

## **COFFEE DRINKING CULTURE AS A SOCIAL PRACTICE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF LEMBAR VILLAGE, WEST LOMBOK**

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### **Abstract**

The culture of drinking coffee in Indonesia has developed into a social practice rich in meaning and function, which goes far beyond just drinking beverages. This culture is an important means of strengthening social interaction between individuals and maintaining and strengthening the cultural identity of the community. This research specifically aims to explore how coffee drinking culture is carried out and interpreted as a social practice in Lembar Village, West Lombok, using an ethnographic approach. Through participatory observation methods carried out directly in the field and in-depth interviews with local residents from various age groups and backgrounds, this study succeeded in uncovering the social dynamics that occur behind the coffee drinking tradition. The results of the study confirm that coffee drinking activities in Lembar Village not only function as a daily routine, but also become a vital social space to build and strengthen solidarity between residents. In addition, this activity is an important medium for information exchange, discussion, and maintenance of local wisdom values that are characteristic of the community. This study highlights the importance of preserving coffee drinking culture as a medium to strengthen social cohesion and community identity, especially in the midst of the rapid modernization and lifestyle changes that have the potential to erode traditional values. Thus, maintaining the tradition of drinking coffee is not only a matter of maintaining habits, but also maintaining the social and cultural sustainability of the people of Lembar Village.

**Keywords:** Coffee Drinking Culture, Social Practice, Ethnography, Lembar Village, West Lombok

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Coffee has long been an important part of Indonesian culture, including in the West Lombok region. In many villages, coffee is not just a drink, but a social practice that is full of

cultural meaning and is the main medium in building and strengthening relationships between citizens. Lembar Village, as one of the villages in West Lombok, is known for its strong and thick coffee drinking tradition, where coffee shops or "warkop" are not only a place to enjoy coffee, but also serve as a center of social activities and community communication. The culture of drinking coffee in Lembar Village is not only a ritual of consumption, but a social practice that implies various cultural values that bind the community. According to Geertz (1973), social practices such as drinking coffee are often "everyday rituals" that feature social and cultural symbols that serve as social glue. In the context of Lembar Village, coffee drinking activities allow residents to interact, discuss, and share information, which ultimately strengthens social cohesion and maintains local cultural identity (Putra & Wulandari, 2018).

Coffee shops in Lembar Village are usually a meeting point for various age groups and social backgrounds. Starting from farmers, traders, to village youth, gathered there to talk about local issues, the economy, to personal matters. Thus, coffee drinking culture acts as an important social interaction medium as well as a space to maintain traditional values and local social norms (Santoso et al., 2020). This practice is also a means to transfer local knowledge and wisdom from generation to generation, thereby supporting cultural sustainability. However, this tradition is not free from challenges, especially in the era of modernization and globalization which brings significant lifestyle changes. The development of information technology and the emergence of various entertainment alternatives and modern lifestyles have caused the interest of the younger generation in the tradition of drinking coffee in traditional coffee shops to decline (Wijaya & Hartono, 2017). Many young generations prefer to consume instant coffee at home or drink coffee in modern cafes in the city, which are sometimes considered more prestigious and in accordance with the urban lifestyle (Arifin & Purnomo, 2019). In addition, economic pressure and changes in social structure also affect the sustainability of traditional coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village. Many traditional coffee shops have to struggle to survive in the face of competition from modern cafes and networked coffee shops that offer different concepts and services (Ramadhani & Setiawan, 2021). This situation has the potential to erode the social values behind the coffee drinking culture that has been the identity of the village community.

This study aims to examine the practice of coffee drinking culture as a social practice in Lembar Village, West Lombok. Through an ethnographic approach, this research seeks to understand how coffee drinking culture contributes to building social cohesion, maintaining solidarity, and maintaining community identity in the midst of the dynamics of changing times. The data was collected through participatory observation and in-depth interviews with residents from various walks of life in the village.

The results of the study revealed that the coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village remains a vital social space despite facing modernization pressure. Villagers still use coffee shops as a gathering place that allows for intense and meaningful social interaction. Through this activity, the values of mutual cooperation, mutual respect, and social solidarity continue to be maintained and inherited (Sari & Prasetyo, 2019). In addition, coffee drinking activities are also a moment of reflection and community discussion about various village issues, which supports participatory joint decision-making. Furthermore, the culture of drinking coffee also plays a role in the preservation of local cultural identity. The tradition of serving coffee in

particular, the ritual of serving coffee, and the distinctive style of conversation are the characteristics of the people of Lembar Village that distinguish them from other communities. This is in line with the findings of Santoso et al. (2020) who stated that cultural practices such as drinking coffee can be a powerful symbol and medium of cultural identity at the local community level.

However, the study also confirms that there are real challenges to the preservation of coffee drinking culture. The shift in values among the younger generation and the erosion of their interest in local traditions are a serious threat. As revealed by Arifin and Purnomo (2019), globalization and modernization bring the influence of a new lifestyle that tends to ignore traditional culture. Therefore, a joint effort is needed to revitalize this culture so that it remains relevant and attractive to the younger generation. One strategy that can be applied is to combine the tradition of drinking coffee with a modern approach, for example through the development of coffee culture ecotourism in Lembar Village, which integrates the experience of coffee drinking culture with education and promotion of local products (Ramadhani & Setiawan, 2021). This approach not only preserves traditions, but also opens up new economic opportunities for the villagers. In addition, local governments and cultural institutions can play an active role in supporting the preservation of this culture through training, documentation, and empowerment programs for local communities (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Digital documentation, such as the creation of videos or social media content about coffee drinking practices in Lembar Village, can also bridge traditional culture with millennials who are more familiar with technology (Wijaya & Hartono, 2017).

In conclusion, the coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village is a very important social practice in maintaining social cohesion and community identity. Despite facing various challenges due to social and cultural changes, this tradition survives and serves as a medium for strengthening social and cultural values. The preservation of coffee drinking culture requires synergy between the community, the government, and various related parties in order to adapt to the changing times without losing its essence and meaning.

## METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods as the main strategy to explore in depth the practice of coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village, West Lombok. This approach was chosen because it provides a space for researchers to understand social realities from the perspective of local communities, particularly in the context of cultural practices that cannot be fully explained through numbers or statistics alone (Creswell, 2013). Ethnography as a method allows the exploration of symbolic meanings, local values, and social dynamics inherent in daily activities such as drinking coffee. The focus of this research is not only to observe consumption behavior, but to trace how the ritual of drinking coffee becomes a means of communication, binding social relations, and a manifestation of the cultural identity of the people of Lembar Village. In this context, coffee shops are not only positioned as a place to drink, but also as a social space that represents power relations, solidarity, and cultural negotiations between individuals and social groups.

Lembar Village was purposively chosen as the research location because it is known to have a strong coffee-drinking tradition and continues to be practiced for generations. This tradition is not only sustainable, but also adaptive to change, making it an ideal site to understand the dynamics between local culture and the influence of modernity. The researcher chose research subjects that represented demographic diversity and social roles in society, namely coffee shop owners, traditional leaders, youth, housewives, and elderly residents. This variety of informants allows for diverse perspectives, from those who preserve cultural heritage directly to generations that are beginning to be influenced by modern lifestyles. Thus, the data collected reflect the diversity of meanings and practices of drinking coffee in complex social contexts.

Data collection was carried out for three weeks through participatory observation techniques and in-depth interviews. Observation was carried out by participating in the daily activities of the community in several coffee shops spread across the village center and suburban areas. The researcher was directly involved in social activities such as hanging out at coffee shops, following conversations, and recording the dynamics of interaction between visitors. This technique refers to the principle of "participant observation" as stated by Spradley (1980), which is the active involvement of researchers in the social environment to capture cultural meaning from an insider's perspective. During observation, the researcher also documented the interactions through field notes, photographs, and situational sketches to reinforce the descriptive validity. Not only that, the researcher also attended several community-based social events related to coffee, such as informal deliberations at stalls and community discussions that indirectly showed the important role of coffee as a social bonding medium.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 key informants who were purposively selected based on their knowledge, experience, and active involvement in coffee drinking culture. The informants include coffee shop owners who have been operating for more than 20 years, traditional leaders who understand the historical context of coffee traditions, youth who represent lifestyle changes, and elderly residents who witness the transformation of coffee culture from time to time. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner, allowing for flexibility in exploring personal narratives and reflective opinions. During the interview, the researcher recorded in detail both verbal and non-verbal aspects, as well as using a voice recorder with the informant's consent to ensure the accuracy of the transcript.

The data analysis process was carried out in layers using thematic analysis techniques as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The initial stage begins with transcribing interview data and field notes, followed by an open coding process to identify units of meaning. These codes are then grouped into main themes related to social meaning, cultural function, and challenges in coffee drinking practices. Some of the key themes that emerged include: "coffee shops as an egalitarian space", "coffee drinking rituals and community cohesion", "shifting cultural preferences of the younger generation", and "cultural resistance to modernization". These themes are interpreted in the social context of the Lembar Village community by considering historical factors, social structure, and external influences such as urbanization and digital technology.

In the interpretation process, the researcher also uses an emic and ethical approach. The emic approach allows researchers to understand the meaning of culture from the perspective of

local communities, while the ethical approach provides a conceptual framework for analyzing cultural phenomena with references to sociocultural theories such as the "thick description" theory of Clifford Geertz (1973), the concept of "third place" from Oldenburg (1999), and the theory of social cohesion from Putnam (2000). By integrating local perspectives and scientific theories, the results of the analysis provide a complete understanding of how coffee drinking culture functions as a complex and meaningful social practice.

To ensure the validity and validity of the data, the researcher applied the source and method triangulation technique. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and visual documentation are compared to each other to ensure consistency of information. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking with several key informants to confirm the interpretation of the results of interviews and observations. This step is taken to avoid interpretation bias while strengthening the credibility of the findings. In addition, researchers maintain transparency by recording self-reflection during the field process as part of the reflexivity process in ethnographic research.

The ethnographic method used in this study proved to be effective in understanding the depth of meaning and social dynamics in the practice of coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village. In contrast to quantitative or survey approaches, this method allows the disclosure of latent and symbolic aspects that are not explicitly visible, such as the role of coffee in building solidarity between citizens, maintaining intergenerational communication, and as a means of communicating social aspirations and criticism informally. The tradition of drinking coffee in Lembar Village has not only become a consumption habit, but has transformed into a symbolic arena where history, identity, and daily practices of the community meet.

Thus, this study not only presents a descriptive picture of coffee drinking culture, but also provides theoretical and practical contributions in the study of cultural anthropology, community sociology, and local cultural preservation strategies. These findings can be the basis for policymakers in designing programs for the preservation of traditions, the development of cultural ecotourism, and the education of local values to the younger generation. Furthermore, the approach and methodology used in this study can be replicated in other cultural studies, particularly in the context of rural communities facing the challenges of modernization and globalization.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The culture of drinking coffee in Lembar Village, West Lombok, has long been a meaningful social practice, beyond just drinking drinks. For the local community, drinking coffee is not an individual activity, but a daily ritual that brings social interaction, fosters solidarity, and maintains community cohesion. This routine seems striking, especially every morning and evening, when residents from various generations of young people, adults and the elderly gather in coffee shops scattered in various corners of the village. They came not only to taste the aroma and taste of coffee, but also to share stories about work in the fields, newborn grandchildren, Hamlet Deliberations, and national political issues.

In an interview with Pak Hadi, the owner of a local coffee shop for more than two decades, he explained that the coffee shop has become a center of discussion and togetherness.

"Every morning and evening, our coffee shop is always crowded. It's not just about coffee, but about sitting together, exchanging news and opinions," he said. This statement illustrates that coffee shops are not just places of trade, but important social spaces where cultural values such as brotherhood, hospitality, equality, and social care are revived and inherited. This is in line with the findings of Fitriani & Santoso (2020), who stated that coffee shops in local Indonesian communities function as a center of social networks as well as an arena for conflict reconciliation. Such stalls are organically designed by the community as a friendly place where anyone can sit together and access information, apparently this function also applies in Lembar.

More broadly, coffee shops in Lembar can also be interpreted as a "third place" classic concept from Ray Oldenburg (1999), describing an alternative public space full of social and democratic meaning. As revealed by Mbai, a village youth, "In the coffee shop, we can talk about anything, from village problems to personal affairs. No one feels more or less, all equal." This egalitarian term affirms that the coffee shop becomes a neutral place where green, old, poor or rich can sit on an equal footing. It is at the heart of rural social cohesion, encouraging genuine interaction and collective bonding.

Local values such as mutual cooperation, simplicity, openness, and mutual respect are also strongly implied in every drop of coffee in Lembar village. Local traditional leader, Ibu Sari, emphasized: "Drinking coffee together is more than just a habit, but a time to listen and maintain brotherhood and strengthen the spirit of mutual cooperation." His expression reflects a collective culture built through simple interactions, reinforcing the findings of Susanto et al. (2019) who call the coffee ritual a non-verbal communication medium that strengthens the dam of indigenous culture.

Nevertheless, the trend of modernization is a real challenge. The presence of urban cafes with modern décor, international coffee menus, and fast WiFi is able to divert the interest of the young people of the village. Andi, a young man from Lembar, said: "Sometimes I like to go to cafes in the city, it's more comfortable, I can play with my cellphone and hang out with friends. Coffee shops in the village feel old-fashioned and less attractive to young people now." Hasanah's article (2021) confirms this trend as a result of modernization that triggers changes in cultural preferences and social identities. Theoretically, the concept of "thick description" from Clifford Geertz (1973) is relevant to interpret the daily ritual of drinking coffee in Lembar. This ritual is a symbolic way of expressing the identity of the community, bringing generations together, and projecting cultural values from the past to the future. Coffee and coffee shops themselves are a symbolic medium where people can adventure in conversation and togetherness. In line with this, Robert Putnam (2000) said in *Bowling Alone* that the components of informal public spaces—such as coffee shops—form the basis of interpersonal capital that supports local democracy. In Lembar, the hangout place became a place to coordinate village activities, a place to spread farmers' information, and mediate conflicts—showing the importance of the existence of a public inclusive space without hierarchy.

For this culture to be sustainable, adaptive strategies are needed. One of them is through cultural digitalization. Huang, Tan & Wang (2022) write that digital technology can be a catalyst for reviving cultural heritage—reaching young audiences without losing traditional essence. In Lembar, digital platforms such as coffee ritual videos, character profiles, photos of local events, or interview footage like this can be published on village social media such as

YouTube, Instagram, and even WhatsApp Broadcast, forming the younger generation's recognition of local culture.

Sector collaboration is important here. Suryadi & Widodo (2020) highlight cultural integration in education as the key to preservation. Lembar Village can add a module of regular visits to coffee shops for elementary to high school students, then motivate students to record field documentation, write essays about local coffee culture or create creative works. This form fosters an early appreciation of local values. Then there are cultural economic opportunities through coffee cultural ecotourism. Nugroho & Anggraeni (2019) stated that tourism based on local culture can encourage preservation while strengthening people's income. In Lembar, community packages such as coffee garden visits, manual roasting demonstrations, traditional coffee classes, and evening coffee shops with local cultural offerings such as sasak, music, or folklore can be developed—forming educational tours as well as authentic cultural experiences.

Practically, these ecotourism efforts can create income growth for village communities and micro business opportunities such as coffee souvenirs, merch, or locally brewed coffee packages, empowering communities while supporting cultural preservation. This realization is also supported by a sustainable development approach, maintaining a cultural and economic balance (ADB, 2017).

In addition, cross-stakeholder collaboration is important: village governments provide regulations and infrastructure—helping village WiFi access, tourist signage, event facilitators; academics from local universities develop curriculum, training, research publications; and the community plays the role of cultural experts. This joint approach is in line with UNESCO's (2003) Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage which emphasizes community participation as a center for the preservation of intangible culture.

The sustainability of village coffee culture also requires monitoring and evaluation. Village governments and academics can build indicators such as youth participation in activities, the number of educational works, or tourism satisfaction ratings—as a reflection of the success of digital, educational, and ecotourism interventions. This data is important as a basis for improving and updating strategies. Overall, the coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village not only practically preserves traditions, but also contributes to social ties, cultural identity, and economic resilience. With the values of mutual cooperation, brotherhood, and openness, the simple ritual of coffee numbers became a symbol of the roots of rural culture—which must be facilitated in order to survive in the middle of the ages. Digitalization strategies, cultural education, cultural tourism, and cross-sector collaboration can form a real foundation for these traditions to survive, providing sustainable social, cultural, and economic benefits.

Thus, "coffee together" is not just a ritual and then forgotten, but a village cultural manifesto that connects humans with historical, social, and philosophical values. The togetherness in every cup of coffee serves as a bridge between the inherited past and the expected future, ensuring that Lembar's cultural roots live on and give strength to local identity amidst global currents.

## CONCLUSION

The culture of drinking coffee in Lembar Village, West Lombok, is more than just a consumption activity; It is a social practice that plays an important role in strengthening relationships between citizens and preserving local cultural values. The coffee shop in this village is an egalitarian public space, where people of all ages and backgrounds gather every morning and evening to talk, exchange stories, and strengthen community solidarity and identity. This tradition reflects the values of openness, simplicity, and mutual cooperation that are characteristic of the social life of rural communities. However, with the advent of modernization and lifestyle changes, particularly among the younger generation who are more interested in modern cafes, the culture of traditional coffee drinking is beginning to face serious challenges. For this reason, conservation efforts need to be carried out collaboratively and adaptively by involving traditional leaders, youth, village governments, and the wider community. Approaches such as cultural documentation, the use of digital media, the development of local-based coffee tourism, and cultural value education among the younger generation are important so that these practices remain relevant and live in the dynamics of the times. Thus, the coffee drinking culture in Lembar Village can continue to be a symbol of social cohesion and cultural richness that is inherited across generations.

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