

## Conference Paper

# Local Wisdom of Dayok Binatur in the Simalungun Community

Dede Atika Purba, Jumino Suhadi, and Purwarno Purwarno

Master's Program, Faculty of Literature, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

**ORCID:**

Dede Atika Purba: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1835-7203>

**Abstract**

This research is concerned with the local wisdom of Dayok Binatur in the *Simalungun* community. Local wisdom is a collection of knowledge, practices and beliefs that evolved through adaptive process (adjustment) passed from generation to generation through culture, associated with the relationship between living beings (including humans) and the surrounding environment (Berkes, 1993). In the *Simalungun* community, *Dayok Binatur* is made from chicken and arranged on a plate. It is used as a symbol of intermediary to convey a message, advice and hope delivered from one side of the family to the other and usually presented at the *Simalungun* community's traditional and special events. This research was conducted using qualitative descriptive methods. The results show that there are ten parts of chicken meat called *gori*, namely the head (*ulu*), neck (*borgok*), breast (*tuppak*), left and right wing (*habong*), base of thigh (*tulan bolon*), thigh (*tulan parnamur*), leg (*kais-kais*), the egg-producing organ (*tuahni*), liver (*bilalang*), and tail (*ihur*). Four objects are used, such as the head (*ulu*), neck (*borgok*), wing (*habong*), and leg (*kais-kais*), which carry cultural symbols and local wisdom. The head (*ulu*) refers to leadership; the neck (*borgok*) refers to problem solving; the wings (*habong*) refers to protection; and the leg (*kais-kais*) refers to responsibility. The local wisdoms in *Dayok Binatur* are needed to maintain the balance of life.

**Keywords:** Local Wisdom, *Simalungun*, *Dayok Binatur*

Corresponding Author:

Dede Atika Purba

[dedeatikapurba@gmail.com](mailto:dedeatikapurba@gmail.com)

Published: 11 March 2021

Publishing services provided by  
Knowledge E

© Dede Atika Purba et al. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the AICLL Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

Culture is an important asset for each country. *Indonesia* is one of the countries which has many tribes causing different customs of the society. Culture is close to tradition. Tradition is the spirit of a culture, making the cultural system solid and if eliminated, there is a possibility that a culture will end as well. (Soekanto, 1990).

Tradition is an activity which is carried out by a group of people from generation to generation with the aim to obtain harmony either between humans with humans or harmony between humans with nature through values and norms. Every tradition is

**OPEN ACCESS**

closely related to local wisdom. Thus it can be seen that the local wisdom is an idea or wisdom inherited from previous generations and used as a reference in living social life in harmony.

Cultural tradition which has the values of local wisdom is *Dayok Binatur* from *Simalungun* ethnic. *Dayok Binatur* is made from male native chicken meat with a mixture of various kinds of spices. One of spices is *Holat*. *Holat* is from *Sikkam* tree which is presented at the *Simalungun* community's traditional and special events. Chicken meat that has been cooked (boiled or baked) then set (binature) back with part of chicken called *gori* regularly on ceramic plate (*pasu* plate) and served. In fact there are 10 ten *gori* namely head '*ulu*', neck '*borgok*', breast '*tuppak*', left and right wing '*habong*', base of thigh '*tulan bolon*', chicken's thighs '*tulan parnamur*', leg '*kais-kais*', the chicken's organ of the egg-producing '*tuahni*', chicken's liver '*bilalang*', and chicken's tail '*ihur*'. Serving *Dayok Binatur* intends to convey a message, advice and hope delivered from one side of the family to the other. So *Dayok Binatur* has the peculiar and local wisdom that can be taken and developed as a worldwide culture and should be maintained.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Local Wisdom

Local wisdom is a set of ideas or policies based on the values of virtues found in a community and often applied, believed to be the guidance of life, and handed down from time to time. Manugeran (as cited in Sopa, 2018) states that local wisdom is a set of ideas or policies based on the values of virtues found in a community.

Local wisdom, from linguistics anthropology perspective, is a part of values and norms of an oral tradition inherited from one to another generation through oral ways. Some forms of local wisdom are hard work, discipline, education, health, gender standing, cultural and creative reviving, peace, mannerism, honesty, solidarity, care-free life style, conflict-solution, commitment, positive thinking and gratefulness (Sibarani in Manugeran, et. al, 2017)

The concept of local wisdom in environmental management is described by Berkes (1993) with the terminology of traditional ecological knowledge. The term means a collection of knowledge, practices and beliefs that evolve through adaptive process (adjustment) passed from generation to generation through culture, associated to the relationship between living beings (including humans) with the surrounding environment. Traditional ecological knowledge is owned collectively and can be conveyed in

the form of stories, songs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, custom laws, local language and natural resource utilization

## 2.2. Simalungun Culture

Simalungun is one of six *Batak* ethnics in Simalungun regency. It has four clans, they are: *Sinaga, Saragih, Damanik, Purba* with the term “*SISADAPUR*” (Purba, 1995). The four clans are the result of “*Harungguan Bolon*” (big consultation) between the four great kings not to attack each other and not to fight each other. As with other *Batak* tribes, the Simalungun tribe also has a clan as a determinant of lineage, i.e. carrying a patrilineal or patrilineal line, causing the clan determination to be determined from the father’s clan.

The philosophy of life of Simalungun ethnic is *Habonaron do bona, Hajukkaton do sapatra*, means everything must be started from the right thing (Sihotang, 2013). The motto is included in *Simalungun* Regency government symbol. This philosophy teaches people to have the right mind and act. Truth (*Habonaran*) is the source of everything in daily life. In the past there was no robbery in the village. Eventhough the village was left without any door locked, then no one would dare to steal anything. From this philosophy it can be concluded that characteristics of Simalungun ethnic are basically honest and pure at heart, soft and well mannered also not intended to hurt anyone.

*Simalungun* people in daily life are inseparable from customs. The traditional ceremony in the social life of the *Simalungun* community begins with the traditional ceremony; marriage, seven month of pregnancy, entering a new house, and feeding elderly parents. In traditional ceremony, Simalungun ethnic always presents culinary food *Dayok Binatur*. Another term for this type of food is *Dayok Nabinatur, Dayok Set Manggoluh, Dayok Pinarmanggoluh, Gulei Dayok Set Manggoluh, Dayok Nani Batur*. Although different names are given to the culinary all refers to *Dayok Binatur*. *Dayok Binatur* is made from chicken meat. *Dayok Binatur* is used as a symbol of Simalungun traditional food (Sumbayak, 2001).

## 2.3. Dayok Binatur

*Dayok Binatur* is a dish made from a mixture of various kinds of spices. One of spices is *Holat* arranged regularly on the plate presented at the *Simalungun* community’s traditional and special events. *Dayok Binatur* is not only served as a side dish of food, but also as a very important function for the people of Simalungun. *Dayok binatur* is

always served at every ceremony of *Simalungun*. In the traditional ceremonies of the *Simalungun* ethnic community, whether it is related to the likes and griefs, *Dayok Binatur* is never forgotten. In every celebration of *Simalungun* ethnic, if *Dayok Binatur* is not served, it is considered less legitimate. *Dayok Binatur* is not only served in traditional ceremonies, but also in ordinary celebrations, such as: birthday celebration, entering a new house, and also as a gift.

## 2.4. The reason of choosing chicken

*Simalungun* people choose chicken as traditional culinary food because there are several characteristics and principles of chicken that are worth imitated by humans. The values of the life of chicken are good to be imitated:

1. Chicken's parent incubates her egg for twenty-one days. It means that parents are responsible for protecting and caring for their children to preserve their generation. Chickens look for food for their chicks by scratching her claws. It means that parents are responsible to meet the needs of children's life both physically and spiritually.
2. Chicken's parents peck their children to grow up. It means that parents teach their children to be independent people.
3. When drinking, chicken bows his head first and then raises his head facing up. It means that we always have to be grateful to God for giving life.
4. The rooster crows in the early hours. It means that we have to remember to use our time as effective as possible.
5. Chickens always lift their heads up when crying. It means that we have to remember to think about our future.
6. Chicken is a common food of religious people. It means that food made from chicken is not forbidden so that it can establish good relationships among religious communities.

## 2.5. Display of Dayok Binatur

*Dayok Binatur* is made from chicken whose flesh is cut into pieces and then arranged regularly on a plate of 'dishes'. The chicken meat is divided into ten parts based on the *Simalungun* ethnic: head 'ulu', neck 'borgok', breast 'tuppak', left and right wing

'*habong*', base of thigh '*tulan bolon*', chicken's thighs '*tulan parnamur*', claws '*kais-kais*', the chicken's organ of the egg-producing '*tuahni*', chicken's liver '*bilalang*', and chicken's tail '*ihur*'. Chicken meat is arranged based on Simalungun ethnic looks like alive chicken.

Each *gori* on *Dayok Binatur* is presented in the form of its composition, firstly arranged in small pieces of meat '*tok-tok*' arranged on a plate, in the front there is a head '*ulu*' supported by a breastbone '*tuppak*', the left side and on the right side of the edge is placed on the base of thigh '*tulan bolon*' then the thigh '*tulan parnamur*', next to the thighs are wings '*habong*' that are parallel to it, then the chicken feet '*kais-kais*', on the back is the tail '*ihur*'. In the middle there is a neck followed by the order of the head '*ulu*', then chicken's the egg-producing organ '*tuahni*', and *rempelo* '*atei-atei* or *dekke bagas*'. Each piece of chicken meat must be arranged according to tradition. Every part of the complete chicken body pieces is a picture or symbol that can remind humans to build relationships and in time of cooking process the meat should not be tasted, for fear of losing its philosophical meaning.

Before tasting the pieces of *Dayok Binatur*, the families gather first, then they ask, for example in this case the child to purify himself with *pangir* water, which is water from lime juice, then the child washes his face, his hair then drinks a little of that water. After the process of self-purification is done, usually the parents of the child give a prayer to the child while giving a plate containing pieces of chicken meat.



### 3. Research Method

The research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Kothari (2014) the major purpose of descriptive research is description of state of affairs as it exists at present. Moleong (2007: 6) reveals that qualitative research is intended to understand the

phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject of research such as behavior, perception, motivation, and action and it is described in the form of words and language on a natural special context by utilizing various natural methods.

Other techniques might include questionnaire, observation, documentation, note-taking and data analysis to obtain accurate data leading to local wisdom. Questions and interviews are done in relation to head, neck, wings, eggcell and feet and to their meaning existence, meaning substance and function. The results were documented in the forms of notes and audio-visual records. Respondents were Simalungun community and religious figures as well as youths. The key informants were the priests having mastery of knowledge of this tradition and this is initiated by Miles and Huberman (2014).

In case of reliable validity, we employed a technique of comparison, such as, comparing (i) the data of observation result with the data of interview result, (ii) the words said in public with those in privacy, (iii) what people said about the research situation with what was said all the time, (iv) the situation and perspective of a person with those of various classes, and (v) the results of interviews with the contents of related documents.

## 4. Discussion

There are 4 local wisdoms of *Dayok Binatur*, *Simalungun* ethnic's culinary. They are leadership, problem solving, protection and responsibility.

### 4.1. Head 'ulu' Referring to Leadership

The head 'ulu' is one part of the *gori*. It is always positioned at the front. The head is placed with the beak facing forward. When giving *Dayok Binatur*, this chicken head is confronted to those who receive *Dayok Binatur*. On the head there is an eye that is useful to direct the path of a chicken. The location of the chicken brain is in the head as the instinctual center of the chicken. This is interpreted by the *Simalungun* people as head, part of superior leader and the position is always at the front. So it is hoped that as a leader, he must have a good leadership, giving good examples and providing the best by being responsible for his duties using a healthy mind. As a leader he must have authority, for example in terms of speaking. This means that a leader must have more values compared to his members.



#### 4.2. Neck `borgok' Referring to Problem Solving

The neck 'borgok' is placed close to the head that is previously placed on plate. The neck is a part that connects the head to the body of chicken. Food that is put into the chicken's mouth is distributed through neck. *Simalungun* people interpret each problem to be solved, *mamborgokkonkon*, by themselves.



#### 4.3. Wings `habong' Referring to Protection

There are two wings 'habong' in chicken namely the left wing and the right wing. In hens both wings are used to protect their offspring, both when the hens incubate the eggs so that the eggs are warm and protected from other dangers in any situation. As a representation, hens or cocks can supervise, pay attention and protect their chicks well. This symbolically means that parents are fully responsible for their children. Wings of a chicken can be used to fly, this is related to the going away of a child from the parents' home and the child before leaving is usually given *Dayok Binatur*. The hope is the child can be healthy, safe and successful.





#### 4.4. Leg `kais-kais' Refers to Responsibility

Leg '*kais -kais*' is the third lowest part. Besides its function to walk, its function is also to look for food by scavenging. *Simalungun* people see the good nature of a chicken that is to be imitated especially the one concerned with responsibility to their children. Thus a man works hard to find food for his children, namely by fulfilling physical and spiritual needs. Besides both parents can give priority to the needs of their children rather than their own needs or needs of others.



Remarks:

CF: Community Figure

RF: Religious Figure

YG: Young Generation

Research components: A. Existence consists of four cultural symbolic meanings: meat, the coconut milk, chili, spice mixture, B. Meaning Existence of five C. Meaning Substance of four D. Educational function of five E. Religious function of four.

CF 1: Informant of the first Community Figure



TABLE 1: Triangulation Analysis of Local Wisdom of *Dayok Binatur* in *Simalungun* Ethnic's Culinary

No.	Research component	Document	Interview Informant										
			CF				RF				YG		
			CF 1	CF 2	CF 3	CF 4	RF 1	RF 2	RF 3	RF 4	YG 1	YG 2	
1	A	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
2	B	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
3	C	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
4	D	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
5	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X

CF 2: Informant of the second Community Figure

RF 1: Informant of the first Religious Figure

RF 2: Informant of the second Religious Figure

YG 1: Informant of the first Young Generation

YG 2: Informant of the second Young Generation

√: having answer

X: no answer or incomplete

TABLE 2: Local Wisdom of *Dayok Binatur* in *Simalungun* Ethnic's Culinary

1. Question Indicator		
No.	Indicator	Number of Question
1	Existence	4
2	Meaning Existence	4
3	Meaning Substance	4
4	Function	8
Amount		20

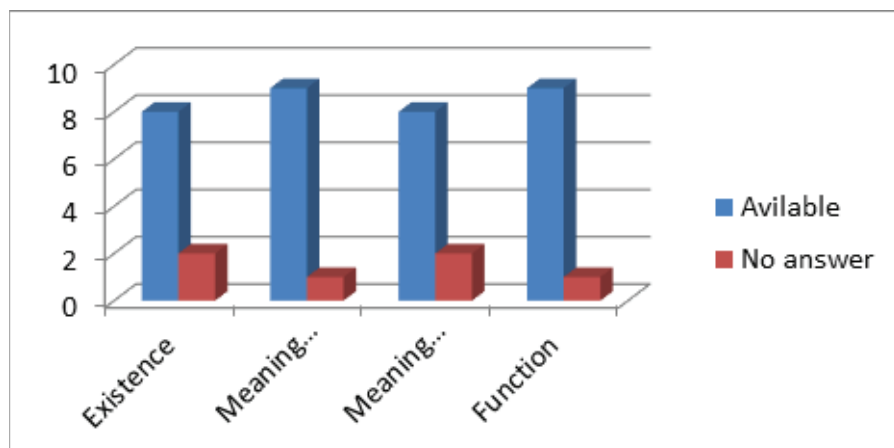


TABLE 3

2. Interview Result				
No	Question Indicator	Answer	No. of Respondent	Percentage (%)
1.	Existence: - Head - Neck - Wings - Leg	Available	8	80 %
		No Answer	2	20 %
2.	Meaning Existence: - Head - Neck - Wings - Leg	Having Meaning	9	90 %
		No Idea/No Answer	1	10%
3.	Meaning Substance: - Head - Neck - Wings - Leg	- Head is the symbol of leadership - Neck is the symbol of problem solving - Wings is the symbol of protection - Leg is the symbol of responsibility	8	80 %
		No Idea/No Answer	2	10 %
4.	Function: - Head - Neck - Wings - Leg	Educational Function: - Introducing Cultural Identity - Cultural Education - Regeneration and Cultural Preservation - Family Relation	8	80 %
		No Idea/No Answer	2	20 %
		Religious Function: - Respecting parents - Praying - Uplifting the quality of spiritual progress - Uplifting Family Harmony	9	90 %
		No Idea/No Answer	1	10 %

Note: Number of respondents: 10

## 5. Conclusion

In *Simalungun* ethnic, *Dayok Binatur* is made from chicken meat that is arranged regularly on the plate. It is used as a symbol of an intermediary, to convey a message, advice and hope delivered from one side of the family to the other presented at the *Simalungun* community's traditional and special events. From the study results, it is seen that *Dayok Binatur* in *Simalungun* ethnic has four points of local wisdom in each part of

chicken: Head '*ulu*' referring to leadership, neck '*borgok*' referring to problem solving, wings '*habong*' referring to protection, and leg '*kais-kais*' referring to responsibility.

Based on the analysis of the research, it can be concluded that *Dayok Binatur* is the wealth of the archipelago that deserves to be conserved and developed. Every single part of *Dayok Binatur* with the significant points of local wisdom could be used as a guideline to maintain harmony.

## References

- [1] Berkes, F. (1993). *Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Perspektif*. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Nature.
- [2] Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research Methodology (Methods and Techniques)* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Jaipur: New Age International (P) Ltd.
- [3] Manugeran, M.et.al. (2017). *Local Wisdom in Hindu Tamil Ethnic Wedding Tradition in Medan*. RET Academy for International Journals of Multidisciplinary Research. Vol 5, Issue 7. Retrieved from [www.raijmr.com](http://www.raijmr.com) 12 June 2018
- [4] Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (H. Salmon Ed. *California: Arizona State University, USA*).
- [5] Moleong, J. L. (2009). *Metode penelitian kualitatif*. Rosda Karya: Bandung.
- [6] Purba, D. K. (1987). *Sejarah Asal Usul Terjadinya Dan Makna Nama Simalungun*, Pematangsiantar: Partuha Maujana Simalungun
- [7] Soekanto, S. (1990). *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- [8] Sopa, M. (2018). *Local Wisdom in the Cultural Symbol of Indonesian Traditional House*. *KnE Social Sciences*, vol. 3, issue 4, pp. 524-531. Indonesia, Medan.
- [9] Sihotang, D. P. (2013). *Mengenal Kabupaten Simalungun*. Medan: CV. Mitra.
- [10] Sumbayak, J. (2001) *Refleksi Habonaron Do Bona dalam Adat Budaya Simalungun*. Pematang raya: PMS.