

THE JAVANESE MYTH AMONGS THE MODERN PEOPLE IN 2000s GENERATION

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating the Javanese myth among the modern people in 2000s generation. This study focused on the area of Wonosobo Regency to be observed. The researcher conducted the in-depth interview toward the stake holder (Sesepuh/traditional leader, the residents); observation, documentation and giving questionnaires also conducted to obtain the validity of data. The result of this study shows that there are various perception and attitudes toward the existence of Javanese myth among them and there are some kinds of myth that still believed. The Javanese myth still exist among the modern people in the area of Wonosobo.

Keywords: *Javanese myth, perception and attitudes, modern people*

INTRODUCTION

The mysticism actually happened not only around Javanese people but also in other people from any places, areas, and even foreign country. Mysticism is a kind of beliefs that there are two worlds which stand together among us. Those worlds are about human and unseen spirits. For the Javanese Mysticism the belief is on when they already got the spiritual experience or mystical experience (Mulder, 2001). Each of the worlds; human and unseen spirits, has their own characteristics. Not everyone believes about that but certainly for the Javanese

people. Most of them still maintain his mind not to lose the belief. Myth and mysticism have the close relationship; as the explanation of Raglan (1955) that myth cannot be fully believed because it is as like the word of mouth and the people who believe in myth, they will conduct a ritual practices and it will develop gradually although the relationship between myth and rite is still problematic (Hefner, 1985) but in factual condition the people did as its mentioned. Then the ritual practices itself there under the thought of mysticism.

Wonosobo, the regency that still in a part of central Java, is a famous area with its weather and mountain. The weather of the mountainous area is cold and the resident mostly life as a farmer. The large of this regency is around 984,68 km². We can easily reach of this area by private or public transportation because it is not far from the capital city of Central Java, Semarang.

The educational background of the residents in Wonosobo can be seen based on the BPS (Central Bureau of Statistics) in 2018 and Department of Population and Civil Registration (2018) that from the total residents 878.612 (from 0 year to > 75 years old), the age of residents > 15 years old who already graduated from their educational level are below:

Table 1. The Percentage of Residents' Education in Wonosobo 2018

Level of Education	No/Never School	Not Finished Elementary School (SD)	Finished Elementary School (SD/MI)	Finished Junior High School (SMP/MTs)	Finished Senior High School (SMA/MA)	Finished University/High School
Percentage	2.98	20.6	38.91	20.46	11.7	5.35

From the Table 1 we can say that there are many educated people in Wonosobo, although the percentage is not satisfied. The residents of Wonosobo mostly still maintain the traditional culture. They often hold the traditional dance, traditional celebration and ritual procession that hold in sacred month/day and the event are followed and participated by any generation. Although the residents of Wonosobo mostly are moslems dutiful but for the cultural preservation they don't think where the tradition or culture from.

Wonosobo regency; a mountainous place with nice and beautiful scenery; it's of

course own a lot of phenomena and mystery who sometimes not known by general people from in or outside of Wonosobo. As the residents of Wonosobo are Javanese, they have special or particular belief that owned and passed down by generation to generation and one of the them is a myth. There are many kinds of myth which is spread out among the residents of Wonosobo. Myth is believed by most of the residents in Wonosobo. They know about myth because of their family, parents or grandparents and even they know about that from their friends.

Is a myth must be believed and followed? The residents who believe in it,

they will follow the rule or procedure of the certain myth because they don't want to get any regret because of something bad happen toward their life. While the residents who don't believe in it, they will ignore it and let it goes. At sometimes the residents who don't believe in myth gradually they believe in it because of their friends or relative's influence. The condition of this happen not only in ordinary people but among the modern people.

From the above, there is very interesting thing that should be researched. To know more about the myth that happen among the modern people, the researcher conducts the topic of Javanese myth among the modern people then perceptions and attitudes of them are also investigated.

In the field of sociology, there are some attempts to conduct of the understanding what modernity is. Various terms are used to describe the social life, society, symptomatic mentality, driving force and also other defining aspects of modernity. To find the description of the modernity, usually, should have the comparison among the characteristics of modern societies, pre modern and post modern.

As what has been explained by Gay (1998) about conditions of the modern self that they tend to reject the authority of

community or tradition, the modern self assumes that they have their own way of life, they think of theirs (personal) in the result of subjective well-being, identity is self-constructed which is created by self-consumption of product they desire.

The people who was born around 2000s faced the condition of modern era where they have found the technology and social characteristics of modernity. It is so interesting when we observe about their perception and attitudes toward the Javanese myth.

Demuth in Sahid (2019) described about the perception that study the world always involve to the study of perceptions; the world of perceptions, images or ideas. We have to be very closed and familiar toward the object of study in order to be able to make a good interpretation (Sahid, 2019). The perceptions are always influenced by the individual factors (Sahid, 2019) and the perception itself is broader interpretation (Demuth, 2012); motivation, emotion and how the individuals are familiar to the object become highly influenced toward the interpretation (perceptions). Then the perception itself lead to form attitude of them toward the object.

Attitudes is a way of thinking or behaving and attitudes cannot be separated to

the perception. To form the perception individuals are required to make an assessment of the object (Sahid, 2020) then the perception will form to the attitudes. The perception of each individual of course different, it can be positive or negative, depends on the way of thinking (Demuth, 2012). Different in perception leads to the different in attitudes.

The Javanese mostly are moslem dutiful, they know and understand Islam but they still believe in animism or *kejawen* (Sahid, 2020). There is close relationship between *kejawen* (Javanism) and Animism (Woodward, 1988). The Javanese conduct the practice of Animistic under the believe of *kejawen* not under the *Syariah* (Muslim religious law). Because the Javanese believe itself the believe in myth also widespread among the Javanese generally.

As Raglan (1955) described that myth cannot be believed fully because it is like the history that sometimes cannot be proven. We sometimes realize that myth is like past history but since everyone believe in it then conduct the ritual practices, at sometimes it might be happened. We know that the tradition of ritual practice mostly gradually developed from generation to generation although the relationship between

myth and rite is still problematic (Hefner, 1985).

METHOD

To know the condition of the people in 2000s generation, the researcher did the observation among them. The purpose is to know deeply what is going to be explored from them. Questionnaire is also made to elaborate more about them. The researcher distributed the questionnaire by online (google form) for the respondents who are not able to meet directly.

Then in depth-interview toward the respondents also did successfully to get the information accurately. The researcher interviewed some stake holder; *Sesepuh* (the people who really know about the Javanese culture/especially myth), *Kyai* (the people who know deeply about the Islamic Religion), Ordinary people (respondent on this research). The ordinary people who are taken as the respondent come from various profession and also education who was born in 2000s.

The people who fill the questionnaire come from various profession. We take them randomly to get the validity of data. Taking the respondent in various areas in Wonosobo also been conducted,

considering to the different areas might have the different in culture.

The researcher obtained the data from any sources; document, archives, and literature which used to support other data that the researcher has collected successfully.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

We have interviewed the respondents who lived in Wonosobo. The respondents were born on 2000s. They come from any professions, and they can be mentioned as modern people based on the theory that already written above. There are some kinds of respondents; the respondents who are native of Wonosobo, means that they was born and grow up in Wonosobo, the respondents who was born in outside of Wonosobo but grow up in Wonosobo, and the respondents who was born in outside of Wonosobo but now living in Wonosobo and has been several years. The most important is that they are Javanese who are now live in Wonosobo.

The respondents who fill the questionnaire are mostly born from Banjarnegara, Batang, Kebumen, Magelang, Pati, Purbalingga, and Wonosobo regency. Then they grow up at sometimes in different regency from where they are from (land of birth); Banjarnegara, Demak, Wonosobo, Magelang, Pati, Pemalang, Kebumen.

The researcher actually wants to focus on the Javanese respondents who are now living in Wonosobo (in coincide the researcher conducted the research). Here is the result that found by the researcher after conducting the interviewed, observation, distributed the questionnaires, and studied the literature.

The perception of modern people toward the existence of Javanese myth

There are some understanding that stick on their mind about the myth. The various of perception about myth because of the difference background of them. Here is the understanding/definition of myth according them:

Table 2. The Definition of Myth based on the Respondents' Understanding

No	The Definition of Myth based on the Respondents' Understanding
1.	Myth is something people believe in, where the truth cannot be ascertained. Myths are usually associated with mystical things.

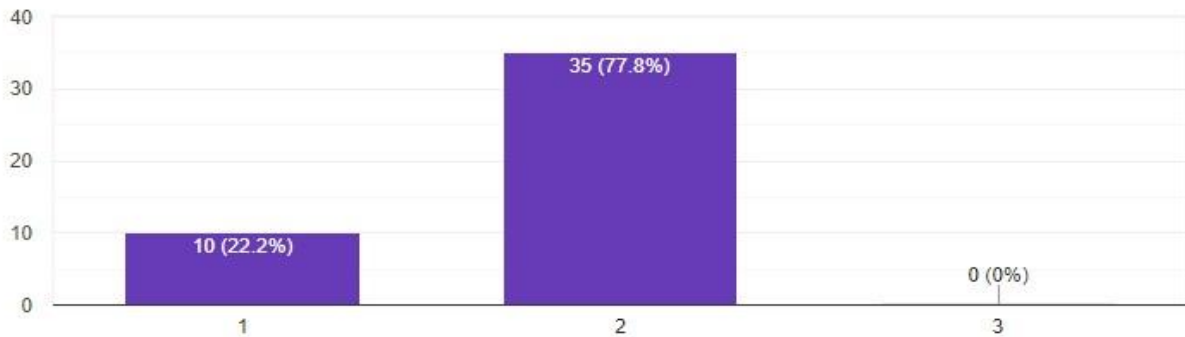
No	The Definition of Myth based on the Respondents' Understanding
2.	Myth is something that is believed but has no scientific explanation
3.	Myth is an event that is not necessarily true but has been believed for years
4.	Myth is something that is commonly believed, but some things cannot be proven scientifically, but sometimes it happens because someone is sure of it.
5.	Myth contains an interpretation of the universe
6.	Myth is a belief that has been believed for a long time, a situation that will really happen or even if you break a myth, you will be hit by a disaster.
7.	Myth is a strange thing beyond reason that happens because of cause and effect, but most people (especially parents / people in ancient times) really believed it, because they were afraid that it would happen and in some events it might just happen by coincidence, and often change the consequences of for prohibited acts.
8.	Myth is part of a folklore in the form of a story set in the past, contains an interpretation of the universe, and is considered to have really happened by those who have the story and its adherents. In a broader sense, myth can refer to traditional stories.
9.	Myth is something that most people believe in, but the truth is not certain or not guaranteed. Sometimes myths in society can be proven true in Islam and scientifically, however, there are also many myths that are just the opinions of some people without basis. The stories of a people about gods and heroes of ancient times which contain interpretations of the origins of the Universe, humans, and the nation itself which contain deep meanings that are expressed in supernatural ways
10	Myths will really happen if they are believed, but if you don't believe them, sometimes they don't happen

Above are the understanding of respondents about myth, some of them do believe about myth because it really happens in their life but some of them still in hesitation. The people mostly believe in myth after they get the experience about them, and there is also people who believe in myth

although they have not got the experience by themselves (they see the experience of other people).

The research shows (Figure 1) that the 77.8 % respondents believe about the existence of myth and 22.2 % do not believe about myth.

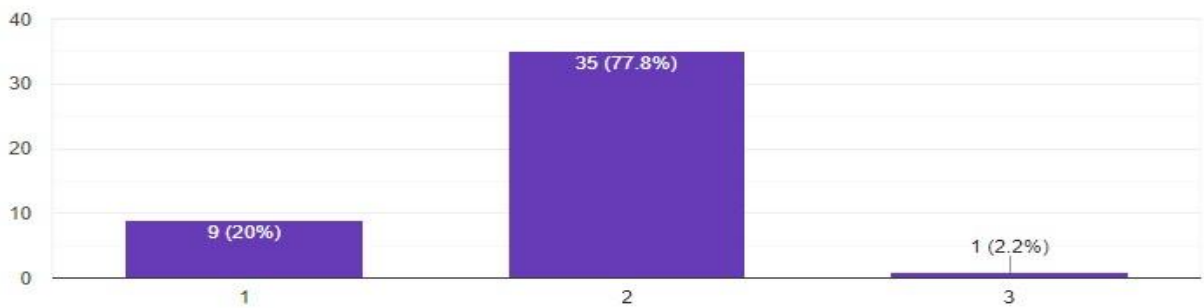
Figure 1. Result 1 Believing the existence of myth



The respondents (77.8%) also believe that the myth will occur in certain situations/ certain circumstances and or in

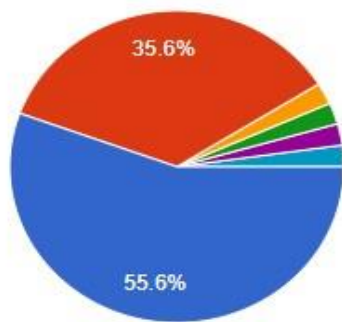
certain places; even 2,2% respondents, they really do believe without the slightest doubt.

Figure 2. Result 2 Believing the myth will occur in certain situations



There are 55.6% respondents ever believed in a certain myth also and it really

happened while 35,6% respondents show that they have not got the experience of it.



- Pernah
- Tidak Pernah
- Mungkin dulu ketika saya kecil, orangtua jaman dulu sering mengatakan tentang suatu pantangan dan adakalanya ben...
- saya pernah tidak percaya pada sebuah mitos jika bersaudara menikah pada tahun yang sama maka salah satu ak...
- pernah tidak meyakini namun terjadi
- Tidak tahu

Figure 3. Result 3 Believing in a certain myth

The attitude of modern people toward the existence of Javanese myth

There are many kinds of attitudes of the modern people toward the existence of Javanese myth, some of them are described below:

They (modern people) ever tried to find out that something (event/habitual

behavior) that has happened, which they previously only thought of as a mere myth (48,9% respondents), actually has an explanation in their religion. The other; 22,2% respondents have not ever gone to look for about that while 28,9% of respondents are now looking for the information about it.

Figure 4. Result 4

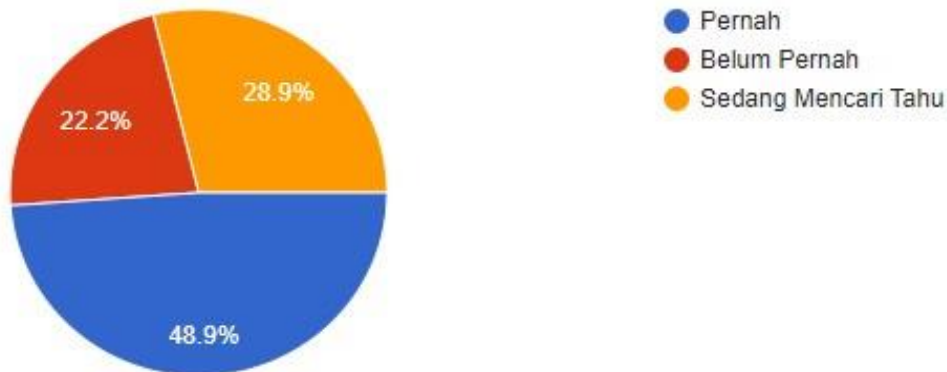
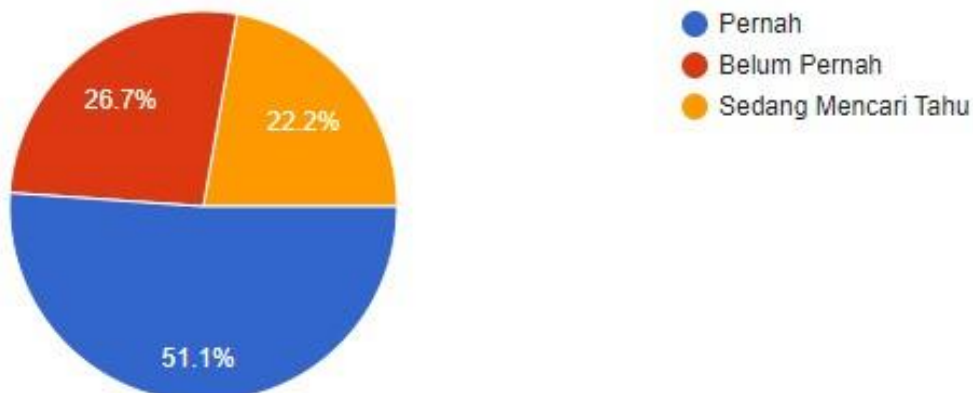


Figure 5. Result 5



The respondents also experienced or encountered something that smells of myth in society but actually has a scientific explanation and apparently there is also an explanation in their religion (57.8%) see the Figure 6. The Figure 6. Result 6

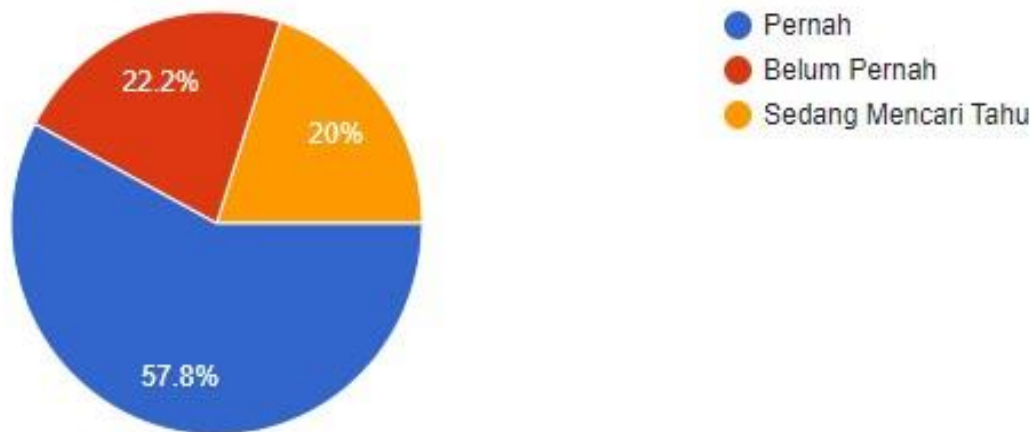


Figure 7. Result 7



respondents (68.9%/see the Figure 7) mostly don't agree if there is a statement that "Myth is just something maginary without any logical reasoning".

The other statement raised and agreed that myths cannot be ignored, but they do not need to be fully believed and trusted (88,9 %) see the Figure 8. Myths (some of the existing myths), some need to be believed because there

is an explanation in their religion (71.1%) see Figure 9. Then myths (some of the existing myths), there are things we need to believe because there is a scientific explanation (64.4%).

Figure 8. Result 8

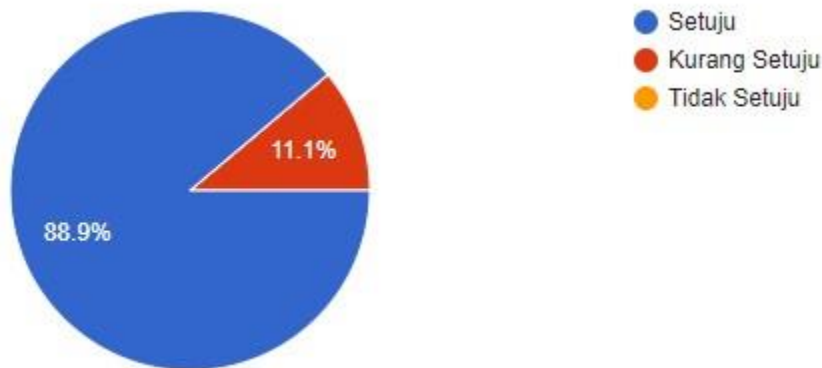


Figure 9. Result 9



The kinds of Javanese myth that exist among the modern people

are born around 2000s. Some of them are in this table below:

There are some of Javanese myth that now still exist among the modern people who

Table 3. Javanese myth that now still exist

No	Kinds of Javanese Myth
1.	Butterflies enter the house, a sign that they will get good luck.
2.	The myth that sitting in front of the door will be far from his soul mate.
3.	Cutting nails at night can make fingers cut off.
4.	Rejecting the application of the person who first came will make someone not be proposed again afterwards.
5.	If you sweep, you have to be clean, otherwise your husband will have a beard/mustache
6.	If you sit on a pillow, you will get boils
7.	If a black cat comes to the house, it is a sign of bad luck.
8.	Sweeping the floor of the house at night has a myth that it can sweep away fortune.
9.	The myth of eating chicken wings, sweeping is not clean, eyelashes fall

The residents of Wonosobo mostly are muslim dutiful and although they now belong to or can be mentioned as the criteria of modern people (the respondents) but still the way of their life still influenced by the *kejawen*. Javanese mostly doesn't want to let their generation without owned the custom or Javanese culture. And as the Woodward (1988) explained that there is a relationship

between the *kejawen* (Javanism) and animistic.

CLOSING

From the research above we can see that there are various perception and attitudes of modern people (2000s generation) about the Javanese myth. Mostly they believed in Javanese myth, and the belief itself has some levels. For examples They really believed in,

they believed in and they don't too believed in Javanese myth. Then some of modern people also at sometimes believed only to the certain Javanese myth (not every kinds of myth they believed in).

The modern people who are in the area of Wonosobo mostly are muslim dutiful, although they have the religion and they can be mentioned as modern people but we know that they were born and grow up in around the Javanese culture. That is why they still under the influence of *kejawen*. Perception and attitudes of modern people toward the existence of Javanese myth are different from one another because every resident (modern people) at sometimes have the different background of family or education.

Javanese myth at sometimes cannot be separated from the activity of animism and mysticism. It is no wonder that the people who believed in myth, they will be afraid to violate the Javanese myth.

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