

# The Effectiveness of Sunda Culture In Business Resilience During The Pandemic Covid-19

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## **Abstract**

Indonesia is a pluralistic country and its territory is quite wide, from Sabang to Merauke, consisting of various tribes with different cultures and languages. Cultural and linguistic differences have also entered into the governance, economy, and law enforcement in each region, especially in West Java. West Java is a province where the majority of the population comes from the Sundanese tribe. Handling the COVID-19 pandemic also finally has a different way and the way people survive in a pandemic is also different according to the customs and habits of their respective regions for West Java using Sundanese customs/culture. Business resilience is a big concern for both the government and the private sector. Economic recession is also a new challenge amid the outbreak of COVID-19 in Indonesia. The lengthy handling of COVID-19 in Indonesia has also slowed down improvements, especially in the economic sector due to reduced income which has an impact on reducing people's purchasing power. So the question arises on how the Sundanese culture is effective in dealing with business resilience in a pandemic. This research uses qualitative descriptive research with data collection methods based on field observations, interviews, and documentation. This study found that Sundanese culture has effectiveness against business resilience in a pandemic, seen from the economic growth rate which is still increasing by 2.73% (y-on-y). The Sundanese culture which has strong effectiveness is a culture of communication, a culture of social relations, and a culture of cooperation, all of which are summarized in the words *silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh*.

**Keywords:** Culture Sundanese, Business, Economic recession, Pandemic COVID-19

## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic which spread at the end of 2019 then entered Indonesia in February 2020 after the discovery of the first case in Depok. Prevention of the spread of COVID-19 uses several methods using masks, washing hands, and social distancing. The use of the distance guard method has contributed to the enforcement of the PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) regulations following the Minister of Health regulation or Permenkes number 9 of 2020.

(Rosmha Widiyani, Detiknews, 20 April 2020). The social distancing policy enforced by the PSBB regulation makes companies do several policies namely work from home, unpaid leave, and even layoffs en masse. According to the Head of the Manpower and Transmigration Office for West Java, Mochamad Ade Afriandi, noted that 62,848 workers from 1,041 companies in West Java were sent home. (Puji Fauziah, Pikiran Rakyat, 5 May 2020)

The domino effect of the company's policy of lying off or laying off employment causes reduced income due to a reduction in monthly wages and even cuts in people's income. An extreme reduction in the company's production capacity also applies. This condition causes an extreme decrease in consumers or buyers and the raw materials for home industry production are scarce or experience an increase in prices. This relationship in the economy is called opportunity cost and scarcity. (Muhammad Khusaini, 2013: 1) The implementation of PSBB also hampers the process of distributing goods to consumers according to the ATI (Indonesian Toll Association) data, average daily traffic throughout Indonesia has decreased between 40-60% since the beginning of March 2020. Service providers and distribution are also worried about being exposed to COVID-19 so that several distribution services have also stopped the distribution process. (Athika Rahma, Liputan6, 12 May 2020).

The service sector related to business has also experienced a decrease in income and even temporarily closed due to the inability to pay employee salaries due to reduced customers, for example, construction workers, make-up artists, wedding organizer workers, photographers, weddings. The government in the first quarter issued a National Economic Recovery (PEN) program with the main objective of protecting, maintaining, and increasing the economic capacity of business actors, especially MSMEs. The government also issued other policies, namely providing work incentives, training, and credit relaxation, however, according to Suroto, the head of the Strategic Socio-Economic Cadre Association (AKSES) the program was running slowly and misdirected. The micro and small businesses account for 99.3 percent of our 64 million business actors. They have been community employers, up to 95% of the total workforce. They are a sector that has supported the economy of many people. (Noviarizal Fernandez, Bisnis.com, 15 August 2020).

Based on the background of the problem above, the researchers narrowed the research to one research subject, namely the effectiveness of culture in West Java, namely Sundanese culture towards business during the COVID-19 pandemic with the title of the research is the effectiveness of Sundanese culture in business resilience in the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the background of the above problems, the researchers formulated the research in the formulation of the problem as follows: (1) What Sundanese culture has effectiveness for business during the COVID-19 pandemic? (2) How effective is the Sundanese culture on business resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Research Methodology**

The research method used by the researcher is a qualitative research method, which is where the research emphasizes the observation research method in the field and the data is analyzed in a non-statistical way, although it does not always have to find the use of numbers and the approach uses an ethno methodological approach, namely to understand how people perceive, explain and describe the order of their own life.

The research data collection was carried out descriptively which was then written in the report. The data obtained from this study are in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. It is testing using triangulation which is done extensively, both method triangulation and triangulation of data sources. In handling it, it prioritizes the emic perspective, which is more concerned with

the respondent's view, namely how he views and interprets the world and his point of view. This research verification uses negative or positive conflict cases. Purposive sampling has a small sample and is selected according to research objectives. (Asep Ahmad Fathurrohman, an daryan, 2017: 22-26).

Besides, descriptive research does not provide treatment, manipulation, or alteration of the variables under study, but rather describes a condition as it is. The only treatment given is the research itself, which is carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. (Nana, 2013: 73).

## **Research Discussion**

### **Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Characteristics**

According to Dun Steinhoff and John F. Burgess, entrepreneurship is a person who organizes, manages, and dares to take risks to create new businesses and business opportunities. According to Schumpeter an entrepreneur is an entrepreneur who implements new combinations in the engineering and commercial fields into practice (Suryana, 2003: 11-12). Entrepreneurship according to Scarborough, NM (Slamet, 2014: 3) is someone who creates a new business by taking risks and uncertainty to achieve significant profits and growth by identifying opportunities and combining the necessary resources so that these resources can be capitalized.

Entrepreneurs should have the enthusiasm to expand knowledge to know the characteristics they must have, the reasons people try also vary, such as high needs being met, a desire to take risks, moderate, strong self-confidence, and a willingness to do business. There are 4 characteristics of entrepreneurship according to Justin et al (2001: 10), namely: (1) the need for high success, Psychology recognizes that everyone is different in the level of need for success. Some people want to try a business, follow trends, or transition from work culture to business culture. One of the changes occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic (2) the desire to take risks, the risks are taken by entrepreneurs are always different regarding the level of risk. High-risk high return, a low-risk low return is usually practiced in the business world but in the middle-class many people do low-risk returns due to factors limited capital. (3) Self-confidence People who have high enough confidence in themselves then success is just a matter of time as the saying goes man behind the gun is not what you sell but who sells it means that if the seller has high self-confidence then success is only achieved. (4) A strong desire to do business and know what to do is important. Small business people must have a strong desire not just to try but with the right judgment.

Slamet (2014: 3) adds that the results of the survey show that entrepreneurs have the following characteristics: (1) Desire to find out feedback as soon as possible, meaning that they want to immediately see the progress of their business, so that when there is feedback, entrepreneurs can immediately improve their business processes over done (2) Energetic and physically strong (3) Future-oriented (4) Organizational skills (5) Value achievement higher than money.

Scarborough and Zimmerer (Suryana, 2003: 14) suggest characteristics, which include: 1. The desire for responsibility, namely having a sense of responsibility for what they do. Someone has a sense of responsibility will always be introspective. 2. Preference for moderate risk, namely preferring risk in the middle, meaning that he is a person who takes risks, does not take too low or too high in the middle. 3. Confidence in their ability to succeed, namely believing in their ability to succeed and the company to become big. 5. Value of achievement over money, which is more appreciating value than money.

According to Anoraga (2007: 30) the characteristics of entrepreneurs are as follows (1) Adaptive, responsive to changes an entrepreneur is required to be responsive to existing changes both in terms of methods and in terms of using technology based on existing situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Every change by entrepreneurs is considered to contain profit opportunities. (2) High creativity. Creativity is an act of always creating a new product, either a physical idea or product, tagline, brand mark, or technology. (3) Originality, Original is not only following other people, but having their own opinion, having original ideas and truly from themselves. Original does not have to be new, but the product can be the result of a new combination an existing business, resulting in a new business.

### **Definition of Culture**

Culture is the product of human reason and is a gift from God given to humans. Humans can develop their activities and creativity to an extraordinary level with a cultural approach to culture that can be defined as the main value of human ideas. Meanwhile, according to culture (Koentjaraningrat, 1990: 180) is defined as the whole idea, action, and work of humans in the context of community life which is made the property of humans by learning. Thus, almost all human action is cultural.

Van Peursen said that talking about culture is the same as talking about people. This means that between man and culture are inseparable, as cannot be separated between substances and their properties, between sugar and sweetness, between salt and salty taste. (Van Peursen, 1976: 9). According to the anthropologist, culture is the whole way of life of any society and not only part of that way of life, but namely, the part that is considered by society to be higher or more desirable in another sense is also the way people live in that society if culture applied to our way of life. (Ihrami, 1996: 18).

However, some consider that the concept of society and the concept of social life has slight differences, namely (1) The concept of community life (society) is human units in carrying out social processes that occupy a certain area for a relatively long time based on a customary identity or certain norms, and (2) the concept of social life is the processes of individuals in society in fulfilling their various needs. Based on these differences, the meaning of social life is more dynamic than the meaning that society is a place for the development of social activities or life (Goode, WJ 1977: Koentjaraningrat, 1989).

Adding Koentjaraningrat the characteristics of society are having customs, social norms, a set of rules, or laws that regulate all patterns of social action of members of the community. According to David Popenoe, almost all social processes or social relationships between community members arise because of life necessities that must be met together or there are common problems that must be resolved. (Arifin: 2010: 6).

The economy also comes from the basic word, namely Oikos, but the emphasis is on studying the human household, which is a human being part of a living being whose life depends on other living things. (Soemarwoto, 1989) explained that ecology and economy have many similarities. It's just that the transactions used in ecology are not one-dollar rupiah, but materials, energy, and information. In ecology, all three revolve around a community over among several communities as the right of currency flows in circulation in the economy. (Sofyan Anwar mufid: 2014: 11-12). Culture is closely related to the life of the people in the region, it can be used as a means of survival and can even be used to increase prosperity. Because culture is part of a group that can relate to each other, but in the economic community it is not only related to money but business information, market information, distributor information, and event information as a reseller.

## **Sundanese Culture**

Sundanese Originated from the Salakanagara and Tarumanegara kingdoms. The culture of the people who live in the western region of the island of Java, but over time it has spread to various parts of the world can be done using transmigration or assimilation through marriage.

Sundanese comes from the word *Su Bagus Baik*, everything that contains elements of goodness, Sundanese people are believed to have the ethos/character/character of the Sundanese as a way to the virtue of life. Character/characters Sunda question is *cageur* (healthy), *bageur* (good), *Ko* (right), *singer* (introspection), and *smart* (smart/intelligent) which has been run since the days Salaka Nagara to pakuan pajajaran, has brought prosperity and well-being of more than 1000 years. (Wikipedia, 11 August 2020).

The majorities of Sundanese people embrace the Islamic teachings although many still embrace teachings following myths or local areas or still mix old cultures with their current religions such as animism, dynamism for example is Almsgiving Sea, worshiping trees, graves and having other sacred places.

*Cageur* , which means good or must be healthy both physically and mentally, healthy from the way of thinking, healthy in opinion or discussion with others, healthy morals do not violate what is prohibited in Sundanese culture, healthy in acting according to actions and actions, healthy prejudice or distance the nature of *suudzon* ism.

*Bageur*, namely kindness, compassion for fellow human beings, likes helping others in the form of material or other assistance. Whether it is in the form of a good character in action or deed, whether in speech it does not talk about other people besides that, whether it is good to the environment where it lives. *Bageur* is also usually a prayer that parents give to their children.

*Bener* that is true in all instances not to lie, not perfunctory in doing the job, trust, correctly following the teachings of their religion, the correct leadership and correct if given the mandate to him, and right concerning beings' human and the environment

*Singer*, that is the conscious self-, self-full of-awareness, not anxious, acting according to one's ability and behaving following human capacity, understanding every task, putting others before personal, good at respecting other opinions, full of compassion, not quick to anger when criticized but is permeated with meaning the essence.

*Pinter*, which is clever in terms of both the science world and the hereafter, has a very broad knowledge, good at talking, good at putting themselves, and clever in understanding the conditions that exist in the community and around.

Sundanese culture has certain characteristics that distinguish it from other cultures. In general, the people of West Java or Tatar Sundanese are often known as religious communities. This tendency is seen as in the saying " *silih asih, silih asah and silih asuh* loves one another, sharpens oneself and protects one another. Besides that, Sundanese also has several other cultures which characteristics such as politeness, humility towards others, to older people, and love to those who are less. In Sundanese society, there is cultural wisdom of building human life by placing the importance of harmonious relations between people in the life of people who live independently without forgetting their identity and habitat to improve the quality of humanity, contained in the concepts of *silih asih, silih asah, and silih asuh (silas)* ( Suryalaga, 2010: 126) The relationship between individuals in Sundanese society in everyday life runs relatively positively. Moreover, the Sundanese people have the character of "*someah hade ka semah*". This is evident from the fact that many newcomers or guests never recede to Tatar Sunda, including those who are reluctant to return to their homeland. Furthermore, many strategic activity sectors are dominated



by immigrants and this is a fact which shows that the Sundanese have friendly and kind nature towards immigrants or guests.

Between the "white lines" and "boxes" in the picture are symbols of a dam, dam, and water channel. These three water structures are the key to utilizing the fertile natural wealth of West Java towards the welfare of its people, as the motto written at the bottom is "Gemah Ripah Repeh Rapih." Gemah ripah means fertile and prosperous, sufficient in clothing and food. Repeh neat means harmony, peace, safe, and prosperous.

Recognized also by other ethnicities in this country that most of the Sundanese people indeed have harmonious relationships and are meaningful with the migrants and mukimin. It is characterized by a profound relationship with empathy and friendship. It is not surprising that friendship, mutual understanding, and even brotherhood often occurs in daily life between Sundanese and immigrants.

Based on the above explanation regarding Sundanese culture, namely the religious character and attitudes of the Sundanese people in West Java, it is related to business, namely the synergy between religious character and attitude and business fundamentals, namely:

Cageur or health is capital The main thing that humans have in carrying out all their activities, without health, humans cannot do anything. A healthy body in the business world is also one of the important assets, especially for day laborers who earn money through daily activities. According to Andi Wijayanto (2013: 4) in his article, it is said that there are factors main that influence the success of a business, one of which is having detailed knowledge of the key factors needed to succeed in the industry and the physical stamina required for workers. In a pandemic that has caused the number of people infected to exceed 200,000 people, health is the main factor and capital, so the Sundanese culture cageur makes business resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bageur and the attitude of the Sundanese people indeed come from attitude, religion, and correction practicing the teachings. Religious and cultural customs it will be born attitude bageur (Good) and Ko (Right). Business is one of the activities that require attitude bageur because it is part of self-service and branding and true is an attitude where honesty is the most necessary thing in business life. This pandemic where many people are affected due to the implementation of the PSBB has made many people do whatever business they don't see properly. Changes in attitude due to loss of income are also a problem with increasing crime. Without attitude, bageur, and right in business, the company will become a new problem. Scarborough and Zimmerer quoted by Suryana in their book (2003: 14), the characteristics of a business that pays attention to culture should have the attitude, desire for responsibility, and value of achievement over money, meaning that value is more important than just an advantage in Sundanese culture is bageur and true. Attitude bageur and right will make businesses survive during a downturn economy even though profits are likely to decrease. Goodwill or name is an advantage that cannot be replaced by an amount of money.

Singer is the attitude resulting from applying bageur and correctness as conveyed by Suryana that someone who has a responsible attitude will always be introspective, not arrogant, and always listen to what will make the company and its business big and survive a pandemic. Introspection always listens, so with an introspective attitude, born innovation is and always adapts to the situation, no longer with the pandemic. Jack Ma said that complaining is important for a business because complaining that eating will create opportunities because the business is growing at the input of consumers. So with the attitude, singer's namely introspection born after an attitude of responsibility, business resilience will be maintained.

A smart Being an important part that every entrepreneur must-have. Smart in strategizing, smart in organizations, smart in seeing opportunities, and smart in managing finances. According to Yunus Suryana, the characteristics of character entrepreneurs are having a future orientation. An element that must be owned is thinking positively (Positive thinking) and having extensive knowledge.

Based on attitudes religious, people's it can also strengthen business defenses during a pandemic, namely:

Discipline: The business world is a world full of competition and competition. Competition can be of the same product, price competition, to competition between individuals. However, in Sundanese culture, competition is categorized as the word *silih asah*, which means to test and provide competition. The message to be conveyed is that if the word mutually means there is an understanding, it is usually called a healthy competition as conveyed by Totok S. Wiryasaputra regarding the 10 basic attitudes of entrepreneurs.

Compassion, care for care: This pandemic in Indonesia requires the involvement of many people because the virus is still new and anti-virus has not been found, so the certainty of the completion time of this pandemic is uncertain. Culture, penance compassion, and reparation foster the culture of mutual help among fellow society Indonesian especially the people of West Java. Culture compassion, penance, penance foster care is very important in the business world. It is in West Java gridded with many business activities such as milk Pangalengan. This concern will help people to survive this pandemic, especially in the business world. UMKM what is needed is the involvement of many people because in the capital it is not big with the concept of penance foster care, the marketing process becomes a solution.

West Java Province also has a tagline, namely *gemah ripah*, which means that the people of West Java must have prosperity. Indirectly, business is an effort to achieve prosperity. *Repeh* is part of management's risk that every problem does not have to be raised but resolved properly. Although in general the community members mutually care, love, and care for each other, for the business that is nature it professional in must be resolved privately. Neatness means that everything must be done in an orderly manner, meaning that the character that must be possessed is good organizational management, so with good organizational management, the business will run well.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the description above, the researchers can conclude that the culture of the Sundanese community can make business during the COVID-19 pandemic survive. The Sundanese culture that can make business resilience stronger is Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Singer, and Smart. Apart from that, the religious characters of Sundanese culture, namely chanting, compassion, and fostering strengthen what has become a Sundanese culture.

The Sundanese culture which is used as the tagline for West Java is also *gemah ripah*, *repeh*, neat, making resilience strengthen the existing economic structure. Culture, characteristics, and the agreement that the majority of people in West Java Sundanese culture following the characteristics of a successful entrepreneur, but it bore the Sundanese culture of solidarity to help each other, especially during a pandemic COVID-19.

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