

Research Article

The Resilience of Local Religious Leaders in Maintaining Harmony: Anthropology of Communication Perspective

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Abstract.

The existence of local religious leaders has undoubtedly played a determinant role in maintaining harmonious life of a community. However, the challenges they face are immensely dynamic and intricate. This research thus aims to explore the extent of the influence of local religious leaders, particularly their communication patterns, in dealing with social and religious contentions which frequently emerge. This research is carried out in the three selected villages in the South Lampung Regency, namely *Sumur Kumbang* (mostly Sundanese), *Sukabakti* (mostly Javanese) and *Balinuraga* (mostly Balinese) where people there have diverse ethnics, religions, and cultures. It employs the descriptive-qualitative method by which data is collected through observations, depth-interviews, and from relevant resources. Aubrey B Fisher's concept of *The Four Perspectives of Human Communication* and Stephen W Littlejohn and Kathy Domenicy's theory in *The Communication Ecosystem* are much explored as the theoretical lens. This research consequently shows that each local religious leader from each village has different perspectives and patterns of communication in dealing with social and religious issues, and such differences are influenced by some factors such as the innate characters, similarities in beliefs and consideration of the existing political opportunity structure.

Keywords: anthropology of communication, harmony, local religious leaders

1. Introduction

In 2014, World Bank Report entitled "*Mobilizing for Violence: The Escalation and Limitation of Identity Conflicts, The Case of Lampung, Indonesia*" written by Yuhki Tajima figured out although riots and conflicts with their variant motives occurred, however, "Lampung is not typically associated with identity-based violence." Further, since the arrival of transmigrants in Lampung, ethnic, cultural, and religious relationship between Lampungnese (native) and transmigrants (non-native) was relatively harmonious. In this respect, Tajima argued that elites in village levels have played a strategic role to limit the escalation of conflicts in Lampung. With their authority, elites have the ability to negotiate to end spiral violence and even can bridge a mechanism to prevent future escalation [1].

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In one hand, when referring to the survey result of Religious Harmony Index in 2022, the tendency revealed by the report above was certainly concomitant. Based on the survey, Lampung's Tolerant Index was categorized "good enough" with 70.36 points in which it ranked 25 from totally 34 provinces [2]. However, on the other hand, it sounds rather bias and simplistic when contending "elites (state apparatus)" as the only major actors who can maintain harmonious life as well as prevent the riots and conflicts that unexpectedly emerge. Again, it does not mean to downplay the crucial role of elites here, but to confirm that conflict is too complex and needed the involvement of whole stakeholders to deal with it.

Apart from the role of elites, this paper thus aims to show that the existence of local religious leaders are also in fact determinant in maintaining harmony and anticipating clashes and conflicts in the middle of society. The position of local religious leaders is central, in which they can take roles not only as spiritual figures who engage in ritual and religious affairs, but also as "the guards of village" by which with their authority and privilege they are able to nurture a village's stability and (informally) influence village's regulation. To certain extent, the status of local religious leaders is even more dominant than village apparatus themselves.

A bunch of studies, with its own approach and perspective, related to the roles of local religious leaders in preserving peace and harmony clearly has been much carried out. The studies conducted by Tri Wibowo, Rudi Setiawan, and Yusuf Faisal Ali, for instance, portrayed the roles of religious leaders to maintain tolerance and harmony. They pointed out the forms of participation and contribution of religious leaders not merely in the religious activities, but in social and cultural events as well. The existence of such religious leaders in fact became spoke-persons to delivers peacefull messages to avoid prejudice and stigma, particularly toward them who have different religious backgrounds[3][4][5].

In addition, James Bourk Hoesterey and Stig Hjarvard highlighted that the presence of new media or platform digital has shifted and changed the religious authority. Both Hoesterey and Hjarvard noted that unlike in the past where standard of morality and spirituality were much centered in figure of *kyiai*, *ustadz*, or *guru*, in digital era today, however, religious authority is more fluid, in which most people, whether they have the capacity of religious knowledge or not, can claim that they are authoritative to speak about religious issues. The presence of what so-called "ustad seleb" more attract millenial generation in which the method and content of their da'wa through social media are more interesting and attractive [6] [7].

The other study that examines the role of religious leaders in perspective of defending gender equality is done by Elizabeth Petersen in South Africa. Petersen observes South African women who live in one of the most religious societies in the world, but they live under pressure of male domination. Petersen shows that one of four women there find themselves in abusive relationships. Her research also indicates that while many victims/ survivors use faith as a coping mechanism and that they often approach their religious leaders and faith communities for help, perpetrators use easily misinterpreted scriptures, religious teachings and cultural practices to support such abusive practices [8].

Based on the studies discussed above, a study concerning on the roles of local religious leaders in preserving harmony of their community from the lens of anthropology of communication in fact is still lack. In this regard, the anthropology perspective means that as a part of anthropology's object, communication should be apprehended holistically. The communication taking place both inside and outside community certainly does not stand alone. It is intertwined by engaging the other entities which exist in a society. If the communication is a sub-sistem, it is invariably correlated with other sub-systems such as social, culture, politics, economics, or demography. On the other word, to comprehensively describe sub-system of communication also has to depict the other existing sub-systems [9] [10].

Hence, this study focuses on how local religious leaders, with their personal authority and influence, deal with contentions, riots, and conflicts that emerge; how they build communication with other actors; and what kinds of major considerations they propose to address certain issues in their community. As a field study, this study is done in three transmigrants villages in South Lampung, namely *Sumur Kumbang* village in *Kalianda* District (mostly Sundanese), *Sukabakti* village in *Palas* District (mostly Javanese), and *Balinuraga* village in *Way Panji* District (mostly Balinese).

These villages are selected not only to point out the diverse ethnics, cultures and religions, but as the other reason the influences of religious leaders there are still very dominant. Therefore, in the following chapters this study is going to elaborate that (1) each local religious leader from each village shows the pattern of different communication when dealing with social and religious issues, particularly with Lampungnese as native; (2) to build communication with other actors (conflicting parties) these local religious leaders invariably take into account of political opportunity structure that allow them to act appropriately; (3) the patterns of communication showed by these local religious leaders are varied in which a religious leader in *Sumur Kumbang* more

emphasizes on kinship and cultural approach; interactional and psychological ways in *Palas*; and mechanistic and pragmatic patterns in *Balinuraga*.

2. Methods

This study employs the descriptive-qualitative method by local religious leaders in three selected villages (*Sumur Kumbang*, *Sukabakti*, and *Balinuraga*) as the subject of research. Collecting data is obtained through observations, interviews, and utilizing relevant documents [11]. Observations are carried out to delve and grasp the facts in the field, particularly related to the roles of local religious leaders and how their communities perceive them.

Then interviews aim to search data more deeply including religious leaders' engagement, acts, and experiences. The participants of this interview involve all stakeholders such as local religious leaders, village apparatus, and community itself. Data from the field afterward is completed by relevant documents such as books, articles, and archives as supporting data to reinforce the result of research.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Harmony in Between: Innate Characters and Similarity in Beliefs

Historically speaking, the province of Lampung has been the main destination of transmigration projects that actually had been taking place since Dutch colonial occupation. The transmigration policy then became a prominent attention of New Order regime under Soeharto through which over six million people were gradually relocated from Java and Bali during thirty years (1969-1999) [12]. Apart from reducing the density of population, this transmigration programme was also part of equalization of development in the outside of both islands in which it could not be certainly isolated from regime's political interests at that time [13] [14]. In the case of Lampung, the transmigrants mostly occupied unproductive and vast areas utilized as agriculture and plantation [15] [16].

As a consequence, nowadays Lampung has been "a melting pot" where diverse ethnics, cultures, customs, languages and religions encounter and interact one another.¹ Due to its plurality, Lampung is often well-known as "the miniature of Indonesia." As such, it is hard to deny that, as commonly occurred in a multicultural-democratic state,

contentions, clashes, conflicts are inevitable. Those are even inherent in the process of democratic maturation [17] [18]. In the context of Lampung, such ethnic and religious conflicts in their variant motives and scales are also unavoidable.

Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik (Kesbangpol) of Lampung Province reported that inter-ethnic conflicts, both small and large scales, have occurred since New Order regime.² Subsequently the escalation of conflicts significantly increases after Reformation era. The list of conflicts shows in the Table 1 as following.

TABLE 1: the List of Conflicts in Lampung (1982-2012).

Year	Brief Chronology
1982	The dispute involved Lampungnese youths from <i>Sandaran</i> Village and Balinese youths from <i>Balinuraga</i> Village. It caused dozens of houses and houses of worship to be burned.
2005	Balinese from <i>Bali Agung</i> Village clashed with <i>Semendo</i> (Palembangnese) from <i>Palas Pasemah</i> Village. Some people from <i>Palas Pasemah</i> were killed in this incident.
2009	The mutual attack occurred between <i>Balinese</i> from <i>Ketapang</i> Village and Lampungnese from <i>Ruguk</i> Village. The clash was triggered because a youth of <i>Ruguk</i> Village was killed by a Balinese. Many houses of worship (mosques and temples/ <i>pura</i>) were destroyed in this dispute.
2010	Balinese from <i>Ketapang</i> District attacked Lampungnese living in <i>Tetaan</i> Village. It was reported that several mosques and houses were burned.
2010	Balinese from <i>Bali Agung</i> village again attacked the villagers of <i>Palas Pasemah</i> village. Some from both villages were killed and dozens of houses were burned.
2011	Balinese attacked Lampungnese in <i>Marga Catur</i> village. By wearing Balinese traditional clothes, they fiercely burned mosques and houses.
2012	A number of Balinese youths assaulted Lampungnese youths from <i>Kota Dalam</i> village. Then, Lampungnese from that village retaliated by burning down some houses in <i>Napal</i> village as one of the bases of Balinese.
2012	Balinese youth from <i>Balinuraga</i> village sexually harassed a Lampung teenage girl from <i>Agom</i> village. This incident then triggered a huge conflict that resulted in dozens of deaths and hundreds of houses and temples were damaged. In the history of Lampung, this riot were the biggest incidents.

High intensity of ethnic-conflicts as described above has brought about deep segregation in relationship of inter-ethnics in Lampung. Prejudice, hatred, and negative stigma make them keep the distance and more exclusive toward people outside their own ethnics. Yet, if conscientiously paying attention, in this sense Yuhki Tajima in her report

as having discussed in the introduction chapter above is right when arguing “Lampung is not typically associated with identity-based violence.” It goes without saying that escalation of riots and conflicts in Lampung is not based on identity motives such as the difference of beliefs, ethnics, or cultures. Rather, it is much driven by trivial things that are indeed insignificant. Taking an example of the last biggest conflict that involved Balinese and Lampungnese in 2012 ago, the initial motive was the youth problem. This issue then was widespread and ignited the mass anger from both sides to attack each other.

The other notable point that needs to elaborate here is the facts that almost riots that broke up frequently entangled between Balinese and Lampungnese or Balinese and Palembangnese (*Semendo*). On the other word, Balinese is the most often ethnic that embroiled conflicts with other ethnics. If historically referring back, Balinese transmigrants who inhabited South Lampung areas came from *Nusa Penida*, an island located in the Southeast of Bali separated by *Badung* strait. Since 1950s, they have transmigrated to Lampung to improve the social and economic standard of living which in their origin territory (*Nusa Penida*) they lived in poverty. Most of Balinese from *Nusa Penida* are farmers and they are well-known to have tough, rough and hard-working characters. Even when they arrived and settled in Lampung areas, such innate characters have been embodied as their identity and used them to communicate and interact with Lampungnese (native) and other ethnics [19] [20].

Unlike Balinese, however, the involvement of Javanese and Sundanese was minor in conflict, and even could be said never both against Lampungnese or other ethnics. This is certainly an interesting fact, considering that based on statistical data, Javanese and Sundanese as non-native people are more numerous in number than Balinese. Even today Javanese are the majority population in Lampung with a percentage reaching 65% and Sundanese are 9.61% rather than Balinese are merely 1.2%. In this regard, the big question raises why did Javanese and Sundanese minorly contribute to riots and conflicts with other ethnics particularly with Lampungnese as the native so far?

To answer such question of course requires a variety of perspectives and specifically deeper research because a conflict is intricate problem that is not simple to unravel. However, this paper would propose hypothesis to answer it in which there are some determinant factors that buttress it, namely the innate characters, the similarity of belief, and the resilience of local religious leaders. In regarding of the innate characters, since a long time Hildred Geertz had mentioned in her research that the prominent characters of Javanese society were respect, giving in (*nerimo*) and more prioritizing the balance

of social harmony. According to Geertz, these noble values have been transmitted from generation to generation through various mediums such as Javanese teachings and philosophy, traditions, and educations as well [21]. Meanwhile Sundanese are well-known as polite and gentle, upholding the principles of *silih asih* (love), *silih asah* (self-introspection) and *silih asuh* (caring) [22].

The similarity of belief also becomes the other leading support why Javanese and Sundanese are rarely involved in conflicts, particularly with Lampungnese as the native. The majority of Javanese and Sundanese are devout Muslims, same as their Lampungnese counterparts who are almost 100% of Muslims as well. Although difference in the term of culture and custom, this similarity of belief makes them more fluid and compartable in interlacing social relationship. It also paves a way of acculturation process to more smoothly. In contrast to Balinese either culturally or religiously different, it causes the process of acculturation with existing local culture to be more unbridgeable [23]. In addition to it, the resilience of local religious leaders also have played significant roles in maintaing harmony in their own community. In the next chapter, it is going to more elucidate on how the pattern and strategy of communication are applied by local religious leaders in addressing social and religious contention.

3.2. Local Religious Leaders and Political Opportunity Structure

In order to holistically comprehend the roles of local religious leaders in maintaining harmony in the three selected villages, particularly in the aspects of their communication pattern and strategy, the anthropological perspective is used. As briefly discussed in the part of introduction, the state of communication is a sub-system in a structure of society which is intertwined with other sub-systems. When the concept of communication is broadly articulated not only as a means to deliver and receive messages, but also as a system of symbol and meaning, based on the anthropological point of view, it cannot be isolated from its circumstances[24][25]. To catch the meaning taking place in communication needs to be interpreted based on its context [26]. This way contributes to shed light on why were communication pattern and strategy of each local religious leader from each village in dealing with conflicts different one another?

Apart from the innate characters and the similarity of belief as elaborated in previous chapter, local religious leaders from the three selected villages also take into account of political opportunity structure in making decisions and steps that are required to address certain contentions, clashes or conflicts that emerge in their community. Conceptually

the political opportunity structure implies all available resources (social status, policy, law, privilege, culture, identity, etc) utilized by an actor to achieve the certain desired goals [27] [28].

In the case of *Sumur Kumbang* village³, for instance, the position of Abah Santika as a religious and societal leader is very central. Abah Santika is a descendant of *Sheikh Mansur*, the ancestor of *Sumur Kumbang* village. Hereditarily, the spiritual leadership of this village is also inherited to him. He has the authority to lead and guide religious events in the village. In addition to such regular roles, he also actively engages in non-religious issues including to preserve village stability and security. He is used to going down when tensions or riots involving *Sumur Kumbang* people with other villagers appear. *Abah Santika* said that:

*“Actually, this village has been safe since long time ago. Riots or wars with people from other villages have never happened. I always tell my people here, our ancestors were the spreaders of Islam in this Mount Rajabasa area. So, we as their descendants are obliged to maintain that honor. We must be role models based on Islamic teachings and maintain good relationship with other residents. We all are family. I always remind everyone here”.*⁴

In the circumstance of the community, intra-cultural communication conducted by Abah Santika clearly much stresses on the pattern of mechanistic perspective that communication channel is one direction through which Abah Santika is an active communicator and his community is a passive communicant. However, in inter-cultural communication, the pattern of Abah Santika's communication is different. When dealing with a tension involving the youths of *Sumur Kumbang* with other youths from a Lampungnese village, Abah Santika witnesses that:

“Several years ago, there was a riot between the youth from this village and the Lampungnese youth from Sukaratu village. In an event of wedding party (orgen tunggal), the youth here stabbed Sukaratu village's youth by a knife. This incident then almost become a war between villages. The victim family did not want peace or resolving it through familial ways. Instead, other youths from Sukaratu planned to attack Sumur Kumbang. Mediation of villages appartus from both parties had been held, but the result was nothing. Due to no solution, I my self occompanied by the head of the village then visited and met the victim family at their home. Because I was old man, the first thing I asked to them was what was the name of the youth's grandfather? Even though he had passed away, I knew the youth's grandfather, and I even told them

*that we were of the same descent, one family. It also means that if the victim also my grandson as well. Hearing my explanation, this problem could finally be resolved through familial ways without any war or bloodshed.*⁵

In addressing such contention, Abah Santika seems much emphasizing on the tie of kinship and brotherhood. This choice is evidently effective to end the tension that if not bridged properly is able to potentially lead inter-village conflicts in huge scale. It also indicates that in building cross-cultural communication, Abah Santika puts forward the pattern of interactional communication in which he, as a religious and societal leader, is willing to directly meet with parties involving in tension and open a discursive dialogue to them for the sake of seeking the best solution. In this respect, *Abah Santika* certainly have taken into consideration what the so-called “the ecosystem communication” in which he can decide what kinds of communication styles are required when in personal, community, and relational realms. [29]

Slightly different from *Abah Santika*, in the context of *Sukabakti* village⁶, *Ustad Kholil*, or people there usually call him “Mbah Lil”, more develops pattern of psychological approach in his own community and interactional perspective in cross-cultural communication with other groups when dealing with tension or riot. For instance, *Ustad Kholil* stated that:

“A few months ago there was an incident here. A young man from this village was accused of impregnating a Lampungnese girl from other village. The young man refused to take responsibility for marrying that girl. Although both of them had dated and then broke up, the young man insisted that he did not impregnate her. The young man’s parents reported to me, while crying, that the girl’s family threatened to kill and burn their house if he ran away and didnt take responsibility. The young man’s parents were ready to take responsibility, but the young man still felt innocent. Albeit private matter, I tried to mediate. Because he was my student (Santri) whom I taught him to recite Qur’an, I invited him to come to my house. I even asked him to stay at my house if he felt afraid or uncomfortable in his own house. At that time he told me everything about his problem, and I just listened to him. Then I gave him advice and asked him to follow my advice. After about two days I tried to convince him to marry the girl and alhamdulillah he was ready with all the risks. I and his family took him to meet the girl’s family. And, the girl’s family welcomed us well. They finally are married and has given birth a daughter though still senior high school students.

In addressing such issue, clearly *Ustad Kholil* makes use of the psychological perspective as his communication pattern. He did not judge the young man or force him to take responsibility immediately. Instead, he treated him who was facing a serious problem as a dialogue partner and listened to all his complaints. Like a psychologist, after psychological aspect of that young man was successfully touched, *Ustad Kholil* subsequently invited him to seek the best solution while inserting some advices for consideration. The emotional elements of the individual are the main concern of this psychological communication pattern.[30] Yet, rather similar to *Abah Santika*, *Ustad Kholil* also uses interactional pattern when conducting inter-cultural communication with others outside his community. *Ustad Kholil* tells that:

"We Javanese have actually been taught by our parents since long ago to always uphold the principle of" nerimo" and "ngalah". It is why we are rarely involved in conflict with other tribes, even never. We live in harmony with Lampungnese, Semendo, Jaseng, Sundanese, and Balinese as well. If Lampungnese was at war with Balinese, or Semendo clashed with Lampungnese, we never get involved. Instead, when there was a conflict between them, we tried to mediate. Even if there was friction, it was triggered by trivial things like brawls at a soccer match between youths. Once our youth rioted with the Semendo youth from a neighboring village because of a soccer match. The riot even quickly involved people from both villages. What I did at that time, I first calmed our youth down, then I and the village officials went to meet our neighbour village leaders. I always told them that a riot like this is like "cutting off a finger on the thigh (memotong jari di paha)", there is no benefit at all. Finally, we agreed to end the problem and after that we had coffee together.

In the process of inter-cultural communication with neighbour village leaders, *Ustad Kholil* much accentuates a dialog to reach the agreement toward the issue they face. Yet, unlike *Abah Santika* who tends to more emphasize the issue of kinship in negotiation, *Ustad Kholil* seems to put forward the values of brotherhood to achieve mutual understanding among them. The expression such as *"riot is like cutting a finger on the thigh"* is a kind of affirmation language that their problem, including a brawl between youths triggered by the football match, can be overcome together through dialog and the spirit of brotherhood.

However, in contrast to the two local religious leaders from the two villages above, *Pemangku I Made Bawe*, a religious leader as well as village apparatus of Balinuraga village, much precisely uses the pragmatic communication pattern, particularly when

doing inter-cultural communication in dealing with certain issues. *Pemangku I Made Bawe* in this respect tells his experience that:

"We are now more alert when a riot involving our people appears. Learning from the experience of a huge conflict with Lampungnese in 12 years ago, we were less alert in responding to the initial trigger. In fact, if thinking about it again, such huge conflict was only caused by a trivial thing that could be solved peacefully. It is why now, when a problem emerge here, we always coordinate with other various parties. For example, a few week ago, there was tension between our youths and villagers from Sidoharjo village. The cause was sparked by incident in which our youths broke through the asphalt road that was still wet. Immediately it provoked the anger of the villagers there. At that time of such incident, a Sidoharjo village apparatus called me by phone and reported it. And, I called the security (village Babinsa) to immediately go there. Our youths were secured in the village office to avoid the mob's anger. Then, we and Sidoharjo's societal leaders sat together to seek solutions for such incident witnessed by the security. Finally, we agreed to make peace and the mob's anger could be avoided."

Based on the experience of *Pemangku I Made Bawe* as above-mentioned, it can be interpreted that the pragmatic communication pattern certainly cannot be separated from the communication ecosystem where he lives. As a religious leader as well as a community figure, in determining his acts and decisions, *Pemangku I Made Bawe* obviously does not ignore the structure, character, and objective conditions of his society. The style of pragmatic communication, stressing on results and goals oriented, is considered more effective when dealing with social problems [31].

In addition to the ecosystem of communication in this regard, considerations of the existing political opportunity structure also necessarily affect pragmatic communication pattern. After a huge conflict involving Lampungnese and Balinese of Balinuraga village occurred more than a decade ago, the mechanism for conflict management and resolution became increasingly more structured. *Pemangku I Made Bawe* admitted that:

"After attending some trainings held by the local government or certain communities, now I know and understand about what to do when a riot occurs involving our villagers. I have a security contact (police or military district) to ask for help. We also have a WA group containing religious leaders, community leaders, local government officials from various villages in South Lampung to be able to communicate with each other or get

updates if there is important information. Channels like this were not available in the past, so it made us confused when there was a riot.”

The political opportunity structure in this regard has become an determinant account for *Pemangku I Made Bawe* to stipulate strategic steps needed, including his communication pattern, to solve certain societal issues. The presence of local governments, security forces, and communities of religious and society leaders are pivotal resources. This political opportunity structure is then utilized by *Pemangku I Made Bawe* not solely as a means to address a riot, but it is also able to grasp why the pragmatic communication pattern that dominantly he uses to.

4. Conclusion

This study has shown that the resilience of local religious figures has played a very significant role. This study focuses on the question of why does each local religious leader in each selected village have different perspectives and patterns of communication in dealing with social and religious issues that emerge? To reveal such question, this study uses the anthropology of communication point of view that posits a communication as a sub-system that is always tied with other sub-systems such as social, cultural, religious, political and economic sub-systems.

In the context of *Sumur Kumbang* village, *Abah Santika* tends to use mechanical pattern of communication when building dialog with his own community. This top-down style is possible for him, considering that his position is very central and even his influence is much stronger than the head of village head himself. However, when doing inter-cultural communication in solving a problem, such as a riot involving his residents, he tends to use an interactional communication pattern that emphasizes kinship in the process of dialogue. Meanwhile *Ustad Kholil* from *Sukabakti* village applies psychological communication patterns when mediating his group's problem. Almost similar to *Abah Santika*, in the process of inter-cultural communication with other people outside his community *Ustad Kholil* prefers to use an interactional communication style that prioritize the principles of togetherness and brotherhood. However, in contrast, *Pemangku I Made Bawe* from *Balinuraga* village tends to use a pragmatic pattern, particularly in inter-cultural communication.

As conclusion, the results of this field study have revealed that the differences in communication patterns and perspectives of each religious leader are caused by several

factors. In addition to the innate characters and similarities or differences in beliefs, the existing political opportunity structure of each village has also played the determinant consideration why their patterns of communication are diverse in nature.

5. Endnotes

¹Lampung Province has 13 districts and 2 cities (South Lampung, West Lampung, East Lampung, North Lampung, Central Lampung, Tulang Bawang, Tanggamus, Way Kanan, Pesawaran, Pringsewu, Mesuji, Tulang Bawang Barat, Pesisir Barat, Bandar Lampung and Metro). Based on the Central Statistics Agency of Lampung province in 2022, the total populations of Lampung are 9.419.580 or 9.4 millions of people, consisting of Javanese (65%), Lampungnese (13.56%), Sundanese 9.61%, 5.40% South Sumatran (5.40%), and Balinese (1.2%). In addition to that, the composition of religions comprises of Islam (93.55%), Protestant (2.32%), Hinduism (1.63%), Catholic (1.62%), Buddhism (0.87%) and Confucianism (0.01%). See <https://lampung.bps.go.id/>;

²<https://kesbangpol.lampungprov.go.id/berkas/uploads/fxYdVOXey6npzJimUdbtXY5K6F2KEw8RYaxhVraG>. Accessed in August, 05 2024; 14.40 WIB

³Sumur Kumbang is one of the villages located at the foot of Rajabasa mount. Territorially it included in Kalianda District, South Lampung Regency. Based on statistical data, there are around 600 families inhabiting in this village. The majority of its population is Sundanese (Banten) and Muslim. Most of them works as farmers. Although this village was administratively established in the middle of the 21st century, according to Abah Santika, the ancestors of the Sumur Kumbang people, Sheikh Mansur, firstly came and occupied this area since the 17th century (Interview with Abah Santika August 16, 2024: 16: 45; see also <https://lampungselatankab.bps.go.id/id>).

⁴Interview with Abah Santika August 16, 2024: 16: 45

⁵Interview with Abah Santika August 23, 2024: 09: 15

⁶Sukabakti Village is one of the largest villages located in Palas District. The area of this village reaches 15.94 KM with a population composition of more than 2500 people. The majority of the population is Javanese, Muslim, and works as

farmers, traders, and ranchers. This area was one of the transmigration destinations that become a major program under New Order Regime in 1970s (<https://lampungselatankab.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTE3MSMy/jumlah-dusun-menurut-desa-kelurahan-di-kecamatan-palas.html>). Accessed in September, 10 2024

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