Research Article

Ciu Bekonang as a Traditional Alcoholic Drink: Sociohistorical Phenomena and Health Concerns

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Abstract

Ciu is a traditional alcoholic drink known by the enthusiasts from generation to generation in Bekonang district, Sukoharjo regency, Indonesia. The objectives of this study are to examine sociohistorical phenomena underlying the presence of Ciu Bekonang in the Bekonang district from Mangkunegaran sugar factory in 19th-20th century to the present, in addition to determine the social and personal effects caused when a person or community has a drinking habit consuming Ciu Bekonang. This study found that the Ciu Bekonang has long been manufactured. Its presence is inextricably linked to the presence of sugar factories in the history of plantations in Surakarta. Consuming Ciu Bekonang to get drunk is illegal, even if the community around it shares the Bekonang community's drinking habit and many community leaders, including religious leaders and elders, still revere and adhere to the standard. However, because of the process of distillation, the Bekonang region produces 90% of its alcohol as a means to promote health. Additionally, the use of alternative medicine in the Bekonang district is equivalent to that of Surakarta and other parts of Central Java. This study eventually suggests that the stigma associated with the manufacture of alcohol in the Bekonang region needs to be overcome in the perspective of others in the community.

Keywords: Ciu; Community; Culture; Bekonang district; Drunk

Introduction

More than 50 small industrial or house enterprises manufactured molasses-based alcohol in Bekonang district, Sukoharjo regency. The alcohol produced in Bekonang district has a modest level, roughly 37%. The company has been passed down through generations, so what they do has not evolved much since the time of their forefathers. With such minimal uses, it is not surprising that the results fall short of expectations. Only 37% of the alcohol produced was determined. The uncomfortable social ramification of a low alcohol level (37%) is that what produces in the form of alcohol with a content of 37% is widely abused for drinking (drunkenness), especially by young people in rural Bekonang and the surrounding area. If young people in Bekonang or other areas of Surakarta want to become drunk, they go to Ciu Bekonang, which is reasonably priced.

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Due to its proximity to the center of Surakarta (approximately 15 kms east of Surakarta), the culture and environment of the Bekonang people's social system are nearly identical to the culture of the people of Surakarta in general. What is unique about the Bekonang district community is that when the people arrange activities in the form of parties or other fun events, many of them participate in drinking, consuming alcohol and getting drunk with Ciu Bekonang. Religious leaders and community elders, especially local health actors, have frequently issued advisories about the consequences and side effects of excessive alcohol consumption. However, because it has become a habit and tradition to consume alcohol, people disregard these cautions and prohibitions.

A number of studies on Ciu Bekonang have previously been carried out, such as the use of Ciu Bekonang waste for bio gas production, Ciu Bekonang alcohol enrichment using adsorptive distillation, buying and selling alcohol in the review of islamic law at the ciu factory in Bekonang village, case study of the alcohol crafts home industry in Bekonang village, development and economic strategy of entrepreneurs in the ciu industry in Bekonang village [1-5]. Furthermore, many sociological theories of deviant behavior have studied general behavior in criminality, violations, mental illnesses, drunkenness, and drug addiction [6-9]. Consequently, the condition of drunkenness, as practiced by individuals who consume Ciu Bekonang, includes alcoholism, which frequently violates cultural norms. The objectives of this study are to examine the sociohistorical phenomena underlying the presence of Ciu Bekonang in the Bekonang district from the Mangkunegaran sugar factory in the 19th-20th century to the present, as well as to determine the social and personal effects caused when a person or community has a drinking habit which involves Ciu Bekonang.

Methods

The method used in this study was based on qualitative descriptive data analysis approaches. Pitana explained that, generally, this study generates descriptive data, is humanistic, understands the meaning underlying the participant's behaviors, and comprehends the issue within a limited scope [10]. Qualitative study methodologies focus on the depth of understanding by using informant interviews as data sources [11]. A number of individuals associated with Ciu Bekonang including the head of the Bekonang district Alcohol Craftsmen Association, Ciu enthusiasts were interviewed in-depth. In addition, this study draws on a variety of historical materials, including daily newspapers, research journal articles, and relevant reference resource books.

Results and Discussion

The origins of the Ciu or alcohol industry in Bekonang

Ciu topic is inextricably linked to Bekonang district, a small industrial center for distilling alcohol located in the Mojolaban District of Sukoharjo Regency. According to the 1993 monograph map of Bekonang district, the village sits approximately 12 kms north of the regency city and 8 kms southeast of Surakarta Municipality. Bekonang district is divided into 12 hamlets:

- Sembung Wetan Hamlet,
- Sembung Kulon,
- Sentul,
- Suren Lor,
- Suren Kidul,
- Bekonang,
- Tegal Rejo,
- Santren,
- Ngambaklipuro,
- Baleharjo,
- Ngambak Kalang, and
- Mojosari

The predecessors of the Javanese people in Bekonang district had been actively involved in the village's alcohol industry since the Dutch and Japanese colonial eras. Even though they had been working in secret at the time, he had created something called "Ciu" with a low alcohol amount. Ciu, also known as Ciu Bekonang, was initially produced for the sole purpose of consuming liquor and becoming inebriated [12]. During the reigns of the kings (Surakarta and Yogyakarta palaces), there was still a custom of harvest celebrations or hosting royal guests to hold parties and traditional dances such as Tayub, Sinden Ledek, and so on. Even though these celebrations took place during the day, there were probably Ciu Bekonang drinking events for drunkenness, both among royal courtiers and citizens from throughout the kingdom.

The home industry craftspeople Ciu Bekonang were only about 20 people when Indonesia gained independence in 1945, and their daily output was about 10 liters. The manufacturing equipment is still fairly basic. Sales are made in secret and to particular individuals who enjoy being inebriated. Between 1961 and 1964, the "Ciu Bekonang" alcohol industry made strides. Progress has been made in increasing the level of alcohol from 27% to 37% using relatively inexpensive equipment. The alcohol yield, which remains at 37%, is accommodated, and the alcohol level is increased [13]. There was also a rise in the number of workers at the time, reaching roughly 30 alcohol craftsmen. The products were sold in practically every part of Surakarta, Surabaya, Kediri, and other cities [14].

In the 1980s, the Level II Regional Government of Sukoharjo (Dinas Perindustrian) provided Rp. 2,000,000 in equipment aid. Alcohol concentrations can be increased to 60%. In 1997, a text of agreement was signed with PT. Indo Acidatama Chemical Industry, a big alcohol industry in Karanganyar (Central Java). With current equipment, the alcohol concentration might be increased to 70% or even 90% in February 2000 [15].

The process of manufacturing alcohol had been around since the Dutch era, about the 1930s. Initially, this alcohol was used to make whiskey, which was sipped by many peasants at celebratory events or post-harvest gatherings, which usually featured Tayub Arts. The rise of a small alcohol distilling factory in Bekonang district is intimately linked to the history of the founding of Ciu as an alcoholic drink manufactured from molasses using a distillation method. Ciu has an alcohol percentage of 30%-45% as a result of level III distillation or additional distillation of ciu, thus it has a high alcohol content of 80%-95%, which is similar to pure alcohol [13,16] (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The Ciu Bekonang processing room

As stated by Nurwijaya, the word Ciu is derived from the Chinese word for wine. Fermented alcoholic beverages are widely referred to as Ciu in many parts of Indonesia. Ciu can be produced from molasses, badek, and water. A 200 litre barrel is made up of 5 buckets of molasses, 6 buckets of badek, and the rest is water. Molasses, commonly referred to as bagasse, is a viscous liquid produced by crystallization in a sugar factory [17,18] (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Molasses or sugarcane drops

Bekonang ciu production has been going on for a long time. Its track record can be found in several newspapers published throughout the colonial period. The process of distilling arak in Gemolong was described in a newspaper circulating during the Colonial period, namely the newspaper Het Nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch Indie 1938 in its title "van Arakstokerijen en Premies" (Distillery and Excise) [19]. The use of Ciu as arak in Surakarta is also mentioned in several news items in colonial period newspapers. In the 1936 De Locomotief Newspaper, was a column entitled "Clandesteine Arakstokkerij" (Illegal Arak Distillation) [20].

The arak brewed traditionally in the area around Bekonang from sugarcane molasses is referred to as Ciu Bekonang in the section before. The reference of the name Bekonang arak as Ciu was most likely the result of an interaction of the Chinese at the time who called arak as Ciu. During the Colonial Period, Ciu Bekonang or arak was widely circulated, from its manufacturing to the limitations that applied to violators owing to the illegal production and distribution of arak to the stockpiling of arak.

Ciu and the XIX-XX century sugar factory in the Mangkunegara area

The presence of Ciu craftspeople in Surakarta is inextricably linked to the presence of sugar factories in the area. These sugar factories require large areas of land to grow sugarcane, which is the basic material for making sugar and molasses, or molasses is waste from sugar factories in the form of bagasse, which is reprocessed through a series of fermentation processes to become Ciu with various alcohol content variants. This molasses is the primary ingredient in the production of Ciu or arak.

The presence of a sugar factory in Surakarta was a long trip in the history of plantations in Surakarta. According to Suhartono, towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were numerous private firms investing in or creating plantation companies in Surakarta. A sugar plant was suggested during the Mangkunegara IV reign. Mangkunegara IV's initial step was to prepare land for a sugar cane plantation by not extending the land leasing contracts signed in 1859 and 1860, and then removing the existing loose land. Mangkugera IV submitted a proposal for a sugar mill to Resident Neewenhuysen and the Governor of the Dutch East Indies for permission in 1960 [21].

Wasino argued that the Mangkunegaran IV era, which governed from 1853 to 1881, was the zenith of the Mangkunegaran economy, particularly the plantation sector, especially coffee and sugar, which were on the increase in local and global markets at the time [22]. This changed after Mangkunegara IV died and was succeeded by his son, Mangkunegara V, who reigned from 1881 until 1896. The presence of the worldwide economic crisis (1875-1890) and the worldwide outbreak of Sereh disease, which destroyed plantation crops, resulted in lower municipal earnings, forcing them to rely on the Dutch Colonial Government to support the demands of the praja. From then on, the Dutch East Indies government directly oversaw Praja Mangkunegaran's financial concerns. The Resident of Surakarta carried out the oversight by established a Commission Council, which was responsible with overseeing the Praja's finances. As a result of the 1875-1890 economic crisis, sugar was protected across Europe, resulting in a bigger domestic supply of sugar. This occurred because sugar production could not be absorbed by the European market, which had previously been Java's primary market for sugar production. Sugar marketing losses occur when supply exceeds demand, and sugar sales revenues are out of balance with manufacturing costs. The issue is aggravated by the Sereh disease, which ravaged plantation crops. Various efforts made during Mangkunegara VI's reign between 1896 and 1916 bolstered Praja Mangkunegaran's economy. To help the economy, one of Mangkunegaran VI's initiatives was austerity and increased sugar production. This strategy was extremely effective in bolstering Praja Mangkunegaran's economy. This austerity approach was successful in repaying colonialist debts. This restored ownership of the sugar industry to Mangkunegara VI [23] (Figure 3).



Figure 3: The Tjolomadoe sugar factory in Malangdjiwan in the Surakarta region 1867

According to Rosyidah, the economy was divided between Praja finances and corporate finance at the end of Mangkunegara VI's reign due to budget efficiency politics [24]. Personal finances include all of the Praja's and its contents' needs, as well as those of the king's family, relatives, and palace servants. Mangkunegara oversaw the king's finances with the help of his government employees. All land rent

es with the help of his government employees. All land rent and tax profits, loan interest, proceeds from leasing Semarang housing assets, and allowance deductions are reported as incoming funds for Praja. The expenditure comprises all needs for palace maintenance, infrastructure procurement, courtier salaries, allowances for family and relatives, and other pressing requirements. The financing provided by corporations responds to the demands of Mangkunegaran-owned businesses.

Wasino argued that the separation of the company's financial administration from Praja's finances near the conclusion of Mangunegara VI's reign improved the enterprise, particularly the sugar factory [25]. The presence of a sugar factory significantly increased the Mangkunegaran's reserve fund. The success of the Mangkunegaran sugar factory was due to 2 sugar factories (hence abbreviated as PG), namely PG. Tasikmadu and PG. Colomadu. The 2 sugar crops cooperate to boost earnings from the Mangkunegaran reserve fund. In 1916, during the reign of Mangkunegara VII, the Mangkunegaran Owned Fund Commission was established. PG Tasikmadu is the most vocal proponent of the Mangkunegaran sugar business. PG Tasikmadu dominated sugar production from 1918 until 1973. During this time, he was not only subject to Mangkunegara VII's authority, but also to the Dutch Colonial Government. Consequently, business activities had to adhere to the Colonial Government's policies [23] (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Tasikmadu sugar company factory building near Karanganjar in Vorstenanden 1920

In response to the need for land, the Colonial Government leased significant sections of land for sugarcane cultivation in the early 20th century. This can be seen in the news regarding the land lease quoted in the 1926 Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad Newspaper with the headline "Uitbreiding Suikerareaal" which stated that K.L. Neumann, Superintendent for Mangkunegaran Affairs, who acts as Director of the Triagan Plantation Company domiciled in Semarang, leases 1,004 shoulders of land in three successive years located in Demakan Village, Cangkol, Wonorejo, Jatisobo, Wirun Land, Tegalmade, Pranan, Bugel, Karangwuni, Ngumbakan, Bekonang, Pajangrejo, Klaruwan, Gadingan, Plumbon and Dukuh are all located in the Bekonang District in Afdeeling Soerakarta [26]. Based on the above description, the rise of sugar factories in Java, particularly in Surakarta, has also become an essential part of the Surakarta Ciu production system. This is related to molasses, which is fermented waste obtained from sugar farms and is one of the primary supplies needed for manufacturing Ciu.

Environmental and social issues caused by Ciu

Because of its proximity to the center of Surakarta (approximately 15 kms east of Surakarta), the culture and social environment of the Bekonang district are nearly identical to those of the larger Surakarta community. What's unique about the Bekonang district community is that when the teenagers arrange activities in the form of parties or other rah-rah events, the majority of them are accompanied by drinking, drinking, and getting drunk with Ciu Bekonang. Spiritual leaders and community elders, as well as local health actors, have frequently voiced warnings about the repercussions and side effects of excessive alcohol consumption. However, because drinking booze has become a habit and tradition, many disregard these warnings and precautions. This is according to Mr. Sabaryono (Chairman of Koperasi Unit Desa-KUD Sukodono), a craftsman with over 40 years of experience.

According to Functionalist theory, illness is a functional issue since it threatens social stability. Many people commit horrific crimes and will continue to do so as a result of social pressures [27]. According to Parson some people are willing to embrace the risk aspects of confrontation with specialists such as psychiatrists, police, and courts that are needed to regulate or eradicate the process of social disorder [28]. The health diseases and ailments prevalent in the Bekonang area are similar to those seen in Surakarta and its environs. Respiratory, digestive, cardiovascular, and other degenerative diseases are prominent in the Bekonang district population. However, on Saturday nights, there typically occur instances of crashes or fights involving Bekonang youngsters who are inebriated from consuming alcohol in the form of Ciu Bekonang. Ciu Bekonang, in addition to being abused for drunkenness, can be used for massage. You would feel warm and fresh after using Param Kocok powder combined with Ciu Bekonang liquid and massaged all over the body while squeezing after doing the massage with the Ciu Bekonang.

Even if the Bekonang community's drinking habit is shared by the local community, and given that many community leaders, such as clergy and community elders, still regard and adhere to the norm, using Ciu Bekonang to get drunk is unlawful. Alternative medicine in the Bekonang area is similar to that found throughout Central Java, particularly in Surakarta. Even though there is an Orthopedic Hospital, Sangkal Putung is where to seek treatment for fractured bones. However, it was discovered that the healing performed at Sangkal Putung was not as perfect as the healing performed medically. Because a person with a broken bone who has been certified cured by Sangkal Putung alternative medicine may appear to have incomplete healing on X-rays. A traditional healer is another option for treatment.

Bekonang community values and norms

Trust frequently develops and grows in a society where members have common interests and goals. Authorities or community leaders typically foster this group's beliefs, which are then propagated to other community members. Drinking, according to religious and community authorities, is against religion and will impair one's health. Nonetheless, people drink while having the same views and attitudes about the detrimental impacts of alcohol. Values are beliefs about what is good or right and what is evil or wrong. Social values represent a society's culture and apply to the vast majority of its people. If a person embraces a value, he can make it his life purpose [29].

To regulate individual behavior in groups so that it complies with prevailing values, certain norms are established in the form of regulations approved by members of the community that detail the behavior that must or should not be carried out in a specific situation or position. Social norms may also include the types of consequences or incentives that will be delivered to people who disobey or comply with these standards [29]. Thus, social norms serve as an approach to manage people's behavior in society. The social norm in Bekonang district about drinking alcohol is that it cannot be justified by religious teachings or its negative consequences. However, the types of consequences for people who do so remain low, based on customary rules passed down from their predecessors. The most common type of consequence is social rejection of a person's drinking habit.

Improving production quality to decrease the abuse of alcohol in Ciu

Distillation is a separation procedure based on the difference in volatility between 2 substances. In this process, 2 phases, the vapour phase and the liquid phase, are in touch with each other. Under these conditions, a mass amount of substance in the reactor will be converted simultaneously from vapour to liquid by evaporation and from vapor to liquid through condensation. The end result is an increase in the concentration of the more volatile vapor components and the heavier (less volatile) liquid phase components. It is envisaged that alcohol with a level near to absolute (90%) will be obtained during the distillation process. The method used to increase the quality of the Bekonang community's alcohol is to modify the distillation apparatus by putting a fill tower above the reactor tank, which is made of stainless steel. The process is made constantly by adding a reservoir to accommodate the basic components of fermented molasses in big quantities. The abuse of alcohol for drinking and drunkenness has reduced as the alcohol level has increased from 37% to 90%. Particularly after the filing of district budget assistance. On May 28, 2001, Sukoharjo 2001 held an equipment and production process training for ethanol craftspeople in Bekonang. Almost all alcohol manufacturing in the Bekonang area is for medical purposes and is sold

in pharmacies or hospitals. Given that the alcohol produced has already reached 90% [13]. Other strategies or methods to prevent alcohol abuse behavior, apart from raising alcohol content through the distillation process, are to support healthy living behaviors. Social relationships shape behavior, and attitude has the intended effects on healthy living. The number of these alcohol abusers can be decreased with appropriate encouragement, such as warnings about the risks of drinking and their effects on health.

Conclusion

Ciu Bekonang has long been manufactured. The presence of Ciu craftspeople in Surakarta is inextricably linked to the presence of sugar factories in the history of plantations in Surakarta. Consuming Ciu Bekonang to get drunk is illegal, even if the community around it shares the Bekonang community's drinking habit and many community leaders, including religious leaders and elders, still revere and adhere to the standard. However, because of the process of distillation, the Bekonang region produces 90% of its alcohol as a means to promote health. Additionally, the use of alternative medicine in the Bekonang district is equivalent to that of Surakarta and other parts of Central Java. According to the Bekonang community's socioeconomic and cultural conditions, where the majority of the population (37%), makes a living in small enterprises that modify molasses into low-quality alcohol, often making it possible for drinking and getting intoxicated. Thus, the stigma associated with the manufacture of alcohol in the Bekonang region needs to be overcome in the perspective of others in the community.

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None.

Conflict of Interest

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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