



## Charismatic Authority of Labai Religious Figures in Malay-Sambas Community in West Kalimantan

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### Abstrak

Di tengah dinamisnya perubahan social pada masa modern saat ini, tokoh agama masih menjalankan sejumlah peran dan fungsi penting di tengah masyarakat. Hal ini terutama disebabkan oleh belum adanya pranata sosial baru yang dapat sepenuhnya menggantikan mereka. Penelitian ini, oleh sebab itu, bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran Labai sebagai tokoh agama dan masyarakat pada masyarakat Melayu-Sambas di Provinsi Kalimantan Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep kharisma dari Weber untuk menganalisis peran dan fungsi dari Labai di tengah masyarakat Melayu-Sambas. Metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografis diterapkan untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan sejumlah Labai. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa otoritas kharisma dari Labai dibangun dengan legitimasi masyarakat Melayu-Sambas yang memosisikan Labai sebagai tokoh publik yang tidak hanya menjalankan peran sebagai tokoh agama yang bertugas memberikan pemahaman keagamaan ataupun doktrin agama kepada masyarakat namun juga sebagai tokoh masyarakat yang hadir ketika anggotanya membutuhkan pertolongan. Dalam hal ini, Labai berperan penting dalam menjaga kearifan lokal yang secara turun-temurun dilestarikan di tengah masyarakat Melayu-Sambas di Kalimantan Barat.

**Kata Kunci:** Otoritas Kharismatik, Labai, Melayu Sambas

### Abstract

Amid a dynamic social change in modern times, religious leaders still carry out several critical societal roles and functions. The emergence of this situation is mainly due to the absence of new social institutions that can completely replace them. This study, therefore, aims to explain Labai's role as a religious and community figure in the Malay-Sambas community in West Kalimantan Province. This study uses Weber's concept of charisma to analyze the role and function of Labai in the Malay-Sambas society. A qualitative method with an ethnographic approach was applied to analyze the data collected through in-depth interviews with some Labai. The results of this

study indicate that the charisma authority of Labai was built with the legitimacy of the Malay-Sambas community who positioned Labai as a public figure who not only played a role as a religious figure in charge of providing religious understanding or religious doctrine to the community but also as a community figure who is always stand-by when its members needed help. In this case, Labai plays a vital role in maintaining local wisdom that has been preserved for generations in the Malay-Sambas community in West Kalimantan.

**Keywords:** Charismatic Authority, Labai, Malay Sambas

### **A. Introduction**

Religious leaders are essential in maintaining social and spiritual stability in each group and region because they are equipped with legitimate knowledge and have the authority to assist in the form of advice to the community. The routines carried out by religious leaders in the public sphere provide strong legitimacy by the community that a religious figure must have at least two characteristics: a resource person and a communication model. These two characteristics allow religious leaders to provide spiritual understanding to the community. In addition, these characteristics also enable religious leaders to understand the problems of life that occur in the community so that they do not only operate in the vertical dimension concerning the relationship to God but also play a role in the horizontal dimension as service providers to the community (Willis, 2007, p. 79).

The socio-cultural environmental factors that underlie and surround the individual are different, causing differences in the formation of the behavior and personality of the individual who experiences it (Siregar, 2017, p. 7). Therefore, every figure who has the authority to assist the community must understand the culture and customs of the community to create a "bridge" that is useful for making it easier for religious leaders to guide people who have problems in their lives.

Recognizing culture as a context in which everyone behaves, a clearer picture can be obtained of humans and the things behind the emergence of

behavior in each individual and even the problems experienced by humans (Farida, 2016, p. 5). The Sambas Malays have a unique set of rules or norms in society in the form of local wisdom that they have maintained. The local knowledge of the Sambas Malays here is in the form of a set of values and behavior systems of the Sambas Malays in interacting with the surrounding environment wisely. Local wisdom here can take the form of all knowledge, understanding or belief, and even customs and ethics that govern how individuals and groups for those who identify themselves as Sambas Malays (Kurniawan & Suratman, 2018, p. 191).

The local wisdom also describes the people or community leaders in Malay Sambas. Cultural figures such as Labai in the Sambas Malay community are a combination of religious and Sambas cultural figures passed down from time to time until now, which we often call acculturation. The value of acculturation between religion and culture, reflected in religious figures such as Labai, emphasizes that the Malay community living in Sambas lives in Islamic spiritual values.

Labai is a community leader trusted by the Sambas Malay community as a person who has an active role in maintaining balance and harmony in society and is assisted by other elements. Each hamlet consists of two to three Labai people who are appointed by the local community and approved by the village apparatus so that this legitimacy makes Labai have the authority to provide the religious understanding and maintain cultural values that exist in Sambas Regency (Ustad, personal communication, March 23, 2020).

Labai's cultural practices have been reflected for so long that Labai has become a place for people to ask questions if they have problems. Various problems faced by the community such as economic, social inequality, children's education, religious consultation, matchmaking, divorce to things related to mystical are often asked by the community by Labai. Labai as a person who is considered by the community to be able to provide solutions

or a traditional counselor must be aware of the implications of cultural diversity on the mentoring process. The culture adopted is very likely to cause problems in human interaction in everyday life. In addition, problems can also arise due to the interaction of individuals with their environment (Marhamah et al., 2015, p. 101).

For the community, a religious figure like Labai is often used as a place to ask for opinions because he is an elder (respected) figure, trustworthy, and understands the problems that occur in the community. In addition, a Labai often communicates directly with the community in his daily life, whether in work, religious practices, or Sambas Malay traditional events. Thus, Labai understands the reality in the community and confirms his position as a religious figure who has charismatic characteristics.

## **B. Methods**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method with an ethnographic approach to overview the issues raised based on facts about the Labai religious figure. Ethnography allows researchers to view and study research data in aspects of culture, values, and habits carried out by a community or individual (Raco, 2010, p. 89). Furthermore, the data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation techniques were reduced to sort out the main things, focusing on the essential data. After being downsized, a common thread was obtained regarding the data obtained. The data that has been reduced is then re-examined diligently to get insight regarding the focus of this research.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

The traditional-cultural Islamic community dominates the Sambas Malay community. The social structure formed is in the form of charismatic leadership with a person as the central figure, which is generally held by the community leader, played by Labai. A person who becomes a central figure must have all the abilities needed by society. This is because the collective

consciousness of the individuals forms the relationship between individuals in society in the community (Al Khanif, 2011, p. 130).

Seeing so much public attention to Labai's existence in the Sambas Regency area, he made himself a central figure who is always needed by the community and awakened Labai's charisma in the public sphere. Specifically, the following discussion will describe how Labai builds and runs charisma in society, Labai's sensitivity to social systems, and community responses to Labai.

### 1. Performing the role of Imam in Mosques

In the tradition of the Muslim community, a leader in the view of Islam is often referred to as an imam, which means as a religious leader who has a broader religious understanding so that he is imitated and has the authority to regulate and provide direction to the community towards a better life (Rivai et al., 2014, p. 2). The definition of an imam in the context of prayer is a leader in congregational prayers. Both in his permanent position and temporary situation, the priest stands at the front of the prayer congregation (Cyrl, 1999, pp. 166–167).

The position of an imam is very urgent in people's lives as an imam in carrying out congregational prayers. This can be seen from the following of all movements and readings in the prayer commanded by the priest. Likewise, in people's lives, the words of an imam become a reference and a "lamp" that illuminates society with religious knowledge (Ismardi & Arisman, 2017, p. 197). Likewise, a Labai, for the Sambas Malay community, a Labai is considered a religious figure who also helps the role of an ustadz in society. He also has legitimacy from the community to become a prayer priest in the mosque. This is because the appointment or appointment of a Labai, one of the indicators that researchers observe is a community leader who they consider to understand religious issues so that with the habituation of a

Labai to become a prayer priest in a mosque, it indirectly maintains his charisma.

There is no provision and obligation for someone to become a permanent priest in carrying out prayers in its application in society. In religious teachings, a Muslim can be appointed as an imam as long as he has fulfilled the requirements to become an imam. However, it has become a habit in the Sambas Malay community to entrust the position of faith in prayer to religious leaders such as Labai. This is based on the legitimacy they give to Labai and the assumption that Labai understands knowledge in Islam so that people believe it.

This habituation has been going on for such a long time that Labai's role as an imam has become an important part of the value system found in the Sambas Malay community. However, in practice, a Labai still provides opportunities for individuals deemed capable and have met the criteria to become prayer priests to lead prayers. This is a form of regeneration and an open value system so that anyone has the right to become a prayer priest as long as they meet the requirements of Islamic law.

However, this has become acculturation between Islam and local culture, which forms a habit in society in carrying out religious practices, including the habit of a Labai who is always a prayer priest. Sumarin's statement also reinforces that Labai's habit of being a prayer priest is a distinctive feature of social status in the Sambas Malay community.

A Labai is also considered to have fulfilled the requirements to become a prayer priest in a mosque. Labai Suketang (Suketang, personal communication, March 26, 2020) explained that at least a Labai in his duties in the community could be an example and an imam at the mosque because, before the election of Labai, the community had judged a Labai from his religious observance and his capacity to lead the community itself. From the community side, they recognize the ability of a Labai to become a prayer priest, and this is said by Cik Ardi (C. Ardi, personal communication, June 1,

2020), which states that the selection of a Labai means covering religious matters including prayer priests, rarely is there a Labai who cannot become a prayer priest, even though there may be an ustadz where the community believes he understands his religious knowledge better or a Labai whose religious knowledge he feels that he is not worthy to be a prayer priest.

Labai's job as an imam is also generally liked by the community because, after all, an imam must understand the situation of the congregation he leads in prayer. Community leaders such as Cik Ardi also explained that a Labai usually does not read long suras when he becomes a priest. Instead, he only read short Surah such as Ad-Dhuha and Surah An-Nash or fragments of familiar verses to recite during congregational prayer (C. Ardi, personal communication, June 1, 2020). So that people who have an older age do not stand too long when praying.

Therefore, the society entrusted Labai to be the Imam of prayer. Labai has earned the community's trust and understands the socio-cultural environment embedded in the Sambas Malay community. So they believe that Labai's role is the answer to their anxiety about a character they trust. These anxieties arise when society's trust in an individual cannot provide harmony in carrying out social and religious practices.

By entrusting Labai to be the prayer priest, he indirectly maintains and carries out the charisma that Labai has in the Sambas Malay community. In the end, Labai's activities as a prayer priest show what Max Weber calls the charisma routine that he maintains.

## 2. Performing the role of mortuary manager

When a Muslim dies, other Muslims are encouraged to follow Islamic law to take care of his body. This set of acts should be an obligation for Muslims to know the understanding of taking care of the corpse from bathing, shrouding, praying, and burying according to the guidance taught by the Prophet (Riyadi, 2013, p. 202). We know that one of the essential issues

related to human relations with other humans is the issue of caring for corpses. Therefore, Islam pays serious attention to this issue, so this is one of the obligations humanity must fulfill especially Muslims. Caring for the corpse is the right of the corpse and the obligation for Muslims to do it with the best drainage (Ali, 2011, p. 20).

Likewise, with matters concerning death, a Labai becomes a figure sought after by the community when one of them dies. When washing the corpse, Labai and other people from the deceased's family prepared clean water. The water used to bathe the corpse has been mixed with camphor, kaffir lime, and potpourri to give the corpse a fragrance. In general, those who cleanse the corpse are religious figures such as Labai, closest family, and community members who are used to bathing the corpse. After being cleaned, the body is made ablution by the officers who clean the corpse so that the corpse is returned to a holy state and protected from all forms of uncleanness before being prayed and buried.

In the procession of bathing the corpse, there are several ways that most of the Sambas Malays in general, first by using the body baths that have been provided in every mosque and the second by using the floor and the head of the corpse in the lap of the deceased's closest family, especially the son of the deceased as a form of filial piety to parents or as a thank you from the family left behind. The area for bathing the corpse is usually carried out in a room that is sufficient to carry out the procession. If it is in an open room, then there is a barrier that is stretched with the aim of so that people do not see the body of the deceased and keep his aurat from the public. On the other hand, there are officers who always maintain the availability of water stocks so that during the process, there are no obstacles in bathing the corpse. Then when washing the corpse, every time water is poured on the corpse's body, Labai guides those who participate in the process to pray and chant words of praise to Allah until the process is complete.



Shrouding the body in the Sambas tradition is usually provided by the community because, according to the custom of the Sambas Malay community, the community is demanded to perform a unique mechanism known as "death fee." This "fee" works like life insurance, where community members pay a certain amount of money that will be used to finance the whole funeral process. The process starts from borrowing a coffin or a place to bathe corpses, shrouds, vehicles transporting bodies, and gravediggers. This entire process is coordinated by the community who care for the death. The Sambas Malay community also practices a custom where they prepare their shroud for themselves in case of death. It also includes the location of the cloth and other relevant pieces of information.

Then when he wanted to pray for the corpse, Labai first announced the invitation to pray the corpse through the mosque's loudspeaker to residents and did not forget to invite close relatives and distant relatives to join in praying for the corpse. When praying, the corpse, mainly a Labai, is at the front even though in Islamic law, it does not regulate the place where a person stands in performing the funeral prayer. However, as a religious figure, Labai occupies a position in the front row right behind the prayer priest. The family prioritizes the Imam of the Labai prayer. If there is no Labai, an Imam becomes the priest in the funeral prayer.

Based on interviews with Labai Suketang, Labai Kurnia, and Labai Ruslan, the researcher took a common thread that the main task of a Labai is to take care of starting from bathing, shrouding, praying to bury the corpse. What Labai does as a charismatic figure for the Sambas Malay community demands obedience from the Malay community based on his abilities, such as religious missions, heroic deeds, and gifts that make him different (Rusli, 2005, pp. 214–215). With the role played by Labai in the community in taking care of the corpse, Labai is the main factor in carrying out the charisma he has in the community. Labai's routine has become a hereditary tradition in

the culture of the Sambas Malay community, which requires Labai's role in taking care of the corpse if a member of the community dies.

### 3. Reciting Prayer

As a religious leader, a spiritual leader like Labai is a person who is believed to have great authority in society. This happens because Labai is a figure who is considered by the community as a person who understands religious knowledge in Islam. In addition to his strengths, Labai's authority and close relationships with community members are implemented in the form of concern and orientation to the interests of religious communities so that the community consciously puts Labai's hopes and contributions in carrying out religious practices that are a tradition in the Sambas Malay community value system.

Cultural practices and Islamic religious values are harmoniously intertwined by involving Labai figures in it. Every tradition that is carried out cannot be separated from the thanksgiving of the community in the form of prayer. The Malay community believes that Labai's prayer will be a blessing for them because they believe in Labai's abilities and knowledge in matters of religion. Prayer led by a Labai is also a means of strengthening social bonds that have existed for so long in ceremonies and religious practices that occur in Sambas.

The prayer led by Labai is a manifestation of his moral support for them to be able to perform on something that is beyond the reach of technology. Prayer is also the highest form of awareness to reach one's spiritual limits. In addition, prayer is a request to Allah accompanied by humility to get something good and benefit by His side (Fajar, 2011, p. 39). The reading of prayers by Labai has become an inseparable part of religious activity in the culture of the Sambas Malay community.

Observations in this study suggest that Labai becomes a central figure for the community when they have an intention or ask for blessings through

a string of prayers performed by the Labai. Every traditional activity carried out by the community cannot be separated from gratitude to God so that they offer prayers led by Labai.

Each Labai memorizes no special prayers, so each Labai has different memorization and application of prayers from one another according to the abilities and knowledge possessed by each Labai. However, the recitation of salvation prayer (doa selamat) is mandatory. Every Labai knows it because they will always be asked by people in events where Labai is supposed to lead.

The existence of Labai as a figure who is always needed by the community to read prayers at religious activities makes the values of spirituality in line with the cultural value system that is reflected in the Sambas Malay tradition. This shows that Labai's role is significant because the charisma they built influences the religious practices in the public sphere. Therefore, the existence of Labai for the community provides a sense of security for the spiritual anxiety they feel. Labai's job, often used as a prayer reader in religious traditions, indirectly builds his charisma. With Labai's influence on the community, he has become an irreplaceable figure in the spiritual aspect, especially reading prayers.

The public's admiration for the personality of a Labai who is considered competent in the religious aspect is the main factor for Labai to get charisma from the community. This ability shows that Labai pays attention and understands the reality in society. This belief makes them feel psychologically safe to continue to be under the hegemony of Labai's charisma.

#### 4. Performing the role of the guardian of the Sambas-Malay culture

The meaning of culture is focused on tradition or also called customs. As explained in the anthropological dictionary, customs are pretty stable rules and include all conceptions of the cultural system of culture to regulate

human actions or actions in social life (Suyono & Siregar, 1985, p. 4). Culture and religion are inherent in a religious person, and in it, there is the involvement of their minds. In aspects of belief and formal worship, religious practices will always coincide and even interact with culture (Khaziq, 2009, p. 42).

Koentjaraningrat also said that culture comes from the Sanskrit word *buddhayah*, a plural form of *buddhi* which means mind or reason. Culture, therefore, is the implementation of mind power in the form of creating a sense of the whole system of ideas, actions and human creations in the context of community life which is made possible by learning (Koentjaraningrat, 2000, p. 181). The scope of culture seen from the spiritual aspect is the essence of human beings, namely the way of thinking and feeling, expressing themselves in all aspects of the life of people who make up society (Gazalba, 1989, p. 12).

Thus, culture is the ongoing product of human creativity by using and mobilizing all its potential. In this culture, there are knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs, etc. These are then used as a frame of reference by someone in answering the various problems they face. Culture appears as an institution that is continuously maintained by its founders and the next generation inherited by that culture (Khoiruddin, 2015, p. 119).

Likewise, Sambas Malay culture, when viewed socially, still upholds cultural values that people still apply in their daily lives. The Sambas Malay community still supports kinship values. Not a few activities carried out by the Sambas Malay community still use a cooperative system, both in social, religious and work activities. In addition, the Sambas Malay community still carries out traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. They can maintain and care for their Sambas Malay traditions and culture (Suratman, 2019, pp. 109–110).

The Malay custom such as the Sambas Malay traditional wedding consists of hearings, proposing, delivering goods, sitting side by side, belulus

bathing, eating face to face is still practiced and passed down from generation to generation (Saad, 2003, p. 9). which in every series of weddings there is always the role of Labai. Furthermore, when the wedding reception is held, starting with the recitation of the remembrance of al-Barzanji or what the Sambas Malays usually call as-Salai and as-Rakal together at the tarup (tent set up during ceremony under which high profile persons in the community stand or sit) majlis consisting of religious leaders, community leaders, pilgrims also including Labai (Abdur, 2005, p. 8).

Labai is influential as both religious and community figure in the social structure of the Sambas Malay community. Traditional and social activities are carried out in mutual cooperation. The people of Sambas are still thick with the culture of gotong royong which has become local wisdom in the community for generations. The role of a Labai is also influential in traditional activities carried out by the community. For example, when there are residents who carry out marriages knowingly, other people will come in to help voluntarily, each bringing chicken or rice to ease the burden of the event owner and Labai here is an advisor and a respected person because of his role in providing wisdom in society.

In the Malay wedding tradition in Sambas, a Labai has a critical role in helping the bride and groom to carry out the wedding. Interviews with Labai Suketang reveal that before holding a wedding reception, first, the family who wanted to marry off their child consulted with Labai. The objective of this is so that Labai knows the time of the wedding. Thus, it would not clash with other community events. He also explained sometimes, in addition to being a religious figure, a Labai is also in charge of representing the woman or vice versa in accepting the prospective bride's family.

In its implementation in the wedding procession, a Labai sits in the *tarub* assembly (a special wedding tent) together with community leaders, pilgrims, and others in the very front position. The seat position of Labai, community leaders, and other important people in front of the *tarub*, is a

symbol of the privilege of someone who is considered important and influential in the structure of the Sambas Malay community. In addition, Labai also participated in chanting as-salai and as-rakal remembrance in a series of Malay wedding traditions.

Labai's charisma routine is the main factor for a Labai to run the legitimacy of his charisma. Every Labai in the Sambas area pays attention and understands the reality of life that occurs in the community so that Labai gets social trust and charisma from the community. This charisma makes people feel helped religiously and socially so that people survive under the hegemony of the charisma of a person who brings peace in society.

Thus, the charisma of a Labai gives birth to the hegemony of a Labai's power over society in all areas of community life, which is not only in the scope of religion but also penetrates the cultural routines that exist in life of the Sambas Malay community. Charisma itself has a unique attraction that causes people to praise and respect him as a leader in society. The leadership found in a person causes admiration from others (Salim, 1991, pp. 665–666). From the activities carried out by Labai above, it is clear that Labai's charisma is getting more robust in the public sphere by always carrying out various religious and social activities. This activity is carried out and indirectly makes his followers or the local community need the presence of a Labai. In the end, what religious leaders like Labai do for the Malay Sambas community illustrates what Weber calls the routine of charisma, where charisma is spread and channeled continuously to others to maintain the continuity of the charisma of the Labai figure (Weber, 1968), p. 61).

In addition, Labai's charisma makes him a figure who plays an active role in spreading Islamic values in the Sambas area and gives a touch of local traditions so that people can understand Islam easily. With a massive understanding of Islamic teachings in the Sambas area, Labai is a figure who can provide religious teachings per the culture of the Sambas people and minimize clashes between religion and culture.

#### **D. Role of Labai in Maintaining Charisma among Sambas-Malay Community**

Labai's position and role, which has a considerable influence, is easily observed in the form of the religious behavior of the Muslim community in Sambas. Although his position is not equivalent to that of a scholar who understands religious issues in a complex and profound way, his function also has similarities, namely maintaining and providing services to the community in the form of religious understanding and understanding of social aspects in society. This makes Labai a place for public complaints related to issues of daily life ranging from religious problems, economic problems, agricultural problems, marriage problems, and all kinds of issues that exist in society (Aziz, 2019, p. 3).

Labai's role is so crucial that he is trusted by the community and holds authority in religion. The source of his authority is a form of legitimacy that is based on an established social order in a tradition/custom and the legitimacy of people who follow the pattern of control based on that tradition. Charismatic authority is an authority based on traditional claims that there are policies put forward by a leader and the beliefs of his followers, thus creating a system of relationships (personal attachment) (Rumadi, 2012, p. 28).

The existence and contribution of Labai in maintaining and caring for the Sambas Malay tradition and being present in several activities in the community indicates that Labai has built his legitimacy in the public sphere. At least the concept of the legitimacy of religious authority in Indonesia can be grouped into two categories. First is the legitimacy that takes place in the online space. Second is the legitimacy in the public sphere so that a Labai is strengthened not only because of his charisma and religious knowledge but also because he has recognition from the community for his existence (Triantoro, 2019, p. 78).

Community leaders like Labai have recognition in the society. With a position like Labai, they show charisma in the community with abilities and can influence people with all their advantages. For the community, figures like Labai are sometimes considered religious figures, so they position Labai as a savior for those who need his help. Labai builds and maintains their charisma through their efforts to build power through social relationships, and this is what Weber called charismatic authority.

For Weber, the charisma of a leader such as a religious figure plays two essential roles that are very prominent in life. First, as an extraordinary thing in terms of personality, charisma is a source of shock and renewal because it is a strategic element in social change. Moreover, gaining followers and earning respect is the source of authority that makes a Labai respected, accepted, and voluntarily followed. Therefore, the respect that Labai has is a form of community recognition for the existence and role of Labai in the Sambas area.

In addition, this study shows that Labai's concept of charisma is different from the initial concept of charisma as initiated by Weber. Weber said that a person's charisma is an extraordinary ability that is only possessed by a person and is different from others. This ability is passed down and routinized by the family or within the charismatic church institution (I. Cabbuag, 2016, p. 209).

Charisma is conceptualized by Weber is limited to a particular thing in a person's personality. Such ordinary people endowed with worldly power or qualities are extraordinary. He also states that charismatic leaders are leaders who are respected and obeyed because they have outstanding personal traits. The authority possessed by this leader depends on the beliefs of his followers (Paul Johnson, 1994, p. 229).

What is interesting in Max Weber's conception of authority is charisma. It often happens for writers or researchers when understanding the concept of charisma stops at the meaning of the word that charisma is a "special gift."



Charisma is used to signify a leader who is able to embrace a community that needs heroic actions. People who are embraced by charismatic figures can follow them because they get benefits and virtues in themselves (Chairi, 2019, p. 201).

The theory of charismatic authority conceptualized by Max Weber says that one of the characteristics of charismatic authority is supernatural. It means that an event or experience that cannot be explained by natural laws or cannot be understood by human reason in general falls under the umbrella term of charisma. However, by looking at Labai's charismatic authority, his character is now more natural in carrying out his activities as a religious figure for the Sambas Malay community. There are Labai who provide religious understanding with their supernatural experiences, but Labai only does that. They live in remote villages and communities far from urban areas to believe supernatural things still. However, people who live near crowds and are biased by the currents of modernization of technology and science tend to abandon supernatural understandings. According to the author, this shift is more related to society's development, which increasingly prioritizes rationality so that supernatural things are starting to be abandoned.

As expressed by the MUI figure in Sambas Regency, Sumar'in, who said that Labai was a central figure who had a relationship to pray for them in the religious realm. This is because the majority of people in Sambas are Muslim. People cannot be separated from spiritual values in their daily lives, and religious issues become sacred issues. Therefore, if a Labai loses his status to the Sambas community, it will affect religious practices in the Sambas area because Labai has become part of the culture of the Sambas Malay community.

The existence and role of Labai in the Sambas area are closely related to the culture of the Sambas community, which is religious and carries out daily activities following the norms and provisions of Islamic teachings. The figure of Labai is also a magnet for the community because Labai is the chosen

person who is trusted to lead religious affairs so that they respect the figure of Labai. This was confirmed by Ustadz Sugimin, who said that the existence of Labai figures in Sambas had a positive impact and helped Ustadz provide religious understanding for the community. Therefore, Labai's role significantly influenced maintaining religious traditions in the Sambas Regency area (Sugimin, personal communication, July 13, 2020).

This is what makes Labai a central figure for the Sambas Malay community. Through the existence of Labai, the community has a figure who can give them input ranging from household issues, religion, economy, and others. The activities carried out by Labai reflect what Weber calls charisma routines, namely charisma that is continuously disseminated and distributed to others to maintain the continuity of a figure's charisma (Weber, 1968, p. 54). Labai's daily activities have indirectly maintained and channeled Labai's charisma as a religious and community figure for the Sambas Malay community.

The charisma built by Labai has a relatively long journey. Based on researchers' research results, the average working period or task carried out by Labai is more than 10 years (Ruslan, personal communication, March 24, 2020). Therefore, Labai has been decorated with many social interactions so that he directly builds and exercises his charisma. The charisma shown by Labai also reflects the quality of himself to distinguish himself from others. He is also often considered and believed by the community as a figure who has spiritual power. Labai's existence gets a place in the community and always gets support.

With the values that Labai has, it can be said that he is an influential figure in the Sambas Regency community. Besides that, he also has a leadership spirit. The leadership referred to by Weber is the ability possessed by a person that reflects an intense attraction that can cause others to accept his will as something that must be imitated because he has a supernatural

quality and can get a lot of mass support from the community (Weber, 1966, p. 358).

### **E. Conclusion**

Based on the discussion about the charismatic authority that Labai has for the Sambas Malay community, it can be understood that a Labai has legitimacy from the community to make him a religious figure for the community so that Labai has authority as a leader and can influence the community. With a reasonably long tenure, a Labai builds his charismatic authority by practicing religious and socio-cultural practices to confirm his position as an influential religious figure in the Sambas Malay community.

In carrying out his charisma, Labai has a friendly nature to the community, simplicity of life, and an approach readily accepted by the community that made him a role model and religious leader who is always needed by the community. In addition, with what Weber calls "charisma routines," a Labai can give his charisma authority as a religious figure and also form a collective consciousness (collective consciousness) in the field of religion.

The legitimacy given by the community to Labai creates a cultural strength in the Malay Sambas tradition that Labai's existence is not only a religious figure who only provides religious doctrine to the community but also deeply understands cultural habits or values with the implication of creating harmony. In society to this day. This balance between religious doctrine and cultural spirit gives Labai a strength that makes them the main reference when people ask for help to solve their problems.

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