu province. The 'Berasan' cultural system (tradition) in Rejang traditional marriage is carried out in several stages, including First, the stage of agreement on the introduction relationship (*mete/besenteak*) towards a household relationship (called the *mediak* tradition), as an effort to avoid inappropriate behavior during dating. Second, the 'Berasan' tradition stage (*basen/bekulo*) is a deliberation activity to continue the agreement between representatives of the male family and representatives of the female family in determining the time, dowry, dowry in the marriage contract and wedding party (*bimbang gedang*), Third, the engagement tradition stage (*betunang*) as a continuation of the 'Berasan' tradition procession (*basen/bekulo*) or vice versa. Then, it is continued with the delivery of gifts in the form of wedding assistance from the groom's family (delivered during the 'berasan' procession). Fourth, the stage of the 'marriage contract' tradition is accompanied by the '*sembeak sujud*' (*sungkeman*) tradition as a form of

procession of asking forgiveness from the prospective bride and groom to their parents. Fifth, the wedding party stage (*bimbang adat/bimbang gedang*) is the official wedding ceremony marked by the pairing of the bride and groom and a banquet together. This is in line with what is stated in the "*Lepeak Hukum Adat Jang BMA Rejang Lebong*" that in the Rejang tribe marriage system which begins with the introduction of the young man and woman (*mediak*), the agreement is continued with the tradition of 'berasan' (*basen/bekulo*), then the official engagement (*betunang*), then the tradition of the marriage contract (followed by *sungkeman*), and finally the official wedding celebration (Ra'uf et al., 2014). It is emphasized in Mabrursyah and Supian (2023:93) that if two families, and are approved by *Kutei* (Customary Leader), *Rajo* (Village Head/RT Head), and *Syara'* (Imam/Ulama) and witnessed by the entire community who have carried out the '*perasanan*' (berasan) to match a man with a woman, then this is declared as an engagement (*betunang*).

Based on the structure (*order of the event procession*) of the core tradition of 'berasan' in Rejang traditional weddings, the urgency of the core order of the procession (order of events) in the 'berasan' tradition (*basen/bekulo*) can be stated. The structure (order of the main procession, includes (1) an opening by the master of ceremonies, (2) a speech by the *kutei* (traditional leader) representing the woman's family, (3) a speech conveying the intention from the representative of the man's family; (4) the implementation of the 'berasan' tradition (the process of customary deliberation or negotiation process to decide various things, such as the official announcement of the engagement, the implementation of the *marriage contract* and the wedding party). In addition, agreeing on the cost of 'berasan' for the working committee, the amount of gifts, dowry (*beleket*), the date and time of the '*marriage contract*' and the wedding party (*bimbang gedang*) and other activities to be carried out by both parties; (5) reading of prayers by religious leaders or Iman, (6) closing by the MC and followed by a communal meal. This is confirmed by the findings of Mabrursyah and Supian (2023:93), that the procession before the implementation of the Rejang traditional wedding (the process of 'marriage contract' and wedding party), especially in Rejang Lebong Regency, consists of several stages, including *mediak*, '*berasan* (*bekulo*), *betunang*, and *sembeak sujud* as well as *mojok sematen* or *bekea mengenyang*, including the 'proposal' system and gifts from the groom to the bride. The stages before this traditional wedding show the urgency of the true meaning of a traditional wedding owned by the community, namely the Rejang tribe (ethnicity), especially those in Rejang Lebong Regency and Lebong Regency. Therefore, the tradition of 'berasan' is very important to carry out as a form of customary deliberation between the two parties, to reach an agreement in carrying out the '*marriage contract*' and the official marriage ceremony.

The meaning of the '*berasan*' tradition contains important cultural values for the life of its people. Several activities have important meanings in the '*berasan*' tradition, such as (1) the engagement procession (*betunang*) is a symbol of the value of 'Trust' or 'Certainty' for the woman. Because, through the relationship of mutual trust between the bachelor and the girl, they agree to establish a more definite relationship in an official bond according to customary law through the formalization of the engagement, (2) the '*berasan*' procession, which is marked by the presence of the man's family (the bachelor) to the woman's family (the girl) to convey the intention of continuing the will of their child who has established a friendship is a symbol of the value of friendship, that the meeting of the two families is intended as a form of perpetuating the relationship between the two new families in forming new family ties, and (3) through the tradition of '*berasan*' which is marked by the agreement to bring equipment or dowry items from the man's family, is a symbol of respect that has the value of appreciation and self-esteem for the woman's family (girl) because she gets a prospective in-law from a capable and respected family. This according to Dundes (2007) is part of the culture of the community group, namely as a cultural story of the Rejang tribe in respecting a way of life or tradition. As stated by Setiyadi (2016), that tradition does not only include customs, but also contains values that provide benefits for the daily life of society, and as a guideline for life in directing the wheel of life. This means that customary community activities, such as the tradition (culture) of '*berasan*' in Rejang traditional weddings, contain symbolic values, for example material symbols in the form of '*kapur sirih*' equipment and symbolic meanings that are important for community life, such as the presence of gifts meaning '*respect*' and so on (Jaspan, 1964; 1967).

Along with the development of the times (modernization), the tradition of '*berasan*' has also experienced a shift in the pattern of variations in its implementation. Variations due to these shifts can be in the form of changes, differences or simplifications. These variation patterns specifically occur in the form of, such as (a) the simplification of the procession time (efficiency) and the simplification of the procession (*flexibility*), (b) the simplification of symbolic equipment (such as the equipment used), (c) a shift in language use (from Rejang to Indonesian), and (d) differences in the use of technology and (e) differences in the rules for implementing the '*berasan*' tradition in Rejang traditional weddings in various places in Bengkulu. This demonstrates that within the dynamics of society, movement and reciprocal interactions occur, potentially leading to dynamic changes in response to societal developments and the times. The rice tradition also experiences rapid shifts and movements, reflecting the dynamics of its society, including shifts in language use (Santoso, 2004; Yunus, 2020). Therefore, it is recommended to

use existing regulations, such as the Rejang Traditional Marriage Regulation in Rejang Lebong Regency, in conjunction with each other. This is because, in terms of cultural systems (traditions), traditional marriages share the same tradition, namely the Rejang traditional marriage in Bengkulu Province.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of the research "*Dynamics of the 'Berasan' Tradition in Rejang Traditional Weddings in Bengkulu*", it can be concluded that (1) The history of the origins of *Berasan (basen/bekulo)*, which is significantly a hereditary heritage from ancestors or since the existence of the ancestors of the Rejang tribe; (2) The '*Berasan*' Tradition (*basen/bekulo*), as an essential procession in Rejang traditional weddings; as a continuation of the introductory relationship between the male (bachelor) and the female (girl) to reach an agreement in the engagement; (3) The structure of the '*Berasan*' tradition (*basen/bekulo*) is a deliberation process to officially formalize the engagement through a meeting between the man's family and the woman's family, witnessed by traditional figures, traditional leaders or village heads, and religious scholars (Kutei, Rajo, and Syara') as well as relatives, in order to decide various matters related to the implementation of the 'marriage contract' and the wedding party, (4) The meaning of the '*Berasan*' procession is very valuable for the family that carries it out, namely (a) as a symbol of certainty of the relationship between the man and the woman, has the value of trust in fostering relationships between bachelors and girls, (b) a symbol of friendship in perpetuating relationships between two new families, and (c) a symbol of respect as a form of appreciation in instilling values of respect and self-esteem for the woman's family. This means that the '*berasan*' tradition has symbolic values such as building trust, uniting two new families, and giving respect to the family of the prospective bride, and (5) along with the development of the times (modernization) that the tradition of '*berasan*' also experienced a shift in the pattern of variations in its implementation, such as (a) the simplification of the procession time (flexibility), (b) the simplification of symbolic equipment (such as the equipment used), (c) shifts in the use of language (from Rejang to Indonesian), and (d) differences in the use of technology and (e) variations in the rules for implementing the tradition of '*berasan*' in various places in Bengkulu. Therefore, it is recommended to use existing regulations, such as the Rejang Traditional Marriage Regulation, in Rejang Lebong Regency together (making joint regulations) for the needs of the community according to tradition.

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