

# Local Wisdom of the Begalan Tradition in Traditional Weddings: Insights from Banyumas, Central Java, Indonesia

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## Abstract

This study delves into the Begalan performing arts, a cultural tradition in Banyumas Regency associated with weddings. It aims to identify the forms of begalan performing arts in Karang Sari Village, Kebasen District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, unravel the symbolic meanings of the began tradition in traditional marriages and establish the values of traditional ethics education Begalan.

The research employed qualitative methods with case studies involving data collection through observations, interviews, and documentation. It interviewed community leaders, brides and grooms as well as Begalan actors and was carried out in Karang Sari Village, Kebasen District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java.

The findings reveal performance time, sequence, and Begalan accompaniment as well as symbolic meanings of the properties, such as *dian* (Javanese traditional light), *ilir* (wind source useful for cooling rice), *kukusan* (tool for steaming rice), *pedaringan* (crate for storing rice), *layah*, *muthu*, *irus*, *siwur* (dipper), *beras* (rice), *wangkring* (a carrying device made of bamboo called a bamboo rope.), *sapu sada* (lidi broom), *suket* (java grass), *cething* (Javanese utensil), *daun salam* (Indonesian bay-leaf), and *tampah* (winnowing tray) and in the song lyrics which contain advice for the wedding couple. The Begalan tradition is steeped in intricate symbolism and multifaceted meanings, contributing to the realm of community ethics education.

The Begalan tradition, embedded in Javanese ethics and customs, imparts several local wisdom values, including community ethics, harmony, self-control, saving, and respect. These values are essential for a harmonious marital life and broader social interactions.

**Keywords:** Local Wisdom, Begalan Tradition, Traditional Wedding, Cultural Values

## Introduction

The diversity of Javanese cultural arts encompasses both their richness and the looming threat of extinction that part of these art forms face. However, some of these arts might go, which is very sad while Indonesian arts especially Javanese are appreciated abroad (Mufidah et al., 2022). This pressing concern has driven certain artists to take on the responsibility of preserving these traditions. Concerning to the extinction of arts, artists are worried about this and want to keep arts alive (Asifina & Ovilia, 2016; Hertzmann, 2018). They are working hard to make sure that these special traditions do not disappear because they are important and should be kept for the future. Banyumas, an area in Java, Indonesia, located in the border of two major cultures, namely the Sundanese and the Javanese. This intersection has given rise to what is now recognized as the Banyumas culture, a fusion born from the interplay of Javanese and Sunda influences (Kinanti, Pitana and Yuliani, 2017; Kurniawan et al., 2018) In addition, Banyumas is rich in cultures namely traditional art, customs, and tradition that should be preserved as assets (Dadan & Priyono, 2016) and its culture is considered unique compared to other Javanese cultures. (Purwoko, 2016).

The concept of cultural choice in one area plays a pivotal role in the formation of culture, exerting significant influence over the course of its development (Kim & Drolet, 2003; Cahya et al., 2016). People evaluate their actions and beliefs on the basis of how useful they are, especially for achieving goals. This process fosters the growth of a wide variety of highly complex cultural products, such as technology, magical arts, aesthetic traditions, and institutions. Cultural dependencies show that certain beliefs produce appropriate new practices and how they relate to other cultural evolutionary processes (Cahya et al., 2016). This dynamic process of evaluation and alignment facilitates the emergence of a diverse array of remarkably intricate cultural creations. By subjecting these cultural constructs to evaluation, their efficacy in serving enduring objectives can be scrutinized, affirming their role as effective tools for meeting long-term aspirations and thereby solidifying their place within the intricate tapestry of evolving culture (Hertzmann, 2018).

Among various cultural customs passed down by the ancestors of the Javanese tribe, one of them is the Begalan art (Purwoko, 2016). It is customary for Javanese traditional weddings, and few artists still survive to preserve the Begalan custom in the Banyumas Regency. The modern era has caused only a few artists to be able to preserve the Begalan custom in Banyumas (Khoeriyah et al., 2018; Rachmadani, 2021). Therefore, various efforts are needed to increase education about the Begalan custom to the younger generation. Banyumas traditional arts are threatened with extinction if there is no regeneration of young people as foreign cultures are increasingly entering Indonesia (Dadan & Priyono, 2016; Kurniawan et al., 2018). There is a need for research on the symbolic meaning of the Begalan custom so that the younger generation not only witnesses the performance but also understands the value and meaning of the Begalan performance. Thus, this present study aims to identify the forms of performing arts in Begalan in order to explore the traditional Begalan cultural values that people rarely know about. Meanwhile, the objectives of this study are: (1) to identify the forms of begun performing arts in Karangasari Village, Kebasen District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java (2) to unravel the symbolic meanings of the began tradition in traditional marriages (3) to establish the local wisdom values of traditional ethics education Begalan.

## Theoretical Framework

### Local Wisdom

The theory employed as the framework for this research is known as the contact theory (Seaman et al., 2010). This theory serves as a guiding lens through which to explore two distinct aspects: the manifestation of local wisdom within institutional groups and the examination of tolerance (Kurniawan et al., 2018). The contact theory, in this context, offers valuable insights into how different cultural and social groups interact and influence one another. By applying

this theory, the researchers aim to uncover instances where local wisdom is embedded within various institutional settings, shedding light on how traditional knowledge and practices shape the functions and dynamics of these groups. Ono's theory is a theory from Gordon Allport, which was popularized in 1954 during the conflict between racists and ethnicities in the US (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2015).

According to Jumriani *et al.*, (2021) & (Marti & Ridiah, 2023) local wisdom stands as a cultural attribute that is distinctly affiliated with a specific geographical region, particular ethnic group, or even an entire nation. It encompasses a repository of knowledge, practices, beliefs, and values that have been nurtured and refined over generations within a particular cultural context (Purwoko, 2016; Khoeriyah *et al.*, 2018).

This localized reservoir of wisdom often embodies insights and solutions that are intricately intertwined with the unique challenges, resources, and history of the community or area it pertains to. As a reflection of the collective experiences and heritage of the people, local wisdom serves as a testament to the rich tapestry of human diversity and adaptation (Chotimah & Faisal, 2018; Sumartias *et al.*, 2020) It not only contributes to the cultural identity of a place or group but also holds the potential to offer valuable insights into addressing various contemporary issues and fostering a deeper understanding of the intricacies of human existence (Purwoko, 2016).

Local wisdom can also be described as an activity that includes how to interact among humans or in the environment and in a belief system (Dahlia, 2015). In addition, a harmonious relationship between humans, nature and the built environment in a place that is influenced by its culture is called local wisdom (Dahlia *et al.*, 2015; Naryatmojo, 2019; Yasir *et al.*, 2023). Berkes (1993) described the concept of local wisdom using the term traditional ecological knowledge. The term means a collection of knowledge, practices and beliefs that develop through adaptive processes (adjustments) that are passed down from generation to generation through culture. This process is related to the relationship between living things, including humans, and their environment. Sources of traditional ecological knowledge consist of stories, songs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, customary laws, local languages, and utilization of natural resources. In addition, Ellen *et al.*, (2005) called it local knowledge. Local knowledge can be defined as follows: 1) knowledge related to a place, a set of experiences, and developed by the local community; 2) knowledge acquired through trial and error; 3) non-theoretical empirical knowledge; and 4) comprehensive and integrated knowledge in the domain of tradition and culture.

## Review of Literature

Research studies have been conducted on Begalan from many perspectives. Previous research was conducted by Andi and Fitroh (2015) on the Function Transfer of the Begalan Tradition in Banyumas Marriage Customs and about the Existence of the Begalan Tradition in Banyumas Society. This research tried to explore the existence of Begalan from 1978 to 2019. Historical review is emphasized in this research. Even though there has been previous research, this research has a novelty, namely how the meaning of the Begalan tradition is related to the younger generation. Meanwhile, (Kurniawan *et al.*, 2018) study's aim was to provide a description of several aspects of Begalan namely: (1) the structure of the Begalan traditional ceremony, (2) the significance found within brenangkepang, and (3) the communication aspects, including communicative situations, events, and actions. The research follows a descriptive qualitative approach and employs techniques such as observation, interviews, and document analysis. It focused on the communication-related activities of the traditional Begalan ceremony in Banyumasan. The analysis method used is qualitative descriptive analysis with interactive elements. The Begalan Banyumasan ceremony serves as a ritual to eliminate negativity, and its sequence of activities, speeches, and tools holds religious and meaningful value. Moreover, the ceremony holds educational value, benefiting both brides and observers. Research study on Begalan was continued in 2018 by (Kholifah, 2018) and (Suroso, 2018). Kholifah's research (2018) discussed the cultural significance of the Begalan tradition in

Banyumas, which is commonly practiced during weddings and encompasses various symbolic and moral values. The tradition is viewed as a norm, guidance, and performance for the local community. The research is qualitative and interpretive, involving the identification of cultural elements within Begalan texts. Meanwhile, Suroso (2018) unraveled the Begalan tradition that holds significant implicatures that effectively contribute to the development of positive character traits within the Banyumas community. The study's research problem revolved around identifying these implicatures and understanding how they foster good character in the community. The research employed a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing non-participant observation and interviews for data collection. The analysis involved describing the Begalan tradition and explaining its implicatures, which serve to cultivate various positive community traits in Banyumas, Indonesia. The study revealed that the Begalan tradition encompasses both conventional and conversational implicatures that contribute to the development of qualities such as religiosity, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, appreciation, friendliness, peace-loving attitudes, care, and responsibility within the community.

Further studies have looked at Begalan from the perspective of religion. The results showed that the acculturation of Banyumas culture with religion can be seen from the elements of Banyumas culture, their practices and beliefs, as well as symbols that have meaning related to religious teachings (Supangat, 2021). Another research was conducted by (Rachmadani, 2021). This study revealed that the Begalan tradition is a unique cultural practice in Banyumas, Central Java, performed during wedding ceremonies (Khoeriyah et al., 2018). It combines dance, speech, and comedy, accompanied by music. This tradition holds religious and educational values, offering advice and teachings. The close relationship between community life and Javanese culture is evident, with Islamic teachings intertwined. The various elements of Begalan, like *brenong kepang* and household items carry religious significance (Wahyu & Brata, 2020; Kamaludin & BS, 2021). The research, conducted qualitatively through interviews, observation, documentation, and group discussions, aimed to uncover religious education values within Begalan and the challenges of its preservation. The tradition imparts Islamic educational values, including monotheism, morals, and social teachings. Efforts from all parties are crucial to preserve this cultural heritage.

The Begalan in Javanese culture is the form of local wisdom found in Banyumas. Begalan holds a significant place within Javanese culture, representing a distinctive manifestation of local wisdom specifically originating from the region of Banyumas. This traditional practice encapsulates the essence of Banyumas' cultural heritage, showcasing the unique beliefs, values, and traditions that have evolved over time within this particular locality (Lestari, 2013; Purwoko, 2016; Khoeriyah et al., 2018). As an integral part of Javanese culture, Begalan serves as a testament to the deep-rooted connection between tradition and community identity in Banyumas, preserving a piece of the area's cultural legacy through its ceremonial and expressive aspects (Asrizal & Armita, 2017; Rachmadani, 2021).

## Research Methods

Utilising a qualitative approach with a case study strategy, the method employed to collect the data for this study included observation (eight times), interviews (four times), and documentation. The informants in this study were Karangasari village leaders, residents of Karangasari Village who became brides according to the Begalan custom, and Karangasari Village officials. The data analysis employed in this study was based on the work of Miles and Huberman including data reduction, presentation, and conclusion or verification. Verification or employing triangulation to evaluate the data's veracity is the last step (Milles & Huberman, 1992).

This research is based on an interactive analysis of the traditional Begalan performance. The selection of objects and subjects in this study used a side purposive technique. The object of this study is related to the Begalan performance, starting from the various tools used and events from the Begalan custom. The research subjects were traditional brides who were the first children and had to perform traditional Begalan performances at their weddings,

as well as the figures who play the Begalan custom and are involved in the Begalan custom nets in Karangasari Village.

In addition, the research subjects were also community leaders who know the value of the Begalan custom and the purpose of the Begalan custom in Karangasari village. The observation was carried out in a participatory manner towards five brides in Karangasari Village. The interview with community leaders was conducted on January 20, 2023. These community leaders provided information regarding the implementation of the Begalan custom in Karangasari Village. Another interview was conducted on January 25, 2023, with the actors in the Begalan custom to obtain information about the traditional Begalan fittings and the process of the Begalan performance. Subsequent interviews were conducted with the younger generation in Karangasari village. Then, proceed with interviews with the bride and groom in an effort to triangulate sources. Documentation was obtained from the process of Begalan performances for eight times so that there was a method of triangulation, namely observation, interviews and documentation. The authors are people who have lived in the research area, so this led to in-depth participatory observation.

### **An Introduction to Begalan**

Local wisdom means the repository of knowledge of certain communities gathered through their experiences. They are unique and are not necessarily known to other communities (Khoeriyah et al., 2018; Wahyu & Brata, 2020) The values have arisen through a long period of time, and sometimes as long as the existence of these communities. They are very strongly attached to them (Widiati, 2017). The word 'Begalan' is indeed biased because it implies robbery, but this is related to the history of the tradition of Begalan during the royal era in Banyumas. It is said that this Begalan originated from an incident that occurred at the time of the wedding of the youngest daughter of Adipati Wirasaba, namely Dewi Sukesi with the son of the duke of Banyumas, Prince Tirtokencono. While moving with the bride, the group that departed from Wirasaba was been intercepted by a group of robbers. However, the robbers have been overcome. Interestingly, this incident has also coincided with a *pageblug* (plague). To contain and overcome it, offerings had to be made, namely as Begalan (Karyono, 2016; Kurniawan et al., 2018). Later, the Banyumas elders have conveyed to their offspring to carry out the Begalan tradition so that the bride and groom would be safe in carrying out their life. (Lestari, 2013; Kurniawan et al., 2018; Wahyu & Brata, 2020).

However, in the current events, the Begalan tradition does not contain violence at all (Kurniawan et al., 2018) but instead features dancing, singing, and bridal advice. Begalan art as a result of culture, is related to symbols. Culture as a symbol system is a reference and guideline for people's lives. Symbolic codes are used to transmit cultural paradigms and ways of interpreting the world. The idea that culture is an expression of society in the form of ideas and human behaviour in their communities is implied by the definition of culture as a system of symbols (Rohidi, 2000). From generation to generation, it is an art form that is integrated with society. It is closely related to customs, and to regional characteristics. Traditional art that grows and develops in the community has a very important function in its supporting community (Sedyawati, 1981). Meanwhile Koentjaraningrat (2002) stated that apart from regional issues, every work of an Indonesian son from whatever ethnic group it comes from, the main thing is that it is unique and of good quality in such a way that most Indonesians want and can identify themselves and feel proud of their work. That is the Indonesian National Culture.

Symbolism in Javanese culture is used as a medium or intermediary. Like the Javanese language, which is full of flowers, symbols, and *sinamuning samudana* or hidden in figures of speech, it must be discussed with deep feelings and be responsive in sasmita or be able to capture the true, hidden meanings. The Javanese take their own personal terms as symbols of God, such as *Gusti Kang Maha Agung*, Prince Kang Murbeng Dumadi, Prince Kang Maha Tunggal, and *Gusti Allah*. Its mystical and magical properties are expressed in terms such as *Sing Mbahu Rekso*, *Sing Momong* and *Mbahe* (Sedyawati, 1981). Socio-cultural capital can provide harmony, opportunity and continuity (Rohidi & Haryanto, 2023).

Begalan art as a result of culture is related to symbols. Culture as a symbol system is a reference and guideline for people's lives (Rachmadani, 2021). The giving of meaning and cultural models is transmitted through symbolic codes. Understanding culture as a system of symbols gives the connotation that culture is an expression of society in the form of ideas and human behavior in their communities (Rohidi, 2000; Purwoko, 2016). It is described in the forms of symbolism in Javanese culture which is very dominant in all things and in all fields. This can be seen in the daily actions of the Javanese, as a realization of their multiple views and attitudes in life. These symbolic forms can be grouped into three types, namely: acts of symbolism in religion, acts of symbolism in tradition and acts of symbolism in art (Asrizal & Armita, 2019; Rachmadani, 2021). Traditional arts cannot be separated from the culture of the surrounding community, as well as the meaning contained therein. Belief in traditional arts or habits that have been entrenched in the community is very strong in Karangasari Village, which is located in Kebasen District, Banyumas Regency. The culture that exists in Karangasari Village and is still being preserved by people is the Begalan tradition which is carried out in every marriage process with certain conditions.

## Findings and Discussion

### 1. Forms of Begalan Performing Arts

Begalan occurs when the bride and groom are the first child, the last child, or the last child of the wedding party. The people of Banyumas believe that rituals should be carried out after the wedding so that the bride and groom are protected from harm. Over time, Begalan became a common tradition in weddings. Robbery can still be committed by anyone wishing to marry, even if they do not meet the above conditions. This is because Begalan has many moral messages and important advice for the bride and groom who are getting married and hope to understand the meaning of life contained therein.

The time for the Begalan art performance in Banyumas Regency coincides with the wedding *panggih* ceremony. The results of Begalan performing arts in this study was obtained through observation and interviews. The interviewee stated that if the *panggih* bride ceremony is held during the day, the Begalan art is performed during the day. In addition, if the *panggih* bride ceremony is held in the evening, the Begalan art is also performed in the evening (Lestari, 2013). *Panggih* ceremony is procession of bringing the bride and the groom together or bridal meeting (Indrati, 2017; Natsir et al., 2022; Risyanti et al., 2022). It is a ceremony in a wedding showing the local wisdom in the Javanese people. The reciprocity of the relationship between the Center and the Satellite takes place through meaningful social relations (Adisaputri et al., 2022). As stated by the interviewees, the time for the performance is not mandatory, but really depends on the will of the responder or adjusts to the existing situation and conditions. The researchers were also had documentation of Begalan performing arts for eight times to which one of the documents is given in Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1:** The Begalan interpreter in the Begalan Tradition is having a dialogue and chanting which contains advice for the bride and groom

Source: (Authors)

Fig. 1 shows one of the Begalan art performance steps especially on delivering advice to the bride and the groom. Begalan is done in two steps, preparation and implementation (Kamaludin & BS, 2021). It starts from the entry of the bride and groom to the place or location of the ceremony, accompanied by both parents and guided by the bridal make-up artist. Usually, the performance takes place in the front yard of the bride's house, accompanied by the *Kebogiro* piece, escorted by two Begalan performers (*begal* handlers) complete with their burning *kepang*. Begalan performers carrying swords (*pembegal*) escort the bride, while the performers carrying *brenong kepang* escort the groom. Arriving at the place, the bride and groom sat accompanied by the parents of each bride and groom. After arriving at the place prepared, the groom sits beside his parents, and the bride sits accompanied by her parents in a sitting position facing each other to witness the Begalan art together. Art performances are staged in the middle for the two people. Begalan custom is a local wisdom in Karangasari village that is different from other regions in Indonesia as stated by the actors in the Begalan through interview in this study. This is reinforced by a statement from the traditional community leaders as follows:

“The bride and her parents can all clearly follow the show so that they understand all the contents of the advice outlined by the robbers. The two robbers then dance to the accompaniment of the Banyumasan piece of music. After performing Gendhing Suwuk (stop), the players stop dancing. The player in charge of carrying the braided *brenong* puts down his luggage. In this part, the two players are already in the arena of performances, but only one player is active. The second player acts as if he has not entered the staging arena. The first player (the emissary from the daughter's side) then performs a monologue.”

The next performance depicts the journey of the *besan* envoy (the groom's side), then continues with the introductions between the two envoys. On this trip, the second player has started to actively interact with the first player. One of the players (usually the carrier of *Brenong Kepang*) introduces himself as *Surantani*, an envoy from the Medang Kamulan kingdom, while the second player (*pembegal* or robbers) claims to be named Sura Dhenta, an emissary from the Kahuripan Kingdom.

There are accompaniments in traditional arts that use only internal accompaniment, only external accompaniment and use both. In the Begalan art performance, the accompaniment used is classified as external accompaniment. Before technology developed rapidly accompaniment was performed directly, as technology developed, indirect accompaniment could be used, for example using cassettes and CD. Begalan had almost never been acknowledge as higher art compared to similar art developed by keraton in the past (Purwoko, 2016). The begalan tradition as one of the wedding traditions that exist in the Regency community Banyumas require lots of innovation and flexibility to get accepted by the wider community (Wahyu & Brata, 2020) In fact, this tradition is full of meaning and advice for newly married couples (Wahyu & Brata, 2020; Lestari, 2013; Rachmadani, 2021).

## 2. The Symbolic Meaning of the Begalan Art Performance



**Fig. 2:** Properties used in the Begalan tradition in traditional marriages in Karangasari Village, Kebasen District, Bayumas Regency, which contain symbolic meanings

Source: Authors

Fig. 2 was obtained from the documentation in this study. This figure shows properties used in the Begalan tradition in traditional marriages in Karangasari Village. The meaning of the Begalan art for Community Ethics Education is found in some aspects. The first aspect is found in the poetry of the song. The example of symbolic meanings of *tembang* poetry in the Begalan art performance are *tembang eling-eling* lyrical meanings. This is established in Karangasari Village. Lestari (2013) stated that this poetry is also found in Begalan held in Pabuwaran Village in North Purwokerto Banyumas.

The second aspect is found in the properties of the performance (Lestari, 2013; Kholifah, 2018; Rachmadani, 2021). The symbolic meanings of the properties of the Begalan art performances include: *Ian* describes the universe *gumelar* (macrocosm), *Iilir* describes the source of the wind, *Steam* describes the four passions namely *anger*, *luamah*, *supiah*, and *mutmainah*, *pedaringan* describes the nature of *gemi* meaning good at saving, *Layah* or characteristic describes the teachings of introspection. Then, *Muthu* describes the teachings to be able to solve problems. *Irus* describes the nature of *mersudi* (trying to). In addition, *Siwur* symbolizes teachings so that people are not careless. *Paddy* is a hope for prosperity. *Wangkring* describes tolerance in household life, *Sapu Sada* describes mutual cooperation; *Suket* is a hope that family life will be built eternally; *Cething* describes a container or organization in society; *Salam* leaves describe hopes for safety; *Tampah* describes a place to separate good and bad things.

There is a religious meaning of the Begalan tradition, according to the Banyumas people to which in this study obtained from the interviews with the community leaders in the setting of this research. The art of Begalan is closely related to religion (Kurniawan et al., 2018; Wahyu & Brata, 2020) (A. E. A. Wahyu & Brata, 2020), namely the belief that if Begalan is not held, the bride and groom will be threatened by forces outside themselves. In this case, it's like *ruwatan*, if people do not have it, they will fall prey to *Bethara Kala*. In the past, Begalan performers were not paid or only helped, because they realized that this was the interest of traditional ceremonies. Thus, they are considered as handlers, as people who can approach ancestors or spirits so that they do not interfere with the marriage ceremony (Kamaludin & BS, 2021). The custom of the Banyumas people before the Begalan art performance begins is preceded by holding offerings (*sajen*), by burning incense accompanied by reading mantras. The purpose of the offerings is so that during the *wishes* and when the bride and groom are side by side safe, there are no disturbances whatsoever.

### 3. The Value of Ethical Education in Begalan Art Performances

The results of the researchers' observations showed that the Begalan performance was still carried out by the Karangasari village community. The Begalan performance is carried out by the community, which is included the people who are obliged to do *yat* as a form of local wisdom. Couples practice the Begalan custom because it has become a hereditary culture. This is reinforced by a statement from the bride as one of the interviewees stating as follows:

“I know that Begalan custom is a local wisdom that I have to protect. My parents required that there should be trouble at my wedding because I was the first child. There is a lot of good advice that can be used as a guide in running a household. This is also a very good form of culture to be preserved (the bride and groom carry out the Begalan custom).”

All the tools used in the Begalan tradition have a philosophical meaning for life, which is included in local wisdom. This is reinforced by a statement from the traditional community leaders as follows:

“The Begalan tradition is a traditional Banyumas local wisdom that has existed for a long time. In Banyumas custom, Begalan is done to get rid of bad conditions in the future that the bride and groom may experience.”

Begalan performance activities as a local wisdom. This is reinforced theory by Berkes (1993) stating that local wisdom is a collection of practical knowledge and beliefs that develop through an adaptive process (adjustment) through inheritance. When viewed from this theory, the Begalan performance fulfills the elements of local wisdom which is a collection of knowledge regarding life guidelines in a marriage and is practised at weddings and also contains values that must be applied and believed by the people of Banyumas through a process of adjustment to current conditions and continues to be inherited become a culture.

All the tools used in the Begalan tradition are traditional tools that are often encountered in everyday life. This is a form of local wisdom and cultural preservation which is continuously maintained by the people of Banyumas. Based on the results of the researcher's analysis, one of the educational values contained in the Begalan art performance is community ethics education. Community ethics education in question, in the Begalan art performance, is ethics education or education regarding good and bad teachings that must be understood by the community to be applied in social life. Community ethics education in the Begalan art performance aims to provide learning to the community, especially the bride and groom so that they can live in harmony and balance in taking on a new life as husband and wife. The ethical education contained in the Begalan art performance belongs to the group of normative ethics because it explains good and bad judgments and shows what humans should do. The local wisdom found in Begalan is as follows.

#### 1. *Pituduh* or advice/ suggestions

Javanese ethics are broadly conveyed in two ways. The first is through *pituduh* (advice or suggestions), whose contents are giving advice in the form of suggestions. Second, through *pepali* (*wewaler*), which means the prohibition for the Javanese to stay away from bad deeds. Advice and prohibitions are the core of manners or ethics. The purpose of giving advice and prohibitions is a state of safety or *slamet*. For Javanese people, manners or ethics are a must (Kismini et al., 2020). Javanese manners or ethics are conveyed from certain parties to other parties who have different positions (levels). Javanese ethics are carried out as an effort to maintain harmony in human life (Endraswara, 2003: 37).

#### 2. *Rukun* or harmony

The value of ethics education according to the findings of this study derived from the interviews refers to Javanese ethics also includes the principle of rukun or harmony. The concepts of harmony is equally suitable for all human beings and societies (Yu, 2022). The community leader as one of the subjects of this study stated that the principle of harmony is the principle of harmony in life to prevent conflicts from occurring in society. The principle of harmony of life will be deeply impressed and will always be remembered or hard to forget. Ethical education implied in the Begalan art performance and in accordance with the principles of harmony include the following: Surrender and *Eling*. The teachings of surrender and *eling* are teachings so that people, especially the prospective bride and groom, in living a married life always surrender and always remember God, and carry out all the consequences as a God's creation. With an attitude of surrender and awareness, people become focused and do not just live by looking at things, looking for worldly things. Mindfulness also fosters self-awareness. Understanding and surrender invites Javanese people to always remember God. By remembering God, people always do good. Human beings as creatures created by God must always remember the origin of life, that the world and everything in it is God's creation (Wahyu & Brata, 2020; Kamaludin & BS, 2021). Begalan custom is closely related to rituals to God and advice when the bride and groom are about to live a household life. This is reinforced by a statement from the traditional community leaders, as follows:

“Begalan is a very important form of wedding ritual in Banyumas because besides functioning as a means of repelling reinforcements. It also contains da'wah, educational and social values aimed at the bride and the other people present at the ceremony (The traditional community leaders).”

Theory of Ellen et al., (2005) regarding local wisdom is very much in line with the Begalan tradition. This is reinforced by a theory from the traditional community leaders, as follows.

“Begalan is local wisdom related to knowledge of a place developed through trial and error and this knowledge is empirical knowledge that is non-theoretical and comprehensive in cultural traditions. Based on this theory, it can be seen that knowledge about life guidelines in the Begalan ritual is a non-theoretical guide related to God and a good guide that forms a culture.”

### 3. *Tepa Selira* or control oneself based on self-awareness

The attitude of working together in the Begalan art performance can be observed in the symbolic meaning of the properties of broom *sada* and rice. *Tepa* means to put down, and *Selira* means personal self. *Tepa selira* is an individual attitude to control oneself based on self-awareness. *Tepa selira* makes the community place itself in the social interaction system based on self-determination and voluntary heart (Suseno, 2001; Istikomah et al., 2021; Farida et al., 2022). *Tepa selira* is the attitude and behaviour of someone who can understand the feelings of others. *Tepa selira* in the Begalan art performance is reflected in the properties: *ceathing*, *wangkring*, *siwur*, *layah* or characteristic, *muthu*, *irus*, *suket*, bay leaf, winnowing.

### 4. *Gemi* or good at saving

The nature of *gemi* means good at saving. *Gemi* always carefully calculates how to spend money. The definition of *gemi* or saving expenses is not stingy, but rather can distinguish what needs to be bought and what doesn't need to be bought. Stingy is not willing to give assistance in the form of money even though it is really needed, even though you are rich. People who have a *gemi* nature, if someone else needs help, will be happy to provide help without expecting anything. *Gemi* means being able to manage the balance between income and expenses. The passionate nature of the Begalan art performance mirrors that of the *Pedaringan* performance property. *Pedaringan* has the connotation that a wife must be good at saving money. *Gemi* means being able to manage the balance between income and family financial expenses. A wife must be able to find a place to store all kinds of fortune that her husband gets. This means that the wife must be able to distinguish between needs and wants so that she can save her husband's income and be able to spend it on positive things that are useful for household needs with full control and not seem wasteful. In the view of the Banyumas people, a wife who acts extravagantly is often likened to the expression rich *pedaringan* perforated (such as *pedaringan* leaks), which means that a woman who is extravagant cannot keep the wealth or fortune that her husband earns. A wasteful wife cannot be a place where her husband's fortune resides because no matter how much income she earns, she will "leak" (run out) for things that are not necessary.

### 5. Respect

The principle of respect includes social rules that play a role in the interaction of Javanese society. The principle of respect is a social rule to maintain harmonious relations between members of the society (Kurniawan et al., 2018; Kismini et al., 2020). The implication of respect will be related to ethics regarding *ungguh* and Javanese manners. The principle of respect will first be learned by children in the family. The child's relationship with parents indirectly reflects the application of respect. Javanese children learn the principle of respect through three situations, namely: *wedi*, *isin*, and *sung* (Geertz, 2003). These three situations are a continuation of feelings that have a social function to provide psychological support for the principle of respect.

There is no agreement on what designation is used by the perpetrators of the Begalan tradition when carrying out the Begalan tradition because the designation is adapted to the knowledge and beliefs of each actor of the Begalan tradition. These names have a unique meaning for each actor of the Begalan tradition (Wahyu & Brata, 2020).

The people of Banyumas consider Begalan as a repellent. However, this performance may focus more on a moral message for those who are about to start a household, a kind of marriage sermon in the form of performing arts. In Begalan, there is a core advice that carries out family functions, such as biological, economic, educational, social, religious, compassion and protection. One of the most canonical traditions, among many other cultural traditions, is carried out formally in the wedding ceremony. Begalan is a typical Banyumas culture. This process is simple, but unique in that unlike one might think, robbery is not the same as robbery. The most important message is that every householder must prepare well and be ready to face difficulties (Erlina, 2023). The Begalan tradition is very closely related to the history of Banyumas, and is usually performed in a lively atmosphere during the marriage ceremony. Begalan is a form of ritual that is very important in a wedding ceremony in Banyumas, because besides functioning as a means of repelling reinforcements, it also has missionary, educational and social purposes for the bride as local wisdom and this is very important (Kamaludin & BS, 2021).

## Conclusions

The Begalan tradition is a significant local wisdom within the Banyumas community. The practice involves a performance carried out by the Karangasari village community. This custom has been passed down through generations due to its hereditary nature. The tools used in Begalan hold symbolic meanings and philosophical significance, representing local wisdom. Ethical values are imparted through this tradition, offering guidance and teachings to brides and grooms. The practice aligns with Javanese ethics, emphasizing harmony, respect, and ethical teachings, fostering a sense of mindfulness and self-awareness. The Begalan tradition is not just a ritual, but also a way to impart essential life values, making it an integral part of Banyumas' history and culture. In a nutshell, this study examines the Begalan performing arts, a cultural tradition in Banyumas Regency associated with weddings. Originally limited to specific circumstances, Begalan has evolved into a broader practice believed to protect newlyweds. Performed during the panggih ceremony, it symbolizes unity. The tradition's stages and symbols hold deep significance, unique to the Karangasari village. Despite historical underestimation compared to royal arts, Begalan carries rich meaning for newlyweds. Adaptation for community acceptance is highlighted. Similarly, the analysis of the Begalan tradition underscores its importance as local wisdom. Its symbolism and practices encompass ethics education, harmony, self-control, saving, and respect. Rooted in Javanese ethics, it offers guidance for harmonious living. Its religious and cultural aspects tie to safeguarding couples and ancestral realms. The tradition's sacred nature is reinforced by offerings, fostering couple harmony. As an embodiment of cultural inheritance, Begalan resonates with Berkes' adaptive local wisdom concept. Its layers of meaning make it a vital cultural touchstone promoting personal and communal well-being through ethics and tradition.

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