

## Tradition of Gratitude (*Slametan*) before Starting a Business and Whening a Success: A Business Ethics Perspective in Pamekasan, Madura

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### ***Abstract***

*This study examines the practice of slametan tradition before starting a business and during business glory in Kadur Village, Kadur Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency, in the perspective of Islamic business ethics. The slametan tradition carried out by the community involves reciting prayers, Al-Qur'an, tahlil, and giving alms (bherkat), and is believed to bring blessings and safety in business. The research used qualitative methods with observation techniques and interviews with business people in the village. The results showed that the slametan tradition has become a hereditary habit that is loaded with spiritual, social, and ethical values. This tradition reflects Islamic moral values such as gratitude, tawakal, almsgiving, respect for ancestors, and strengthening social relations. In the context of Islamic business ethics, this tradition is a form of integration between divine values and economic practices that are oriented towards the balance of the world and the hereafter.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Islam places ethical values at the highest level. Basically, Islam was revealed as a code of moral and ethical behavior for human life, as mentioned in the Hadith “Verily, I was sent only to perfect noble morals.” (Rahmanto et al. 2023). The closest terminology to the notion of ethics in Islam is morals. In Islam, ethics is a reflection of Islamic belief (faith). According to Nurcholish Madjid, quoting Karl Arth, the definition of ethics (from ethos) is comparable to morals (from mos). Both are philosophies about customs (sitten) (Kuznyetsova et al. 2023). The German word *sittlich* (from old German, *situ*) shows the meaning of the mode of human behavior, a constancy of human action. According to Yusuf Al-Qardawi, there are four main joints (characteristics) of ethics in Islam, namely divinity, human ethics, and moderation. Islamic business is a business based on divinity (Квасова, Курбацкая, and Лозовий 2023).

This system starts from the words of Allah Swt in the Al-Quran and uses means that cannot be separated from the provisions of Allah (shari'ah). Islamic business activities cannot be separated from the starting point of divinity and the ultimate goal for God. If a Muslim conducts business activities then surely the ultimate goal is what is called “لا نوديعيل” only to worship Allah Swt. This research examines the tradition of salametan before starting a business and during the heyday, which reflects divine ethics through the recitation of tawhid, Qur'an, and tahlil. This practice reflects moral values in individual and social behavior (Ilham et al. 2023).

The practice of slametan carried out by the community to launch their business with Hindu-Buddhist practices in ancient times, namely burning incense with the view of ordinary people is to bring spirits. In fact, burning incense and the like is something that is favored by Rosulullah because it is in the form of fragrance (Sayudin, Kartono, and Curatman 2023). The activities carried out before starting a business and after the business in its heyday are assimilations of local traditions and Islam (Jatmiko et al. 2024). Based on the review of business ethics, this is part of morals to humans and also God with the practice of giving something they have given to people with the aim of the business they will do smoothly without obstacles. This research was conducted in Kadur Village, Kadur Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency because the dominance of the

Kadur community is a businessman and the community carries out the tradition from generation to generation so that it is interesting to study. A more in-depth research was conducted on the review of Islamic business ethics on the slametan tradition before starting and after experiencing success in doing business.

## METHODS

The method used by researchers is a qualitative method with (Abdussamad 2021), where the system used in this study relates to the collection of opinions, and the behavior of business people who hold slametan, which is intended to obtain evidence that actually occurs in the field during the research process. The research location is in Kadur Village, Kadur Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency with the population used is the Kadur community who do business with slametan. The primary data used by the research is observation of community behavior with interviews. While the secondary data is documentation (Hayat 2020).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **The practice of *Salametan* tradition before starting a business in Pamekasan, Madura**

Kadur Village people often carry out the slametan tradition, from various events such as celebrations, or want to start something expecting something good then they often carry out slametan events from small slametan events to large slametan events, according to the ability of each individual community. When starting a business, the community usually carries out the slametan tradition whether it is inviting relatives and neighbors, or just giving food to neighbors, as a statement obtained from the results of interviews with Mrs. Khodijah Qodir as the caretaker of the Sumber Gayam Islamic Boarding School in Kadur Pamekasan, also as a business or food business, rice, wet cakes, and pastries, he said

"The slametan tradition here at the beginning of the business and the heyday of the business carried out the slametan tradition, did not invite family or neighbors, I just invited some students to study at my house, and did not forget to be dedicated to the elders who had passed away, and offered prayers to be given smoothness in all affairs, after that giving food to the students who studied at my house, before that I had given fragrances to the place that would be occupied for the study in the form of incense. Incense is actually a characteristic of custom because the habits of previous people carrying out the slametan tradition were always associated with incense or *menyan*, until now the community has not eliminated the custom of burning incense or *minyan* so as not to eliminate the customs of the ancestors, and burning incense is not considered bad because it does not have a bad impact on society" (Waqi'ah 2025).

According to him, carrying out the slametan tradition is a necessity that is often carried out by people in Kadur Village, the aim is to ask for safety from all affairs, and also to pray for deceased elders or in Maduranya language often called (*adu'aaki bengatoah*), so that they are given favors in the grave, because actually without the struggle of *bengatoah* we might not be like now. Regarding incense, according to him, it also does not have a bad impact on society, so it is valid.

for providing the best way for my business. The slametan tradition that I practice is by inviting family, employees, neighbors and friends to attend the slametan tradition, in the salamat tradition reading the holy verses of the Koran, *tahlil*, and prayer, after which I provide food, along with groceries for them. The researcher was not enough with interviews, the researcher made direct observations, at that time the researcher was ordering cakes to the informant and coincided with a new employee coming from 9 guardians, in the context of the *catring* business slametan, then the informant interviewed the employee (Dewi 2025)

“Alhamdulillah I just came from 9 guardians, on a 5-day trip, with transportation and consumption money borne by Mrs. Waqi'ah, we are happy with Mrs. Waqi'ah's kindness not only giving work but giving lessons that all efforts must involve Allah” (Umam 2025)

This shows that in fact the tradition of slametan is not only in the form of tahlilan, and eating together, a good thing that is intended as slametan whatever form it takes is still slametan. However, the main characteristic of slameta is giving or almsgiving. The third opinion is a statement from citra Dewi as the owner of Zara make up, one of the young business people, she stated that: In the business world, everyone must expect smooth running in the business world, everyone has their own beliefs in running a business, but generally the Kadur community believes in the slametan tradition as part of the intermediary for success in business. When I started the wedding makeup business I asked weton (Tina phekus) where to set the first starting day to open a business, after knowing the weton day then I did the Slametan tradition by giving sticky rice to relatives and neighbors, then sprinkling flower water called “dhe' kempheng”,

This is a hope that our business will smell like the flower parents often call it custom. Regarding the business Alhamdulillah, until now it is running smoothly and growing. Her opinion is slightly different from nyi waqi'ah and nyi khotijah image using flowers (dhe' khempheng) as a fragrance for the room which she places as a business, and her family also believes in the weton day before carrying out the slametan tradition. By looking at the various slametan traditions applied by the Kadur Village community they have a variety of practices in carrying out the slametan tradition, because the economic conditions of each person are different, the slametan tradition does not press a person above his own ability they give their level, as sincerely as possible and the community does not feel burdened by the slametan tradition, because there is no element of emphasis and imposes each individual. Mr. Khoirul Umam as the owner of PR. Bawang Mas believes that the tradition of slametan:

"Business is an activity related to society and what we have some of it belongs to other people , so it is appropriate that we give to people who are in need, slametan is the same as alms giving and hoping to Allah is something that is required and Allah likes every person who asks him” (Mahfudah 2025)

In accordance with what was encountered by researchers through observation results that Mr. Khoirul Uman often held a tradition of slametan with various kinds of events carried out, starting from recitation, tahlilan, hataman, koloman, orphan compensation, social assistance to underprivileged communities and so on, which was carried out by Mr. Khoirul Umam, the event held was istiqhasah which was attended by all employees and the people of Kadur village, researchers when they became kitchen waiters while examining how the practice of the tradition was carried out, the event went on as the event in general, the most important thing of a slametan tradition itself is the intention of carrying out the salametan. It is true according to the results of the interview that the most important element in the salametan tradition is alms, in the practice carried out by the invited guests in addition to getting food they also get envelopes containing money, without exception the kitchen waiter also gets gifts and envelopes containing money. The findings encountered by researchers from the results of observations are concern for others, and in the slametan tradition at the business success of the community do not have to use incense, minyan, flowers and other fragrances, usually incense and the like are used during the slametan tradition when building a business, while at the time of business success only 30% of the community.

By asking like that aims to remember each other how important the salametan tradition is, in addition to making something that is started or achieved will bring blessings to himself and others. The practice of salametan itself is none other than giving a little of what they have to others, which is not far from alms, various kinds of salametan tradition practices are carried out, from

starting a big event, small small events, even not having to hold an event, the most important thing about the slametan tradition here is the intention, intending the alms for slametan, such as the example of Ahmad giving money to orphans and then saying that the money is as slametan for starting a new business. (Yak tang salametanah dekengan ebekiyah been). According to Ust. Jaib about the tradition of slametan before starting a business and during its heyday it was a habit of the community so that if something was accomplished without slametan then the community would ask “dimmah Slametnah”. (Umam 2025) This is very much in accordance with what the researcher sees, because the place of observation is the researcher's own village, it is easier for researchers to adjust the informant's opinion to the reality in the Kadur Village community. Based on the results of observations and interviews from several informants, it can be concluded that the tradition of slametan before starting a business and at the end of the day, the tradition of slametan before starting a business is very important.

during the heyday of business has become a habit that is often done by the community, not obligatory but has become a necessity among the people of Kadur Village, Kadur Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency (Dewi 2025). The tradition of celametan before starting a business and during the heyday of the business is another form of alms because in the tradition of celametan the most important main point is alms. Repeatedly the tradition is carried out, this will become a habit of the community how they start their business by carrying out the tradition first and at the time of the success of the business the slametan tradition is carried out again to keep in mind that something we have is only a deposit and everything will return to Allah. Every community has their own habits in running a business and the slametan tradition here is believed by the community as a form and way of iktiyar and tawakkal to Allah in running a business (Waqi'ah 2025).

The motivation that drives people to carry out the tradition of slametan before starting a business and during the heyday of business Kadur Village is a village whose residents still carry out several traditions, including the tradition of gametan which is a tradition passed down from ancestors. One of the gametan traditions that are still carried out by the Kadur community is the tradition of gametan before starting a business and during the heyday of the business. If you think about the tradition of slametan, it will not be far from alms, tahlil, reading surah yasin, and good prayers. Motivation that can encourage people to carry out the slametan tradition, here are the results of interviews from several informants. In this case, Mr. Tomin, always a cigarette businessman, argues that:

"The tradition of slametan is actually not a mandatory thing that must be done by the community, but a kindness that if done the goodness itself will return to oneself, and the people of Kadur Village believe that slametan is an important tradition that is carried out before starting a business and during the heyday of the business, the motivation that encourages me to carry out the tradition itself is because I believe that something that starts with goodness will end well too. Through the slametan tradition, apart from carrying out the tradition, there are also various positive values that encourage me to be interested and believe that the slametan tradition is an important part of doing business, the positive values in it are giving alms, praying, reading the holy verses of the Koran, and what I like most is the closing event, namely eating together afterwards discussing together about the business we run, this can attract people to be interested in the business that I run, namely the cigarette business and strengthen relationships between business partners which has a very good impact on business ". (Mahfudah 2025)

Conducted by the author is not enough with interviews but continued with observations conducted in Kadur Village. Researchers observed how the practice of the slametan tradition carried out by business people in Kadur Village, namely, Mr. H. Khoirul Umam as the owner of PT. Bawang Mas, the slametan tradition poured many benefits for implementers and those who participated because of its practice which brought a good impact from starting to read the holy

verses of the Qur'an to closing, namely eating together. The most important part of the slametan tradition is alms, this tradition is able to provide happiness to other people, establish good relations with the community, family and business partners, this is able to have a good impact on business, and the community gives positive value to business by caring for others, and involving God in every business (Waqi'ah 2025).

Another opinion was also presented by Hj. Mahfudah as the mother of the village head and cigarette business owner in Kadur Village, he argued that: 'The slametan tradition is a community activity that is done repeatedly until it becomes a habit and community belief, the slametan tradition is carried out in the entire Javanese population, especially in Madura. The motivation of the community so that they can believe in the tradition of slametan is from the previous people who carry out the tradition of slametan the elders believe that the tradition of slametan brings blessings in every expected, and this has been trusted by modern society because of the benefits of that blessing and the teachings of the ancestors to their children and grandchildren (Dewi 2025). The tradition of slametan has a positive impact on society, if the tradition has many positive impacts then the tradition is considered a good tradition for the community, for example the tradition of slametan which is an Islamic tradition recognized throughout the Javanese community. The tradition of slametan is carried out in the hope and achievement of something. Each slametan tradition carried out has different purposes in it according to the slametan tradition carried out, the tradition carried out at the beginning of business and business success is certainly different from the wedding slametan tradition and others. In accordance with the practice of the tradition of slametan before doing business and during the heyday of business is a tradition that begs and thanks to God, social activities with the aim of expecting the pleasure of God " (Umam 2025).

The motivation for the community to carry out the slametan tradition is from the belief taught by parents and elders that when starting anything or having any happiness so that it is blessed then carry out the slametan tradition, asking for help and praise to Allah Swt. They argue that with the tradition of slametan the community still remembers that actually in any case we must involve God in it. As social beings we also cannot be separated from society, where we can build good relationships with society by holding traditions that are able to become a forum for good relations between the community and the business being built. In doing business will not be separated from the community because the market of the business itself is the community, besides that the almighty moves something is God, with the holding of the tradition slametan as a form of our hope to God because the almighty moves something is God.

From the results of researcher observations that occurred during the slametan tradition in Kadur Village, some people used incense, incense, flowers flowers and other fragrances, during the procession of implementing the slametan tradition, the researcher conducted an interview with one of the informants as a business actor who used incense or incense as the medium of the practice of the slametan tradition. Based on several community opinions regarding the motivation that encourages people to carry out the tradition of slametan before starting a business and during the heyday of the business is, the belief that is taught by elders and kiai. The tradition of slametan before starting a business and during the heyday of the business is able to benefit the community and those who carry it out, because something that is done involves God in it then God will be pleased. Positive impact obtained by the implementer of the slametan tradition before starting a business. and in the heyday of the business is more confident that the business will run smoothly, then it also has a good impact on the business of the community more familiar with the business of the implementers of the tradition slametan, the community will have a good view of the business and affect the marketing system in business (Mahfudah 2025).

## DISCUSSION

### **Business Ethic Perspective for Slametan Tradition of the business, in Pamekasan**

The slametan tradition is a tradition that is quite well known by all Javanese people, Slametan includes inner activities that aim to gain the pleasure of God (Nugroho and Wardhana 2023). The purpose of slametan is to achieve a state of slamet, as described by Koentjaraningrat as a state in which events follow a predetermined path smoothly and no misfortune befalls anyone. The purpose of slametan is in line with the Javanese principle of life, which is to seek safety. The reason for slametan such as new houses, weddings and others that are celebratory or new things will be carried out slametan. Islam calls some customs or traditions 'urf (I Nyoman Tri Sutaguna et al. 2023).

'Urf itself means tradition or habit that is done repeatedly. It's just that 'urf leads to "tradition agreement" a group of people or the majority cannot happen because of personal. Seeing from the tradition of slametan itself has not been known at the time of Rosulullah, slametan is known over time, the tradition of slametan is the teaching of the ancestors of the ancestors. Islam came not in the midst of a society devoid of culture, Islam found customs that developed in the community. Thus there are many proofs of the Qur'an and the sunnah of the Prophet, for example the command to upholding 'Urf and ma'ruf, the scholars of Ushul Fiqh formulated a rule that reads Al-'adah Muhakkimah (Sulistyaningsih, Murti, and Ratnasih 2024).

The meaning is that customs that do not conflict with the principles of Islamic sharia, are one of the sources of determining laws that are binding, while those that conflict with Islamic sharia are abandoned. The tradition of slametan before starting or when reaching the peak of business is a community habit that involves invitations to neighbors and family, recitation of prayers, the Qur'an, sentences *toyyibah*, as well as giving meals and alms (*bherkat*). This tradition is believed to be a form of supplication to Allah SWT and Gratitude for God's favor. The initial purpose of carrying out the slametan tradition before starting a business and during the glory of the business is as a gratitude of the people of Kadur to Allah SWT for all the blessings that have been given to the people of Kadur Village. As Allah says that being grateful for the blessings that have been given by Allah no matter how small, Allah will add favors and vice versa. respect to the ancestors, with the hope that the business runs smoothly and successfully. Slametan is accepted by the community because it brings positive spiritual and social impacts.

### **Motivations that Drive People to Carry out the Tradition of Slametan**

Motivation can be understood as encouragement, willingness and desire to take certain actions. The community carrying out the tradition of slametan certainly has motivation or encouragement to carry out the tradition of slametan before starting a business and during the heyday of business, one of the motivations for the community to carry out the tradition of slametan before starting a business is, the community believes that by carrying out the tradition of slametan then good wishes will come true by asking Allah Swt. the motivation arises because of the beliefs that exist in humans (Rajer 2023). The formation of community motivation to carry out the slametan tradition is the habit of people or communities that become motivation to carry it out, habits that occur within a community group will cause other communities to do so. In every tradition has a value contained in it, kadur village community is religious, so that various aspects of human life behavior cannot be separated from religious values. Therefore, one of the characteristics of local genius is usually closely related to the belief system 'Al-Wasila' (Dayu, Harahap, and M. Nawawi 2024). According to the view of the Kadur community, the salametan tradition is believed to be a means of praying to God, asking for help for blessings and safety in the business they build (Wahyu et al. 2024). The motivations that can be taken in the slametan tradition are:

- a. Tawakkal. Trying and endeavoring is human nature. as Kholifah on earth. Everything that exists is a gift from God. The creation of Allah SWT, and only he regulates everything things, including the mechanism of relations between humans, how to obtain sustenance,

and so on Because all resources in the sky and on earth are owned by Allah, then we can only endeavor to use these resources in accordance with the provisions of Allah SWT, including activities in business (N et al. 2024).

- b. Gratitude for God's favor. The initial purpose of carrying out the slametan tradition before starting a business and during the glory of the business is as a gratitude of the people of Kadur to Allah SWT for all the blessings that have been given to the people of Kadur Village. As Allah says that being grateful for the blessings that have been given by Allah no matter how small, Allah will add favors and vice versa (Chamboko-Mpotaringa and Tichaawa 2023).
- c. Involve Allah in all matters. In essence human beings can only plan that organize all affairs in the world of Allah (Supriyanto and Ekowati 2020). Allah is the one who gives the way in every human affairs both in terms of business, family, and so on In tafsir Al-Munir that humans should always remember Allah Swt wherever and whenever and whatever the circumstances so as not to fall into misguidance.
- d. Sadaqah. According to Al-Jurjani, an Arabic language expert and author of the book *At-Ta'rifat*, defines almsgiving as giving someone sincerely to those entitled to receive it accompanied by the reward from Allah SWT (U.N 2020). Alms do not have to be in the form of material given to the poor, alms include all acts of kindness both physical and non-physical (WIDIYANTO 2020).
- e. Strengthening the bond of friendship. Humans were created to complement each other, humans will not be separated from social relationships, social beings who need fellow people to create good and harmonious relationships (Fountain 2012). The slametan tradition is carried out to build *ukhuwah* to the family and community, the practice of the slametan tradition before starting a business and at the heyday of the business as one of the steps of the village community to build a bond of brotherhood, as the practice is carried out, namely gathering together in one *majlis* by reading the Qur'an, *Tahlil*, and *solawat* together until the last event is eating together, with the gathering of the community making people with each other have a sense of brotherhood that binds them together (Abdul Aziz et al. 2021).
- f. Honoring ancestors. The slametan tradition is carried out because of respect for the ancestors, the doctrine that is able to change the community is in essence what the ancestors said is always true, the belief of the community that by holding a slametan tradition in order to become Slametan world and hereafter (Kulikovskaya 2021). The belief of Animism (Belief in Goib objects, Spirits, and Lives) is also often done by the Kadur community such as doing the Slametan tradition as a form of respect to ancestors who have an important position in every event, and also as a form of gratitude for natural products that have been given to the people of the present, as a form of gratitude the community reads *Fatihah* which is devoted to the ancestors, reading the letter *Yasin*, *tahlil*, and praying that calm in the world there (Hidayati, Addainuri, and Fahrurrozi 2024).

### A Review of Islamic Business Ethics on the Tradition of Salametan

Behavior reflects a person's morals or ethics, and adherence to ethics tends to produce good behavior, including in business activities. Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* makes ethics and morals the core of life. Ethical values in Islam are not only theoretical, but also applicable (Robbani and Mukhlis 2024). One of the main missions of the apostolate of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is to perfect human morals. Business ethics is a set of principles and norms that distinguish between good and bad and must be upheld by business people in transactions and behavior in order to achieve business goals safely (Risdiyanto, Sulaeman, and Rachman 2023).

The tradition of slametan before starting or when the business triumphs reflects the hope for safety and blessing in business. Actually, Islamic business functions to achieve prosperity in this world and in the hereafter, which has been taught in the concept of Islamic economics itself

(Rafi Siregar 2024). The purpose of Islamic economics is the purpose of Islamic law itself (maqashid ash shari'ah), which is to realize the human goal of achieving happiness in the world and in the hereafter. as well as a good and honorable life(hayyatan toyyibah). So with the holding of this slametan tradition fulfills the purpose of Islamic economics to achieve happiness in the world hereafter (Laila et al. 2021) The wealth obtained by humans through business does not mean that it can be controlled absolutely without limit, but is limited and relative. Because the absolute owner is essentially only Allah SWT alone. Therefore here is the relevance, precisely why humans in doing business must obey the provisions of the absolute Owner.

## CONCLUSION

The tradition of slametan before starting a business and during the heyday of business in Kadur Village is a form of implementation of Islamic business ethics that reflects spiritual, social, and moral values. This tradition is a medium to ask for safety, blessings, and success in business by involving Allah in every business process. The main elements in this tradition are alms, prayers, and gratitude, which reflect Islamic moral principles. Although not compulsory, slametan has become a community habit that is believed to have a positive impact on business, strengthen social relations, and foster spiritual awareness in economic activities. This tradition shows how local culture and Islamic teachings can synergize in ethical and hereafter-oriented business practices.

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