

# Reptile Socialization in Efforts to Grow Community Trust in the Coconut Village of Bogor About Snakes

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**Abstract**— Reptiles are the most numerous animals having creepy stories in the world community. In Indonesia, the number of reptiles is very much because it has a tropical climate, so that Indonesia become one of the countries that have the most widely spread reptile in the world. The highest number of reptile and often encountered is snake, because the snake has a strong physical among other reptile so that the snake is the longest life than the other reptile. However, the knowledge of the reptile existence in Indonesia is very lacking, because in school curricula, education on reptile is minimal. Thus, information about the reptile is dominated by the stories circulating in the society that has not been proven, so the reptile in particular the snake has a creepy and scary imagery in society. The purpose of this research is to know the strategy done by snake-keepers in providing knowledge about snakes in the community in Kelapa Bogor Village. This research uses qualitative descriptive methods. Data collection techniques are conducted with the observation and deep participation. The results of this study showed that the strategy that was conducted by the reptile in providing knowledge in the community is by socializing the reptile in various ways to the community who have different knowledge so that The knowledge slowly began to change.

**Keywords:** *reptile socialization, myths, community knowledge*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The ugly story about snakes first appeared when at the time of Adam and Eve God had not been thrown to earth because they had eaten the khuldi fruit which was forbidden by God. Adam and Eve could not resist the temptation of the genie who changed to resemble a snake and seduce the two of them to eat the khuldi fruit. The story related to snakes in the era of Adam Eve spread throughout the world, so that snakes have a creepy image in human life. Almost every country must have its own story about snakes that are passed down from generation to generation, both orally and through media in various religions and cultures.

Stories about snakes circulating in several countries are categorized as myths, because according to Bascom these stories are considered really happening and are considered sacred by those who have stories [1]. According to Anthony Cristie, mythology contains about the creation of the world and its inhabitants including humans and other creatures as well as regarding the origin of its natural state [2].

Thus, snakes are the oldest and most widely used symbol of mythology with a variety of different interpretations. One of them snakes is believed to give birth to planets, gods and symbolizes immortality [4].

Some unusual stories about snakes, for example, can be found in Nordic mythology, where there is a large snake, Jormungandr, a very large sea snake, so it hangs around the earth to bite its own tail. Then in Scotland there is a story about Lochness a giant snake that lives in the sea and often preys on sailors. In Japan there is a giant snake that lives under the sea and he is believed to be the messenger of the coming of an earthquake. In China, we are familiar with Naga Loong, which is used as a symbol for power. In Europe we are familiar with dragons who can spit fire from their mouths. This dragon is maintained by magicians who have magical powers. In Indonesia, we know the name Nyi Blorong the Queen of snakes.



Source: <https://imgur.com/a/068pA>

Fig. 1. Jormungandr



Source: <https://berita.baca.co.id>

Fig. 2. Nyi Blorong

In terms of comparative research, this snake is the most widely feared by humans both by birth and after birth. Outwardly, it turns out that fear of snakes is the result of the evolution of women as part of mammalian creatures. This was tested in studies involving 1-2 year olds by comparing the visuals between snakes and other animals such as giraffes.

Apart from outward fear, snakes are known to have turned out to be human competitors in finding prey in nature, so that when humans and snakes meet in nature they can attack each other. Not a few humans in ancient times were eaten by snakes. The latest news about humans preyed on by snakes occurred in 2018 in the Sulawesi region. In June 2019, in the city of Sukabumi Bogor there was also a man who died as a result of being wrapped around by his own snake.

The explanation related to snakes can be concluded that there are two beliefs that cause fear by humans related to the existence of snakes, namely stories about myths, one is afraid of being injured and killed by snake bites. These two things then circulated in the community and became separate knowledge by the people throughout the country. This knowledge then becomes the basis of society's behavior when they are dealing with snakes in nature.

Since humans succeeded in domesticating animals into homes, slowly people's trust in myths and inaccurate knowledge about snakes began to shift. In the past, snakes were animals that were impossible to maintain because of their image [3]. Likewise, in the village of Kelapa Bojong Gede Bogor, here there are already two people who keep snakes in their homes. Based on this, we are interested and conduct research to see how the processes carried out by people who maintain reptiles into society, so that people can change their beliefs and understanding of snakes.

## II. RESEARCH PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to determine the strategies carried out by snake keepers in providing knowledge about snakes in the community in Bogor Kelapa Village.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This research was carried out for 7 months starting in December 2018 until June 2019. The key informant in this

study was named Wanto who kept batik and molurus pythons in his home. This study used descriptive qualitative method. Data collection techniques were carried out by participant observation and in-depth interviews with snake keepers and communities in the Kelapa village of Bojong Gede Bogor.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The beliefs that exist in the coconut village associated with snakes vary. According to Pak Is, a community leader here said that there are several types of snakes, namely two-headed snakes that can disappear, snake beds that often emit at night, and flying snakes that live in bamboo trees. He will fly to the people he will bite, and reticulated batik that can eat small children even though it is only 2 meters long. The knowledge possessed by Pak Is is based on stories from his own parents and not based on his own experience directly.

Another knowledge was expressed by Pak Muslim, that of all the most dangerous snakes here is the snake 'bedudak' sun. This snake if you bite your foot, then the result is that the bitten leg will shrink and be smaller than the next leg that is not bitten. If you meet this snake, you should immediately turn it off by destroying your head and eyes, because if it is killed but not destroyed by the head and eyes, then this snake can ask his friends to be able to avenge his death to the person who harmed and killed him. This belief was obtained by Pak Muslim from the stories of his parents and friends. According to him this incident had been experienced by his own uncle, when killing a snake that bit him, his uncle did not destroy his head and eyes, so the next day his uncle was visited by a snake of the same type as the one killed yesterday.

According to him again, the tombs of the Kelapa village here are often seen as large and long snakes, but their heads are shaped like human heads. The snake is female. If you meet him, usually people who see him will have bad luck.

Most people here still see snakes as something frightening and dominated by a mystical aura. This becomes reasonable, because according to previous research snake is the most mystical stories [4].

### A. New knowledge

At present, the news in the mass media about the existence of snakes that are made as pets by humans has begun to multiply so that this becomes something interesting to study in areas that are still laden with myths and inaccurate knowledge about the existence of snakes. In Kelapa village, Wanto is a snake-keeper in this village. In his house, he made two cages made of glass measuring 1.5 meters x 60 cm in three levels. This cage is placed in the house.



Fig. 3. Python Molurus



Fig. 4. Reticulatus Python

At the beginning of his stay in this village, Wanto became a lot of bad talk about him. Starting from slander like he is looking for wealth by using snakes as his ritual, slandered as a witch, and so on. The snake here is still considered something mystical. Because Wanto is a snake lover, this slander does not affect him in raising snakes. Wanto often gives new views based on literature to the surrounding community, when Wanto gathered with the surrounding community.

*B. Strategy in introducing Snake*

At the beginning of his stay at home, Wanto put his snake in the house, because Wanto didn't know the character of the people here. Some of the strategies adopted by Wanto are as follows:

- Put the snake cage in the house.
- Village here, including solid. The distance between one house and the other is very close, so that the snake cage placed by Wanto can be seen directly by the villagers here. By attracting the attention of residents, Wanto was quickly recognized in the village, so that many residents openly came to see the snake, and there were also those who saw the snake secretly when Wanto was inside the house. This is so that people here often see apparitions directly with snakes, because so far they have only often heard stories about snakes rather than seeing them directly every day.
- Interact directly with snakes in front of the community.

- After many people saw the snake inside the cage, Wanto slowly took out the snake from his cage but still inside the porch of his house. The interaction he did was when bathing his snake, and during his free time he freed his snake to spin outside his cage. Occasionally Wanto also drew his snake in the neck. This is so that residents see that snakes can also be held directly by humans and do not bite in certain ways. This also means that the snake has its own characteristics, different from the people's beliefs, that the snake cannot be touched because it will definitely bite.
- Bringing the snake out of the house when the people gather.
- By bringing the snake out of the house and getting closer to the residents, neighbors and residents can begin to see and observe the snake up close. From there began many questions such as why the tongue sticks out, what food, what kind of snake, and so on. Here residents begin to get to know the type and character of snakes. This kind of socialization that most successfully attracted the attention of citizens to get to know better about snakes
- Open his house for people who want to ask about snakes.
- This is the opposite of the way the socialization above. This step is a success in the previous socialization step, because by introducing snakes to people who are gathering, usually this will make them tell this to others, given the character of the village community who likes to talk about certain things both negative and positive to others so any news quickly spreads. With the story, it will usually draw attention to others who then the person wants to see the snake directly.
- Lend a snake to neighbors and people who already know close.



Fig. 5. Reptile Socialization



Fig. 6. Reptile Socialization



Fig. 7. Reptile Socialization

This step is the most pleasant step according to Wanto, because at this stage the person usually starts believing and believing that the snake is not what they have thought so far. That snakes can be tame, do not bite and are not phantom manifestations. At this stage, the transformation of knowledge related to snakes is successful. Those who previously had a negative view on the snake knew that their views had been wrong.

## V. CONCLUSION

To change people's knowledge about snakes based on stories parents need a certain strategy. This strategy is basically to provide a new understanding and the most important thing is to provide socialization and examples directly, because ordinary people can basically be confident and trusting when they see new things directly. In this case, the public can directly see and feel physical contact with snakes. Thus, residents who used to see snakes as something scary, but because they have interacted directly, slowly the view of seeing snakes is no longer a frightening animal.

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