



Resilience and Communication Strategy of the  
Samin Community Facing the Cement Industry in  
Central Java, Indonesia

---

Agung Wibowo and Waskito Wardoyo

EasyChair preprints are intended for rapid dissemination of research results and are integrated with the rest of EasyChair.

August 16, 2020

# Resilience and Communication Strategies of the Samin Community in Facing the Cement Industry in Central Java, Indonesia

AGUNG WIBOWO

*Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia*  
*agungwibowo@staff.uns.ac.id*

WASKITO WIDI WARDOJO

*Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia*  
*widiwardoyo@gmail.com*

## ABSTRACT

The Samin community, whose lives rely on their surroundings, have experienced great external pressure which is interesting to discuss, specifically the power of large investors, who in the name of development insisted on building a cement industry in the Kendeng Mountain region of Central Java. These plans greatly disturbed community life around the Kendeng mountains where the Samin residents live. What forms of resilience and communication strategies have been used by the Samin community in the Kendeng Mountain region in the face of this pressure? The purpose of this study is to describe the forms of resilience and life strategies of the Samin community in the face of the power of investors. The research method is qualitative with an ethnographic approach. The results show that the strategies and social communication of the Samin community have proved to be effective in building social movements to resist industrial development. The response of the Samin community to the pressure of the development of the cement industry appears in two main ways, namely (1) the Samin community directly rejects a market economy that tends to be profit oriented; (2) the Samin community tries merely to make ends meet, so that it is more appropriately described as apathetic.

*Keywords: Samin, social communication, industry, resilience*

## INTISARI

Masyarakat Samin yang hidupnya mengandalkan alam sekitar ternyata pernah mengalami tekanan hebat dari luar yang menarik untuk dibahas. Terutama di saat kekuatan pemodal besar yang didukung pemerintah mengatasmakan pembangunan bersikeras membangun industri semen di kawasan Pegunungan Kendeng Jawa Tengah. Rencana tersebut sangat mengusik kehidupan masyarakat di sekitar pegunungan Kendeng tempat warga Samin bermukim. Bagaimana ketahanan dan strategi masyarakat Samin di kawasan pegunungan Kendeng menghadapi tekanan tersebut? Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan bentuk ketahanan dan strategi hidup masyarakat Samin dalam menghadapi kekuatan pemodal. Metode penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi dan komunikasi sosial masyarakat samin terbukti efektif membangun gerakan sosial

dalam menolak pembangunan industri. Respon masyarakat Samin terhadap tekanan pembangunan industri semen muncul dalam dua mainstream, yakni (1) masyarakat Samin secara langsung menolak ekonomi pasar yang cenderung berorientasi profit; (2) masyarakat Samin berusaha semata-mata hanya untuk mencukupi kebutuhan hidupnya an sich sehingga lebih tepat dikatakan bersifat apatis.

Keywords: *Samin, komunikasi sosial, industri, ketahanan*

## INTRODUCTION

As a country rich in natural resources, Indonesia has built a natural resource-based industry. The values, ideas, and concepts for this development were imported or adopted from the west. Development is another word for modernization. From this, new assumptions and convictions have emerged in society, that if Indonesia is to become a modern country, everything traditional must be discarded because it is considered backward and an obstacle to development. The paradigms of development of modernization have directly and indirectly weakened local communities that have a wealth of local knowledge or local wisdom.

As explained by Scott (1976), one of the morals of traditional farmers is “safety first”. For poor farmers who are economically and socially vulnerable, a decreased harvest or crop failure will have a detrimental effect on the survival of their family. It is this morality of subsistence and security that is referred to as the principle of “safety first”. This also applies to Samin farmers, a community often known as *Sedulur Sikep*, who always try to avoid risk and focus their attention on the possibility of a decreased harvest rather than on efforts to maximize profit. Samin farmers never think about which kinds of crops will bring the greatest profit, or which crops have a high selling price. The important thing for them in their farming endeavours is to grow crops that can be used to sustain and support their own lives without having to depend on anyone from outside. The *Sedulur Sikep* community have been farmers since ancient times, and adhere to the philosophy of planting crops to fulfill their own needs, not the needs of others. They plant the crops that they can manage by themselves, without any assistance from people outside the community. They believe that if they need help from other people outside their community, they will be required to follow the wishes of these outsiders, whom they view as investors or capitalists.

The Samin community had great concerns when the government announced plans to build a cement factory at the foot of the Kendeng Mountains. These concerns were founded on a very simple logical thought that if the Kendeng Mountains were transformed into an industrial region, the perennials that lived

around the mountain would disappear, which in turn would destroy the water source needed by the local farmers. The water source that was usually used to irrigate the rice fields would instead become a flow of industrial waste. Hence, they feared they would lose their sole source of livelihood and their work as farmers.

The fears of the Samin community were not unfounded, because if their concerns became a reality, it would become a similar situation to in India. According to the International Forum on Globalization (2001), in India more than 2 million small farmers have now lost their land or become isolated and uprooted from their own land. This occurred when their cropland was taken over by the elite powers of large (capitalist) corporations to produce crops with a high selling value. The local farmers (in Punjab, India) subsequently became laborers for these corporations in a new form of slavery with inequitable contracts.

Therefore, the Samin community were exhibiting a long-term mindset, perhaps more advanced than the people in most village communities in Indonesia. The reason they could do this was because they have continued to preserve Samin cultural teachings. The local cultural values that are still relevant, or policies implemented on a local level, offer strategy for managing capitalism and business in taking control of media and technology. By understanding these Samin cultural values and the way they are implemented as a way of day to day life in the Samin community, we will discover a way to world peace, harmony, and preservation of human life, as well as a way to achieve a balanced natural environment, so that our world will truly be freed from the clutches of capitalism. This research aims to describe the forms of resilience and communication strategies used by the Samin community in the face of the development of the cement industry.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Rogers (1971), a communication strategy is a plan designed to change human behavior on a large scale through the transfer of new ideas. Kulvisaechana (2001) defines communication strategies as the use of a combination of communication facets including communication frequency, communication formality, communication content, and communication channels. Meanwhile, Melkote, Srinivas R, (2002), and Effendy (2011), emphasize the importance of effective planning for conveying a message so that it is easy to understand by the communicant and the message conveyed can be accepted, thereby changing the attitude or behavior of a person. Sataoen and Waeraas (2016) state that communication strategies are used to build reputation, therefore communication must be well designed and properly implemented. Day et al. (2017), in their research, explain that if strategic

communication is poor in terms of a long-term objective and plan, it will cause a gradual decline of trust. Melkote, Srinivas R, (2002), and Middleton in Cangara (2013) describe the best combination of all elements of communication, from the communicator, message, channel (media), and recipient, to the effect that is designed to achieve the optimal goal of communication. Thus, a communication strategy is essentially the planning and management that is designed to achieve a particular goal in its operational practice. An effective communication strategy is a strategy that is successful in changing an attitude, changing an opinion, or changing a behavior.

In the view of Radford (2005), a communication pattern in the perspective of a ritual is not a sender conveying a message to the recipient but a sacred ceremony in which everyone takes part together and gathers as a group, like in a *pujawali* ceremony. In the concept of a ritual, more emphasis is placed on communal togetherness in expressing communication, through prayer, singing, and other ceremonial actions. According to Arifin (1994), there are several techniques that can be used in communication strategies. These include redundancy, canalizing, and informative, persuasive, educative, and coercive techniques. Ruslan (2003), on the other hand, describes four kinds of obstacle that may interfere with communication strategies: obstacles in the process of transmission, physical obstacles, semantic obstacles (barriers), and psycho-social obstacles.

Peter.L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, in their book entitled “The Social Construction of Reality, A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge” (1976), outline the social process through its action and interaction, whereby an individual intensively creates a reality that is shared and experienced together subjectively. This theory assumes that social reality exists on its own and the social world structure depends on the humans who are its subject (Kuswarno 2013:11). In a person’s life, he or she develops repetitive behavior, or habits. These habits enable a person to handle a situation automatically which is also useful for other people. In line with Berger’s view, social reality is not created naturally but rather is formed and constructed (Adoni, 1984). This theory is used as the basis for analyzing the resilience of the Samin community.

A study by Sarwoprasodjo (2007) finds that farming activists develop awareness by conducting training for farmers, holding public discussions and meetings, and various other forms of social action. In a similar study, Wijanarko (2014) researches the Al Barakah Farmers Association in the village of Ketapang, in Susukan District, Semarang Regency, Central Java. This farmers association raises awareness as a form of resistance to the marginalization of farmers’ local communication cells that have always been dominated by the state. The forms of advocacy used by these activists include religious or social gatherings,

seminars, and festivals. In his research, Ramdloni (2005), finds that farmers' activism may take the form of various kinds of action, such as protests, occupation, and demonstrations.

Scott also finds that there is a difference in perspective between real resistance on one hand and incidental or even epiphenomenal "signs of activity" on another. Real resistance (a) is well-organized, systematic, and cooperative, (b) has principles and is without ulterior motive, (c) has revolutionary consequences, and or (d) contains ideas or goals that obviate the basis and domination itself. On the contrary, incidental or epiphenomenal "signs of activities" (a) are not well-organized, not systematic, and individual in nature, (b) are speculative or have ulterior motives (desire for convenience), (c) do not have revolutionary consequences, and or (d) in their intentions and logic have a sense of adapting to existing systems of dominance. In any case, the goals of most forms of farmers' resistance today are not to directly overthrow or change a system of domination but rather are directed towards endeavouring to continue to exist and survive in a system that currently prevails. Usually, it is the goal of farmers to operate a system that produces minimum loss for themselves (Scott, 1993).

Puji Lestari et al, carried out an interesting study in the village of Lingga Karo, in North Sumatra, Indonesia, to investigate the use of local wisdom in handling social conflict in this region. This research shows that there are certain forms of traditional communication based on local wisdom which are highly effective for reducing or resolving social conflict. They are known as Runggu and Purpusage, which are forms of heart to heart communication used by people in the village of Lingga Karo (Puji Lestari, et al., 2019). Another interesting study by Hapsari Dwiningtyas Sulistyani, et al. discusses the subject of education of children in the Samin community in Baturejo Pati, Central Java. This research uses an ethnographic approach with qualitative interviews, and observes the life of the Sikep community. The research findings show that Sikep children have a special narration about education, a narration that determines their interpretation of the educational process in their daily lives. There are a number of special principles of learning that are adhered to by these Sikep children, such as the parent being the main teacher, learning agricultural work as part of their daily lives as an essential hard skill, and practicing values of local morality and spirituality as essential soft skills. The Sikep children's narration about education shows that the school which provides a learning process in their daily lives cannot be replaced by formal school, and as such, an education process that accommodates local values must be implemented (Hapsari Dwiningtyas Sulistyani, 2020).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research follows a constructivist paradigm which ontologically asserts that reality exists in various forms of mental construction that are based on social experience, are local and specific, and depend on the individual experience. Epistemologically, the relationship between the observer and the object is a single subjective unit, and the result of the combined interaction between the two (Salim, 2006). The current research examines in more detail the resilience and social communication strategies of the Samin community in the face of the strong power of investors in the development of the cement industry.

The research was carried out in the Kendeng Mountain region which includes the regencies of Pati, Rembang, and Blora. The main basis for choosing this area was the distribution of the Samin community in these regencies. One interesting reason for selecting this region as the place for the research was the resilience of the community in the face of powerful investors, and their success in carrying out collective action to resist the development of the cement industry. In addition, the researcher had also carried out prior research on the Samin community, which facilitated a better understanding of this developing phenomenon.

The research uses a qualitative method, which according to Daymon & Holloway (2008) is related to the subjective nature of social reality. This social reality is demonstrated by the existence of conflict that has been resolved by social communication strategies among the Samin community, so it is a method that produces an understanding from the perspective of stakeholders, and enable the researcher to view various things as they are seen by the subjects themselves. The research is a case study, which Yin (1987) defines as an empirical inquiry that investigates a particular phenomenon, in this case the phenomenon of collective action in the form of resistance to powerful investors. The subject of the research is the individuals involved in the collective action in the form of resistance.

The data source for this research refers to Arikunto (1998), Moleong (2000), Bungin (2006), and Denzin, et al (2006), who define data source as the subject from which the data is obtained. The data sources for the current study are: first, primary data, or the data obtained from direct observation and the result of in-depth interviews with prominent figures in the Samin community. Second, secondary data, which is the data used to support the primary data, in the form of indirect data which provides additional or supporting data about the resistance of the Samin community to the development of the cement industry.

The research data was obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, Focus Group Discussions, and relevant document analysis (Creswell, 1998; Sutopo,

2002; Mulyana 2007). The documentation in this study was primarily a collection of supporting data needed for the research. The techniques mentioned above are the basic techniques used in qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The unit of analysis in this research focuses on the resilience and communication strategies of the Samin community, and the analysis technique used is therefore a single case analysis. According to Miles and Huberman (1992), in a single case analysis, in every case the analytical process is carried out using an interactive model of analysis. In this kind of analysis model, the three components of the analysis are: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing a conclusion or verification.

The data analysis refers to the framework of analysis introduced by Lewis A Coser (1998), which joins together a structural functional theoretical approach with a theory of conflict. Language, culture, perception, knowledge, and other factors such as political influence are significant variables which can influence communication strategies that are effective in development (Mei Ye, K., et al., (2017). Coser applies a structural functional approach to analyze how the structure of the subject of conflict is formed and to examine the impact of the conflict, while to analyze the source and process of the conflict, an approach using the neo-Marxist conflict theory is used. The neo-Marxist conflict theory views conflict not only as the product of a difference in class but also focuses more on its psychological aspects.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### *1. Resilience of the Samin Community*

#### *a) Economic resilience*

Economically, the Samin people have never experienced a deficiency in their lives, even though those outside the community may sometimes believe otherwise. The Samin people are always thankful for whatever they procure from their farming activities, and their consumption expenditure is not based on what they want but on what they can afford. The statement by one *Sedulur Sikep* member: "*yen nuruti kepinginan ora ono enteke*" means that if people always follow their desires, there will be no end.

The Samin people believe that they will never want for anything in their lives if they always work hard, because nature will provide them with all the food they need. They adhere to the principle that as long as they treat nature as it should be treated, nature will reward them by giving them what they need to survive. The hard work of the *Sedulur Sikep* community is widely recognized. Their views about the environment are also very positive. Usually they use just enough natural resources (for example taking wood) for their daily needs, and never exploit these resources or perform special rituals for the preservation of nature. This corresponds to their mindset which is quite simple, straightforward, not



extravagant. Land, to them, is like their own mother, in the sense that it gives them life. They are very close to nature and all aspects of their lives are closely connected to nature.

The *Sedulur Sikep* people consume whatever local foods are available, not only to utilize existing potential but more as a way of living independently. They do not want their lives to be dependent on the outside world. This means that whatever they grow on the land at any one time is the product that they must use. They do not sell in order to replace one product with another, or to add another item to their menu, such as selling corn to buy rice after harvesting a crop of corn. Instead, they will keep the corn to eat themselves. This is the condition that they refer to as simple living. In the perspective of development, this condition is called the economic resilience of the Samin community.

b) *Psychological resilience of the Samin community*

The behavior of the Samin or *Sikep Sedulur* community is very honest, straightforward, simple (innocent) but also critical. Other people are in fact perplexed by their simplicity and innocence, especially from the point of view of the language they use. They speak in an instinctive manner. For example, if we ask how many children they have the answer will be two, male and female, but if we ask how many children they have in total, the answer may be three, four, or five, possibly accompanied by an explanation about how many of their children are male and how many are female. The language used by the Samin people is like a declaration or affirmation. This means that it is a language where once something is stated, it cannot be withdrawn, and they will never go against anything they say.

Resilience in the Samin community is also shown in the institution of marriage. The *Sedulur Sikep* people do not recognize the concept of divorce. They also follow a system of monogamous marriage. In their opinion, marriage is only once in a lifetime. As one member of the community said: "*siji kanggo sak lawase, becik kawitane becik sak lawase*", which means one for all time, good at the start means good for all time. Marriage is not expected to end in divorce. Separation only occurs when one partner "changes clothes" (passes away).

Psychological resilience is also displayed in the way the Samin people think, in their level of self awareness about power and wealth when making decisions. The interaction between men and women is based on joint decision making where no-one gives or takes orders, no-one wins or loses.

c) *Social and cultural resilience of the Samin community*

In their interaction with other human beings, the Samin people promote values that have the ability to moderate human behavior so as not to treat others

unreasonably. "*Wong nandur bakal panen*" (whoever sows shall reap). People will reap good if in their day to day lives they do good, and vice versa. These values are highly effective in establishing or building a life as dignified human beings. The Samin people are more afraid of social sanctions than any other kind of sanction. In this case, local cultural values should be viewed as an asset for development and not as something that goes against the values of modernization which are at the core of the development process.

The Samin community does not recognize the concept of master and servant. When labor is needed during the process of agricultural production, it is acquired by traditional methods. The Samin people still preserve the institution of mutual cooperation in which they ask each other for help whenever it is needed. In the fields, this tradition is practiced from the time of planting until the time of harvest. At harvest time, workers receive "payment" for their labor in the form of a portion of the harvest, known as *bawon*. This model can also be understood as a form of social assurance for the Samin community. When one household of farmers experiences a crop failure they can still rely on the *bawon* from other households as "payment" for their labor. This system, using *bawon* as payment, is known as an open harvest system. It is implemented by almost all members of the community, depending on the type of commodity and work.

d) *Political resilience of the Samin community*

Sustainability has the ability to preserve and develop the resilience of a community and this sustainability can be achieved through the entry point of a local community with its indigenous knowledge (Chowdhoree, I., 2019). In the past, the Samin people have always held onto their self esteem and fought for their rights. For example, when a forest foreman demanded the payment of taxes, they would demonstratively lie down in the middle of their land while shouting "*Kanggo!*" (it's mine!). This has made the authorities and city people cynical, and their movement has been labelled as the actions of a group of rude people. The authorities have even dramatized their actions by referring to the Samin people with an old Javanese saying, "*Wong ora bisa basa*" which means uncivilized people. In the present day, rights are usually defended through collective action, for example by showing resistance to the development of the cement industry. This is evidence of the political resilience in the Samin community.

History has shown the equal access of men and women to decision making on a local level. The political participation or non-participation in village development indicates the extent of political participation on a conventional level. The political resilience of the Samin community can be seen in their involvement in political decisions that are related to the planning, prioritizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation of development. This involvement is not simply to fill

a quorum, but also plays an important role in presenting ideas, and takes place in various forms of local meetings, from the smallest level to the level of Village Representative Body.

2. *Strategies of Communication of the Samin Community in the Face of the Development of the Cement Industry*

According to Murphy (2008), a communication strategy is a holistic design that involves the public. In the Samin community, the communication that is built on oral tradition does not convey information directly but rather represents or brings back the shared beliefs of the community. This includes belief in their ancestors and gratitude to Almighty God for his blessings. One model practiced by the Samin community, known as "*timbang gunem*", is to channel their aspirations and invite others to raise awareness about the importance of the forest and all that exists therein for their children and grandchildren or for future generations. It is this spirit that is always voiced by young people in the *Sedulur Sikep* community whenever they are given the opportunity to express their opinion. Communication strategies are manifested in artificial or symbolic ways (generally in the form of dance, maneuver/play, story, and oral tradition), with the aim of confirmation, and to illustrate something that is considered important by the community.

a) *The lesungan tradition: a communication strategy for cosmological balance.*

The *lesungan* tradition is practiced at important moments such as independence celebrations, district anniversaries, and on occasions when the Samin community fight for their rights. The messages conveyed are reminders that there are folk traditions which must be preserved and guarded but are endangered by the development of the cement industry. Symbolically, pounding rice in the mortar (*lesung*) is a symbol that the community needs to maintain environmental sustainability so that the farmland does not disappear and they can continue to pound rice and safeguard food security and sufficiency. The media for the *lesungan* tradition is cultural festivals with a religious and or traditional element. The desired effect is to create awareness about the importance of protecting cosmological balance and preserving harmony between the macrocosm and microcosm.

The lyrics of one well-known *lesung* song are as follows: "The sound of the *lesung* (a long mortar for pounding rice), its sound is resonant and unrelenting. The sound of the *lesung*, it is pounded to produce an undulating sound. Its sound resonates throughout the whole village". The lyrics "*thok thok thek thok gung*" are the pulsating rhythms produced by the pounding of the *lesung*. It is the sound of the *lesung* that is considered to be the 'mascot' of this song. The song was very popular in its era. It was created by Ki Narto Sabdo, a well-known Javanese artist and shadow puppet master. Almost all of Ki Narto Sabdo's works

(songs) describe the life in a Javanese village community. The meaning of the song is very clear, namely that joy greets the hearts of the Javanese village community when they harvest crops from the earth - crops known as *polowijo*, which means herbs and spices. This song, however, symbolizes the act of pounding rice rather than other activities of gardening or farming.

*b) The Tayub Dance: A communication strategy for building togetherness*

The Tayub dance has positive and noble values, and the message it conveys is about forming social relationships in the community, as well as philosophical content about human identity. The media used is the dance movements of farmers and their accompanying singing that is regulated and synchronized according to an agreement between the performers and the audience. The desired effect is to create a sense of intimacy and brotherhood. The word Tayub is an acronym of the Javanese words "*Tata dan Guyub*" which means to be friends, with a sense of kinship, without rivalry or competition.

The way in which the Tayub dance functions as a communication strategy is as follows. *First*, the ritual function. The ritual function is the most fundamental function of the dance, which is performed at ceremonies for soil fertility. Indeed, almost all forms of performing art were originally used as a part of ceremonial rituals. Along with the developments and changes that have taken place, over time the function of the Tayub dance has undergone changes to become a form of entertainment, performed for commercial purposes. The characteristics of the Tayub dance in its ritual function include: being performed at a select time (a special occasion); performed in a select place (a specially chosen venue); the first man from the audience who joins in the dancing with the Tayub dancer/singer (also called *waranggana*) must be specially chosen; the Tayub performers must be specially chosen; various forms of offering are needed. In the ritual, the dancing together in pairs between the Tayub dancers/singers and men from the audience is merely symbolic, where the female dancer symbolizes the earth or the soil for growing crops and the man represents the seed (paddy). In Javanese, the terms "mother earth" and "father of the heavens", are widely used, and the union between the two causes rain to fall which brings fertility to the land used for growing crops.

*Second*, the social function. A shift in function of the Tayub dance from its ritual function to a more social function began to take place in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the first railway lines began to operate on the Island of Java. The construction of these railway lines meant large areas of forest were cleared and turned into plantations, which at the time was considered legal. This shift in function of the land in turn caused a shift and change in the traditional arts. The Tayub dance was no longer performed only at fertility ceremonies but began to take on a more commercial nature. Performers of the Tayub dance no longer

positioned themselves as artists or performers who were bound to philosophical conceptions about the union of nature between “the father of the heavens and mother earth”. Instead, they began to position themselves based on calculations of profit and loss, as people “selling a service” for entertainment. The art of Tayub became synonymous with the folk culture as it began to be used as entertainment for the people, to liven up wedding celebrations and other similar events.

*Third*, the political function. The Tayub dance was turned into a political tool that has proved effective for attracting and bringing together large numbers of people under the guise of building solidarity and equality. The beating sounds of the musical instruments are believed to contain values of striving for common interests to create harmony; the stamping of feet in time with the rhythms of the drum, the waving of hands in time with the wooden xylophone (*gambang*), and the swaying of heads at each gong stroke are widely understood to demonstrate the bonds of togetherness in striving for common interests.

*c) The Oral Tradition: A communication strategy for building resilience in the Samin community*

The oral tradition is practiced directly in daily life. This research focuses primarily on the sub-category of knowledge, one of six sub-categories that exist in the cognitive domain, namely knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. There are six recognized educational ideologies that have been widely developed: these are educational fundamentalism, educational intellectualism, educational conservatism, educational liberalism, educational liberationism, and educational anarchism (William F O’Neill, 2002). Of these six ideologies, the oral tradition practiced by the Samin community tends more towards an educational ideology of fundamentalism, although it differs in certain respects. Fundamentalists consider knowledge to be a tool for rebuilding a community following a particular pattern of moral excellence that previously existed. The message conveyed in this strategy of oral tradition is that education is a process of moral regeneration, centered on the original goal of existing traditions and social institutions, with emphasis on returning to the past as a collective orientation.

The use of appropriate media and communication channels can increase awareness of a community (Mohamad Hafifi et al., 2017). The communication media used in the oral tradition of the Samin community is the rice-field, because they rely on the rice-fields as a place that they believe is right for imparting their knowledge to their children. The *Sedulur Sikep* community considers land to be their “Mother”. The transfer of cognition is intended to represent a person’s willingness to use or apply a skill, understanding, or principle that they have learnt in one particular field in a new situation

(Nasution, 2004). Throughout their lives, the *Sedulur Sikep* community use oral traditions to transfer knowledge to their children. The effect they hope for in this communication strategy is to implant values such as honesty, not being jealous of others, not harming others, living in harmony with nature, and sustaining environmental conservation.

The process of moral regeneration can be seen in the way the Samin people consistently adhere to the teachings of their ancestors (*Pandom Urip*). Based on the original goals of Samin culture, the Samin people educate their children to become noble (*atmajatama*) in the true sense of the word. They re-emphasize the past as a collective orientation, and in the Samin community this collective orientation can be seen from their strong sense of solidarity. According to Endraswara (2005), the oral tradition is almost comparable to folklore because almost all oral traditions fulfill the criteria of folklore. The oral tradition is a vessel for oral culture that is able to accommodate all aspects of collective heritage. The history of the oral tradition in the Samin community taught by past generations began with Suro Sentiko Samin, who compiled a book that was used by his followers. This book contains teachings and predictions about the future, but not everyone is allowed to study these teachings - only the *Sedulur Sikep* community learn about the teachings contained in this book through the oral tradition passed on by their elders.

d) *The “Ngeli ning ora keli” maneuver: a communication strategy for resilience*  
“Following the current but not being washed away”. This is one of the life philosophies of the Samin people. They understand that in the end, the only thing they can do in their lives is to follow the flow of life with full awareness, and make maneuvers to do all that is possible to survive and reach a calmer state.

The most fundamental spiritual behavior taught by Samin elders is *eling marang hambegan* (to be aware of one’s breath). In another language, this practice is known as *ngetutke hyang bayu* (following the movement of the wind within oneself). We are guided to recognize *Hurip* (Life) inside ourselves, and then to be aware of the Source of Life (*Sang Sumber Hidup*) that is inseparably connected. This Source of Life is the Emptiness that becomes the essence of, and at the same time pervades, human life: *Sang Suwung*.

The central axis for ancient Javanese spiritual practices is *eling*. *Eling* means awareness. One action that can be performed to develop this deep sense of awareness is meditation. In Java, meditation is known as *manegas*, which means the affirmation of inner reality, especially in a situation known as *bertakhta di telenging manah*, which is the real teacher, or *Sang Guru Sejati*. Meditation is also known as *manekung*, *manembah kang linangkung*: this means that the ego

is guided to become aware of the presence of God - *Gusti, Hyang*. Another term for meditation is *mangening*, which means silencing the soul.

In this context, Samin farmers reject a market economy that is oriented towards large profit. The ethic promoted in the Samin community is to help one another, which in part is a form of rejection of the market economy. For example, innovations in the agricultural sector are believed to threaten the guarantee of subsistence security so they are always rejected or avoided. This is evidence that the moral aspect plays a dominant role in the lives of Samin farmers. When adopting new technology, the farmers will make an effort to balance the benefits, costs, and risks that may arise. In this case, irrational behavior is often considered rational by these farmers,

### 3. *The Response of the Samin Community to the Development of the Cement Industry*

There are two views in a longstanding debate that aims to understand the response of the Samin community to the development of a cement industry. *First*, the Samin community, according to the interpretation of some, directly rejects a market economy that is oriented towards large profit gain in response to outside pressure. *Second*, the Samin community farms the land only to fulfill its own daily needs, and no more, and for this reason it is more appropriately labelled as apathetic.

There are a number of things, or perhaps even a paradox, that the researcher found difficult to understand when conducting interviews and observation in the field, and these may be taken as indicators for helping to analyze the two main ideas mentioned above. *First*, on the one hand, the Samin people are seen to be leading a restricted or limited existence, but on the other they do not want to accept help from outside. They do not consider themselves poor and this has been their way of life for generations, or in other words, it is a way of life that for them is not unusual.

One of the ethics developed by the Samin community is to help one another, which is inspired by a character of altruism. This is one of the strategies used by the Samin people to survive. They believe that every member of the *Sedulur Sikep* community must be prepared to accept any trials they encounter in their farming endeavours, and be willing to help one another as a way to overcome these trials. Therefore, they consider each other to be family. This value of kinship is the main foundation that strengthens the local community. Relationships between members of the community reflect those of family so they are willing and able to help each other. According to Zainuri (1995), this value of kinship will develop a sense of loyalty or solidarity and develop an empathetic attitude and behavior. In addition, the value of kinship requires

transparency. Communication networks, specifically through the role of new media, are highly significant in encouraging collective action (Wolfsfeld, Segev & Sheaffer, 2013).

The value of togetherness is a value that has been agreed upon and serves as the basis for the creation of social harmony. If the value of togetherness begins to fade, the existence of the group will also fade. An asset that manifests as a strong value of togetherness in an area is a basic asset for integrating the interests of and developing the community. Without outside facilities, it appears that the local community only has harmony and solidarity but is not growing or developing.

*Second*, the Samin people are very weak in their access to the natural resources in the area around them but on the other hand, they have great concern for the existence of the Kendeng Mountains. According to one prominent member of the community, "The *Sedulur Sikep* people here never do anything to damage the environment, they (the *Sedulur Sikep* community) care greatly about environmental conservation, even though their actions are only due to the fact that farming is their sole source of livelihood. Without being asked, they plant perennials to sustain the environmental conservation of empty land."

*Third*, the Samin people continue to plant crops to support their families' needs rather than planting other commodities, but on the other hand, with the modernization of agriculture, their way of life is also being eroded, as they begin to use tractors and buy fertilizer from outside. Their priority is to plant staple food crops and various other crops (through inter-cropping and crop rotation), as well as replanting the land with a variety of local seeds that have been developed by the local community for centuries. At the present time, they are also starting to return to farming systems of the past by using the manure produced by their livestock.

## **CONCLUSION**

The resilience of the Samin people in responding to change can be seen in economic, social, cultural, psychological, and political aspects. There are several strategies that the Samin community has used in the face of the development of the cement industry, whether artificial or symbolic (in the form of dance, maneuver/play, story, and oral tradition), which are intended as affirmation, to illustrate something that the community considers important. The response of the Samin community to the outside pressure of the cement industry has emerged in two main ways: (1) the Samin people directly reject a market economy that is profit oriented. The rejection of the Samin community is through active participation, from the beginning until they reach the final goal of their action. Their action started with an action plan, and continued with



demonstrations in Semarang and Jakarta, and various other related activities; (2) the Samin people are simply striving to fulfill their own daily needs, so they can more appropriately be described as apathetic. Of these two patterns of reaction, it appears that direct participation is the main choice rather than the second response. The fact that the resilience of the Samin community has grown stronger in spite of the extraordinary pressure from outside is an affirmation and restoration of its existence as a community that is critical, independent, and holds a high bargaining position when dealing with anyone who tries to harass or disturb the harmonious way of life of the community and its descendants.

#### BIODATA

*Agung Wibowo* is a senior lecturer at Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia.  
*Waskito Widi Wardjoyo* is a senior lecturer at Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia.

#### REFERENCES

- Adoni, H., Cohen, A. A., & Mane, S. (1984). Social reality and television news: Perceptual dimensions of social conflicts in selected life areas. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 28(1), 33-49.
- Arifin, Anwar. 1994. *Strategi Komunikasi: Sebuah Pengantar Ringkas*. Bandung: Armico.
- Berger, Peter & Luckmann, Thomas (1967). *The Social Construction of Reality, a Treatise in the Sociological of Knowledge*. London: Penguin Books.
- Bogdan, Robert, and Taylor. 1993. *Dasar-Dasar Penelitian Kualitatif*. Translated by A. Khozin Afandi. Surabaya. Publisher: Usaha Nasional.
- Bungin, Burhan. 2006. *Sosiologi Komunikasi: Teori, Paradigma, dan Diskursus Teknologi Komunikasi di Masyarakat*. Jakarta: Kencana Publisher.
- Cangara, H. (2014). *Perencanaan & Strategi Komunikasi*. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada
- Carroll, William K 2004, *Democratic Media Activism through the Lens of Social Movement Theory*, paper for The International Association for Media and Communication Research, Porto Alegre.
- Chowdhoree, I. (2019). Indigenous knowledge for enhancing community resilience: An experience from the south-western coastal region of Bangladesh. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 40, 101259.
- Coser, L. A. (1998). *The functions of social conflict* (Vol. 9). Routledge.
- Creswell, John W. 2006. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Day, C., Niekerk, M. V., & Okumus, F. (2017). The important of strategic communication during change management at Palm College of Hospitality and event management. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 5(3), 87-92.
- Daymon, Christine and Holloway, Immy. 2008. *Metode Riset Kualitatif dalam*

- Public Relations dan Marketing Communications. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Bentang.
- Denzin, K., Norman, and Lincoln, S., Yvana. 2009. Handbook of Qualitative Research. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Effendy, O.U. 2011. Ilmu Komunikasi: Teori dan Prakteknya. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Hamad, Ibnu. 2006. Communication as Discourse. Makalah. Jakarta.
- Hapsari Dwiningtyas Sulistyani, 2020. "The Narrative of Ethnic Minority Children on Education in Central Java – Indonesia," Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication. Volume 36 (2), 306-319.
- International Forum on Globalization, 2001. Globalisasi, Kemiskinan dan Ketimpangan. Yogyakarta: Cindelarast Pustaka Rakyat.
- Kaufman, M. 1997. "Community Power, Grassroots Democracy, and the Transformation of Social Life," in M Kaufman & H D Alfonso (eds.), Community Power and Grassroots Democracy. London: Zed Books.
- Kulvisaechana, Samboon. 2001. The Role of Communication strategies in change management process: A case study of consignia brand an business status Introduction. University of Cambridge.
- Kuswarno, Engkus. 2013. Metode Penelitian Komunikasi Fenomenologi. Jakarta: Widya Padjajaran.
- Melkote, Srinivas R, 2002. Theories of Development Communication. In Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication. Second Edition. William B. Gudykunst and Bella Mody (Eds.). Sage Publications. London. New Delhi.
- Mei Ye, K., Mohd Danuri, M., Mohamed, O., & Selamat, N. (2017). Effective Communication Strategy with Community and Landowner in the Construction of High Voltage Power Transmission Line in Peninsular Malaysia. Journal Of Surveying, Construction And Property, 8(1), 75-94. doi:10.22452/jscp.vol8no1.6.
- Miles, Matthew. B and Huberman, A. Michael,. 1992. Analisis Data Kualitatif. (Translated by Tjetjep Rohendi Rohidi). Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia.
- Mohamad Hafifi Jamri, Nurzali Ismail, Jamilah Ahmad, & Darshan Singh. (2017). Kempen kesedaran kesihatan awam: Satu tinjauan literatur dari sudut penggunaan media dan komunikasi di Malaysia. Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication, 33(3), 1-20.
- Moleong, Lexy, J. 2000. Metodologi Menelitian Kualitatif. Bandung: Penerbit Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Mulyana, Deddy. 2007. Ilmu Komunikasi Suatu Pengantar. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya Publisher.
- Murphy, G. (2008). Communication strategy: A best practice guide to developing communication campaigns. United Kingdom.
- Puji Lestari, et.al, 2019. "Use of Local Wisdom (Purpusage) through Heart-to-Heart Communication in Settling of Social Conflicts in Karo, North Sumatra

- Indonesia," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, Volume 35(3), 163-181.
- Radford, Gary, 2005, *On The Philosophy of Communication*, Wadsworth, Belmont.
- Ramdloni, M. (2005). *Teologi Petani: Analisis Peran Islam dalam Radikalisme Gerakan Petani pada Forum Perjuangan Petani Nelayan Batang Pekalongan (FP2NB) di Kabupaten Batang dan Pekalongan.*[Tesis]. Surakarta: Universitas Muhammadiyah.Surakarta
- Rogers, E. M., & Shoemaker, F. F. (1971). *Communication of Innovations; A Cross-Cultural Approach*.
- Ruslan, Rosady. 2003. *Metode Penelitian Public Relations dan Komunikasi*. Jakarta: Rajagrafindo Persada.
- Salim, Agus. 2006. *Teori dan Paradigma Penelitian Sosial Buku Sumber untuk Penelitian Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana
- Sarwoprasodjo, S. (2007). *Penggunaan Ruang Publik Untuk Pemecahan Masalah Sosial Di Pedesaan*. [Dissertation]. Depok: Universitas Indonesia.
- Sataoen, H. L., & Waeraas, A. (2016). Building a sector reputation: The strategic communication of National Higher Education. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 10(3), 165-176. doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2016.1176567
- Scott, James C. 1976. *The Moral Economy of The Peasant: Subsistence and Rebellion in Southeast Asia*. Yale University Press. New Haven.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 1993, *Perlawanan Kaum Tani*, Jakarta: YOI
- Suhartono, *Bandit-bandit di Pedesaan Jawa: Suatu Studi Historis*, 18
- Sutopo, Hubertus., 2002. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Dasar Teori dan Terapannya dalam Penelitian*. Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University.
- Wijanarko, W., Sarwoprasodjo, S., & Rangkuti, P. A. (2014). Communication of Critical Consciousness in Peasant Movement. *Makara Hubs-Asia*, 18(1), 4268.
- Wolfsfeld, G., Segev, E., & Sheaffer, T. (2013). Social media and the Arab Spring: Politics comes first. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 18(2), 115-137.
- Yin, Robert.K. 1987. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills. California: Sage Publication.