**SENİ BELUK CIKONDANG INDIGENOUS VILLAGE REVIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MUSIC EDUCATION**

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Received: 25th November 2019/ Revised: 09th December 2019/ Accepted: 20th January 2020

How to Cite: Cipta, F., Gunara, S., & Sutanto, T. S. (2020). Seni beluk Cikondang indigenous village reviewed from the perspective of music education. Humaniora, 11(1), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.21512/humaniora.v11i1.6099

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**ABSTRACT**

The research was conducted to develop a music model based on local wisdom at Cikondang village, Pangalengan, West Java. The research problem was that, along with the changing times, the next generation tended to ignore the values of local wisdom. Therefore, through music learning, the values of art could be understood and actualized in everyday life. Music (nembang and ngabeluk) became a medium to express values in pupuh verses which contained wawacan about the relationship between man and their God, man, and others, and man and their surroundings.

The data collection was done using observation, interview, and literature review then analyzed with the music education approach. The obtained results reveal that the learning process of seni beluk in Cikondang Village has taken place in the context of community education which is done informally, and formed naturally. There is no invitation or coercion from the elders to the next generation to learn this art form. Meanwhile, for people from the next generation who has a passion for learning. The learning steps do not only train their techniques, but they also learn about the values ingrained in the pupuh verses.

**Keywords:** seni beluk, beluk Cikondang, indigenous village, music education

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**INTRODUCTION**

Education is done with the aim to build and develop human knowledge, behavior, and ability through the process of learning (Sholichah, 2018; Widodo, 2015; Wijaya, Sudjimat, & Nyoto, 2016). This process of learning occurs since birth through observation, imitation, and development, all the way until the end of life (Hasbullah, 2015; Mujito, 2014; Sadulloh, 2011). Through sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch observations, knowledge and significance of the observed will be gained. Then, the imitation process occurs as a thinking process when an individual is motivated to mimic some acts they have observed. After that, they will be faced with the development process that shows ability, which is based on the growing knowledge gained by observation and imitation processes.

By referring to Gordon’s (1980) theory, the process of observation, imitation, and development in learning music is supported by the audition process, which is a process to bring music into the mind. This process is based on the aural concept emphasizing on how the perception of something audible can be remembered, and can then be replayed. This pattern is in line with the process done in the preservation of seni beluk within the community of Cikondang village, Pangalengan sub-district, Bandung regency, West Java. However, the process occurs informally in the context of community education.

The effort to preserve seni beluk in Cikondang village has been going on for four generations since about three centuries ago. Through activities centered in the area of the Cikondang rumah adat (traditional house), the beluk players train to enhance their vocal techniques and learn to obtain a deeper understanding of the values ingrained in the wawacan through the pupuh being sung. From those activities, the knowledge transfer process from the elders to the next generation occurs. The transfer process occurs naturally, without...
coercion, and is not structured. However, in it, there is a constructive meaning.

The traditional art preservation efforts, in principle, are to maintain an identity that has been long-built by one’s ancestors. That identity is based on the value system, which are the noble values bearing spiritual, moral, and social messages (Anwar, 2013; Gunara, Sutanto, & Cipta, 2019; Gunardi, 2014; Irhandayaningsih, 2018; Sumardjo, 2011). Those spiritual, moral, and social values are ingrained within the dynamics of life with cohesiveness, continuity, and harmony (Bauto, 2014; Lestari, 2018; Oktaviani, Baruna, & Roswida, 2019; Rizki & Sumiyadi, 2018; Rusmana, 2018). Therefore, it has become the reason for the preservation of traditional art.

Generally, the spiritual facet can be seen as a concept on matters relating to the arcane. This concept comprises of aspects in relation to the process of finding the meaning and purpose of life, therefore building an individual attachment to the Almighty. This is caused by the limited science and human knowledge in reading something uncertain about life and the afterlife. As for the moral facet, it is a concept on the mental condition in determining which behavior and individual actions are good or bad, or right or wrong. Meanwhile, the social facet is a concept on the relationship between one individual and another, in which societal values are ingrained in the relationship between those individuals as well as their surroundings.

*Seni beluk* is an art to read *wawacan* in front of the public (Manggala, 2018; Ruhaliah, 2010; Septian, 2016; Sumardjo, 2011). This form of vocal improvisation stands on *pupuh* (Soepandi, 1985). The special characteristic of *ngabeluk*, which is derived from the word *meluk*, is intoning high pitches with musical ornaments including *leot, leong, legot, lelol, ledot, leok, lempeng, lenyap, lengis, and leunjer*. As one of the traditional arts of West Java, this art form is generally performed by two or more people, one of whom acts as an *ilo*. The role of an *ilo* is to read each verse of a *pupuh*. Every time a *nu ngilo* finishes reading a verse, they are then greeted by a singer who sings sentences of the same verse, continued with the next verses.

There are two musical aspects in the performance of *seni beluk*, which are *nembang* and *ngabeluk*. *Nembang* is an activity where the performers intone *pupuhs* based on the standardized melody in each *pupuh*, in a way that is not bound by the rules of the beat (*wiletan*), or also called as free rhythm or *irama merdika*. Within the 17 *pupuhs* in West Java, some use different versions of the *tembang* musical scale. However, the *pupuhs* of the indigenous people of Cikondang are sung with the *nyalendro* musical scale (close to salendro in the Sundanese pentatonic musical scale). The standardized rules of *guru wilangan, guru lagu*, and the number of *padalisan* are generally the same. In association with the content of the *wawacan*, each *pupuh* has a specific character (*watek*). It can be seen in Table 1.

Meanwhile, *ngabeluk* emphasizes more on the aspect of musical expression through the practice of ornament and vocal processing technique with the

| Name of Pupuh | Group of Sekar | Number of Padalisan | Guru Wilangan - Guru Lagu/Watek Lagu |
|---------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Kinanti       | *Ageung*      | 6                   | 8-u, 8-i, 8-a, 8-i, 8-a, 8-i        |
|               |               |                     | *Nganti-nganti* = in awaits         |
| Sinom         | *Ageung*      | 9                   | 8-a, 8-i, 8-a, 8-i, 7-i, 8-u, 7-a, |
|               |               |                     | 8-i,12-a                           |
|               |               |                     | *Gumbira ku asmara* = glad and joy  |
|               |               |                     | of love                            |
| Asmarandana   | *Ageung*      | 7                   | 8-i, 8-a, 8-o/e, 8-a, 7-a, 8-u, 8-a |
|               |               |                     | *Kaayaan birahi* = on the passion   |
| Dangdanggula  | *Ageung*      | 10                  | 10-i, 10-a, 8-o/e, 7-u, 9-i, 7-a, 6-|
|               |               |                     | u, 8-a, 12-i, 7-a                  |
|               |               |                     | *Kaayaan salse, gumbira, pinuh humanis* = in calm situation, happiness, full of humanity |
| Balakbak      | *Alit*        | 6                   | 12-a, 3-o/e, 12-a, 3-o/e, 12-a, 3-o/|
|               |               |                     | e *Kaayaan heureuy lucu, bobodoran* = silly think, funny situation, joke |
| Gambuh        | *Alit*        | 5                   | 8-u, 8-u, 12-i, 8-u, 8-o/e         |
|               |               |                     | *Susah jeung sedih* = difficult, sadness |
| Gurisa        | *Alit*        | 6                   | 8-a, 8-a, 8-a, 8-a, 8-a            |
|               |               |                     | *Lamunan/ngalamun* = imagination, fantasy, delusion |
| Juru Demung   | *Alit*        | 8                   | 8-a, 8-u, 8-u, 6-i, 4-i, 6-i, 8-a, 8-|
|               |               |                     | u/i *Bingung ku kasusah campur sedih* = confuse, anxious, sadness |
| Wirangrong    | *Alit*        | 6                   | 8-i, 8-o/e, 8-u, 8-i, 8-a, 8-a     |
|               |               |                     | *Nandang wiwirang* = disgraced      |
reciprocal concept of singing back and forth between one singer and the other. Generally, it is based on the notes of salendro with a wide range of notes, so the ability to reach high pitches is required. Both nembang and ngabeluk are built by the Sundanese pentatonic note arrangement sung in melodious sentences by ad libitum or ad-lib, which means free, regarding the speed and how to play are up to the singer. The high notes sung during ngabeluk are an image that represents the communication of the farming community. Due to the significant distance between the farms, the farmers need to make high-pitched voices with rough dynamics to be heard while communicating, resulting in call and response.

The learning of traditional arts can give a positive impact on an individual in strengthening his/her character values (Gunara, 2017; Riyaningsih, Maryono, & Harini, 2018). The values include religious values, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, tolerance, discipline, and creativity. According to Gordon’s (1980) theory, those values are aesthetic values as the purpose of the musical arts education process. Thus, it can be concluded that the aim of music education is not only evaluated by the aspects of musical knowledge, behavior, and skills but also to build passion in those aesthetic values. Likewise, according to Dewantara (1967), who is laden with philosophical meaning, music can build an impact on the development of personal feelings and behavior in the context of education. That is based on Dewantara’s view that hearing sensitivity can sharpen feelings that will result in good behavior, and feeling and behavior have a higher degree than knowledge.

**METHODS**

The research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The descriptive approach is used to describe various cultural phenomena (in-depth and as is) that existed within the indigenous community. The researchers need to mention that the research on the preservation of seni beluk in Cikondang village, Pangalengan, is an inseparable part of the research that is done on the rationality pattern of the educational culture of the indigenous community in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya (in the year 2018). Therefore, the research on the preservation of seni beluk in Cikondang village is a form of comparative study in order to gain an in-depth knowledge of how the (musical) education process has occurred in the indigenous community environment, in particular of the Sundanese tribe.

Supiarza and Sobarna (2019) have proposed that the descriptive method is a work step used in an effort to describe the cultural system and activities of a community environment’s life. In order to describe the cultural system and activities, the researchers build a good and warm relationship with the informants (local community) with the hope of acquiring complete data to be described in detail, thoroughly, and deeply. The data acquired by researchers are the results of observation, interview, and literature review.

For the researchers, informants are the most important instrument in executing the research. Other than that, electronic media in the form of a video camera, photographic camera, and voice recorder are purposefully utilized so the data could be saved digitally for analysis and knowledge deepening purposes. Although traditional recording by way of
pen and paper is also done, the utilization of electronic media as an instrument in the research is the authors’ technique to minimize the loss of information risk, due to the worry of unrecorded information by manual writing (with pen and paper).

The researchers arrange a guideline for observation and interview so that those activities could take place effectively and efficiently. Although the data collection process is done based on the guideline, during the execution, the observation and interview processes run longer than expected. It is especially so during the interview process, due to the informants’ enthusiasm in answering the questions and describing something, resulting in the longer duration of this activity. The researchers assume the enthusiastic expression to answer questions and describe as part of the informants’ passion in their effort to preserve seni beluk. It is as if the research done by the researchers is a bridge for them in expressing their determination about seni beluk as traditional art, and as their identity. From one of the interviews with local informants (Kaman Suwitna), the researchers are able to paint a picture of Cikondang indigenous village’s family tree and how the village is currently used as a cultural heritage site. The data collected is analyzed through the perspective of music learning, which is about strategies, methods, and learning materials.

In addition to interviews with the local community, the researchers have also interviewed some people who are deemed to possess the competence and expertise in the field of traditional arts, pupuh, tembang, and beluk. This is based on the lack of references or complete writings on the history and development of seni beluk. It can be said that this effort is the researchers’ attempt to deepen existing references.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Through information from an informant (caretaker of a sacred place; Anom Juhana), Cikondang’s traditional village is estimated to have been established three centuries ago (1800s AD). Its origins are not told in detail. Currently, Anom Juhana is the fourth generation from the Cikondang traditional village’s family tree located at Lamajang village, Pangalengan sub-district, Bandung regency. In 1942, a disaster struck this traditional village in the form of a conflagration that burned tens of indigenous people’s houses. The incident was estimated to be caused by the hot and sweltering weather, which then started a fire in one of the houses. Due to the basic material of the houses being wood and bamboo with the roves made of palm fiber, the fire was made to spread quickly, with the added help of strong winds at the time. The only house remaining was that of Anom Samsa, which has now become a rumah adat site, an object of cultural heritage. It is in this place that the community’s ritual activities are centered.

One of the rituals that are still being held today is the ngawuku taun ceremony. This ritual is held every 15th of Muharram. This ritual does not only commemorate the year-end or welcome the new year, but it also has a role in building values on relationships between man and their God, man and others, and man and their environment. This ritual becomes a mode of expressing the community’s gratitude towards God by obeying God’s orders and staying away from the forbidden, strengthening relations between the traditional community by tolerance and respect, and keeping the environment and surrounding nature everlasting.

On the eastern side, around the site of rumah adat, there is an entrance door to the area of the forbidden forest (Miharja, 2015a, 2015b, 2016; Setiawan, Gurniwan, & Dede, 2012). The forest is a sacred place for the indigenous people. There are rules in entering the forest, which are removing one’s footwear and stepping on one’s right foot first. The forbidden forest may only be visited on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, and only by Muslims. Women on their menstrual cycle are prohibited from entering the forbidden forest. In the forbidden forest area, there is an ancient jasmine flower aged three centuries and more, and according to the local community, its fragrance will be smelled around the village when the flowers are blooming.

In the site of rumah adat building, there are scripts stored in a cupboard. These scripts contain wawacans (tales) about past kings (leaders) and stories of people’s daily lives. The scripts are written in pagon letters, which are Arabic letters in the Sundanese language. The scripts have become a form of evidence of the writing habit that has been long done by the elders. The scripts containing wawacans become the story foundation in seni beluk performance in rituals and events within the community.

In the education field, along with time, the number of indigenous people who are successful in completing higher education (university) has grown. The knowledge gained from the formal education process gives an impact on the community’s way of thinking. Some things are maintained, and some others are modified, as long as they are not contradicting their spiritual, moral, and social aspects. Music education has a rather strong potential in developing spiritual, moral, and social values for an individual and instilling those values in their behavior with continuity and harmony. It is in accordance with Gordon’s (1980) thought that in the process of music education, there are work steps and learning stages about music, whose aim is to develop one’s understanding, behavior, and skills so that they can express them aesthetically. Through the aesthetic process, one will give oneself insight on how to comprehend the nature of their relationship with their environment.

Education as a process is done through the efforts of learning and practicing, sticking to the principles of cohesiveness, continuity, and harmony based on spiritual, moral, and social values, and paying attention to the development of individuals and the environment.
(Sadulloh, 2011). By adapting the concept by Sadulloh (2011), it can be categorized into three terms. They are; (1) an effort is done by learning and training processes, (2) spiritual, moral, and social values, and (3) individual and environmental (surrounding nature) development. These three categories move dynamically with cohesiveness, continuity, and harmony in the preservation of seni beluk as a medium of music education in the Cikondang traditional community.

As a medium of music education that takes place informally within the community of Cikondang, seni beluk has a rather significant role in the process of formal education. Through the information that the researchers acquired (from one of the elementary school teachers in the area of Lamajang village), it can be said that the learning and training process of seni beluk in the community has given a positive impact on the development of students (the indigenous community’s next generation). According to the informant, it can be seen from the way they (students) show good behavior and attitude in the school environment, such as behaving with tolerance towards their friends, behaving with politeness towards their teachers, and being accomplished and creative. In relation to musical ability, the students possess a rather strong musical basis and are confident to show their musical skills. The ability is not limited to singing pupuhs and ngahaleuangkeun beluk, but they are also skilled in singing and playing pop music.

Therefore, there are some important points in the role of Cikondang’s indigenous community (in preserving seni beluk) in education and music education at school. They are (1) The community’s role as the provider of learning resources in the form of seni beluk, (2) The learning and training process of seni beluk done by the elders is a concrete experience for the students, (3) Attitude and behavior shown by the elders become an example for students to be implemented at school, (4) Building an adaptive attitude towards the dynamics of the times without forgetting one’s identity.

The context for learning and training is an inseparable part of the process of education (Hasbullah, 2015; Sadulloh, 2011). In the learning process, there is a training process consisting of learning (interview: Kaman Suitna, seni beluk group coach, Cikondang, 2019). Both exist and support each other in reaching goals. From the learning and training process of seni beluk, Kaman differentiates between the learning and training processes of seni beluk. The learning process is a process to understand the depth of pupuh verse contents being sung and to understand the musical aspects of the pupuh, like the notes and Sundanese pentatonic musical scale, melody length, pitch accuracy, and musical communication. Meanwhile, the training process is a process to hone nembang and ngabeluk techniques, which in the nembang part, it is important to train senggol and ornamentation, while in the ngabeluk part it is important to train especially the high notes, and arranging ornamentation patterns. The term senggol refers to simple song ornaments used on each type of Sundanese tradition’s vocal art (West Java). At the same time, ornamentation is the unique senggol composition used in various art forms, both vocal and instrumental.

As a concept of community education, the learning and training process of seni beluk is done informally. There is no coercion from the elders to the next generation to learn seni beluk. From the activities of the artists during training, it becomes a vessel for the next generation to develop an understanding of seni beluk. From those understandings, the ability to appreciate more in-depth both the technicalities and meaning of the verses is developed.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the perspective of music education, retention activities of seni beluk in Cikondang village, Pangalengan sub-district, West Java, is done through learning and training routines. The elder acts as an agent in this preservation process. As the concept of community education, formality is formed from the relationship between elders and the next generation. The elders have an outlook on the noble values ingrained in the wayacak of seni beluk. The outlook becomes the basis for the elders in assuming the responsibility to preserve. Then, a transfer to the next generation is done.

On the other hand, the elders have a democratic outlook on the equality of rights and responsibilities in the preservation of seni beluk. This outlook can be seen from their behavior towards the next generation, which is preserving seni beluk without coercion. Even so, there is a manipulation in developing an interest in the next generation to learn seni beluk. It is to build a habit through the process of learning and training, so without the next generation realizing, the process has instilled their knowledge of seni beluk. Therefore with time, the next generation will have a passion. With the existence of passion, the awareness to learn and train in the next generation is awakened.

The research is limited to strategies, work steps, and musical learning material about seni beluk. The values of poetic poetry (pupuhs) and their language development have not been described in detail, in which researchers realize that the aspect of poetry is one aspect that can develop the spirit of learning music (ngabeluk). Researchers have the view that in the future, the research can still be explored regarding the implementation of seni beluk learning in formal schools, or the development of digital archives about seni beluk, or can be explored on the aspect of tourism and educations.

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