

# Sesaji As A Performance Ritual Of Indonesian Dance: Cultural Expression In Early Children Education

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**Abstract** : Offering and dance performances, as a cultural expression is a characteristic of Indonesian society. The ritual show of popular dance performances is an educational means for early childhood children. The purpose of this research is to analyze the meaning of the offerings in the ritual of popular dance performances as a cultural expression in early childhood education. This method of research uses qualitative methods. Data collection using observations and interviews. Data validity is done with triangulation techniques. Data analysis is conducted with a cultural approach, along with the process of collecting data done by reducing, withdrawing conclusions with classification through domain analysis, taxonomy, and components, and the discovery of themes to describe thoroughly and present findings of the meaning of the research focus. The results of the study in general that offerings as a part of the activities of the folk arts and cultural values owned by the Indonesian. In particular, those offerings have the magical meaning of both individuals and community groups. The offerings form in the form of various media, as a means of communication with the "ancestors" and also the "ruler of supra-natural " around the territory. The educational value for early childhood is (Faith, Steady, tranquility, and confidence). This research implies that educational values are contained in the offerings as a basic laying of educational value and reinforcement of personality values for early childhood children. The value of education in the offerings can be the enrichment of teaching materials of arts and culture for both formal, non-formal, and informal education for the people of Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Culture, education early childhood, offerings, dance.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

According to (Rohidi, 2000) the diversity of a society that presents a variety of arts such as the present, namely (pop Art, folk art, mass art, and the art of bourgeoisie). The existence of the arts beside as fulfillment of the needs of beauty, but also for the fulfillment of primary or secondary needs. It is in fact that the arts cannot be separated by human life either individually or in groups. According to (Hadi, 2006) The presence of inseparable art with About spiritual (Koentjaraningrat, 1982) explains that the arts as part of an unbiased culture are released with mystical and pre-logical minds. This is as also stated by (Pamadhi, 1985) that the art part of the culture is concerned with the life of spiritual, mystical, pre-logical thoughts, and hospitality. Hospitality is one of the values of the region and is generally expressed in the arts, more specifically traditional art. Traditional art in general reflects the social institution where art is part of the culture. Considered a culture when used together and made a guideline and to fulfill the needs of his life. According to (Budhisantoso, 1982) that the attitude and social behavior of members of a society are not free from culture. It is also expressed by (Bahtiar, 1985) that culture is in fact complex with various knowledge, values, vital ideas, and beliefs or beliefs that bind to its supporters. Cultural existence, because of the tradition that is done together in a society. According to (Spradley, 1972) that culture is a rule

that is used selectively by humans that have it according to the environment encountered. From the description that the essence of culture, is the lifestyle of certain groups, and as a symbol system, as well as to sustain survival. Therefore, culture for the community has a very valuable value in the life of both the individual and the group. For a society that has no culture, it means not having a clear identity. Because of the cultural situation is as a symbol of identity and also as the system of life. It is as expressed by (Williams, 1981) culture as its meaning and daily values are part of the totality of expressive social relations. While according to (Barker, 2005) that the meaning of every day is not produced by the individual but by the collectivity.

Dance, like an art show, not only interest in motion, costumes, musical accompaniment but also on the offerings as ritual activities. The offerings as ritual activities are a unity that cannot be separated in the dance performances. Offerings serve as an increase in performance energy. It is as stated by (Chakim, 2009) that religious ceremonies essentially serve as the encouragement of life from birth to death. Thus the offerings as a means of rituals in the dance performances, until now for the community is still preserved. In other words that offerings as a means of praying are still preserved. According to (Mursalim, 2011) that prayer is in principle the petition of a creature against the creator. (Gazali, 2016) the values contained in prayer are the foundation in the behavior of the people who believe it. This is as the result of research (Pabbajah, 2012) that belief is the human belief in all kinds of manifestations beyond the reach of reason and the human mind that must be believed and accepted as a belief in its mind. Offerings as a ritual of dance performances in rural communities in particular, as a spiritual medium related to the transcendental process. Having a driving force of encouragement for the actors and Society, no exception in it there is an children as a connoisseur of the show. Almost every dance performance event, that children are definitely present in it. The offerings include human beings as perpetrators, offerings (prayer and media), and implementation time. Humans live in a cultural aura filled

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with symbols, which imply meaning, which can be understood and lived together in a community of cultural advocates. Based on some previous remarks the main objective of this research is to analyze the meaning of offerings in

## 2 RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study was qualitative concerning (Rohidi, 2011) To assess the problem of the offerings in the ritual of dance performances as a cultural expression in the education of early childhood, conducted using cultural approaches. It was to look for regularity, which included identifying and categorization elements and tracing each other's relationship and observation of patterns. "Data collection techniques, researchers acted as data-gathering tools, researchers were directly involved in collecting the data needed. To collect data, researchers used several relevant data collection techniques, i.e. observations and in-depth interviews related to research issues. Observations involved or participated by researchers by involving themselves socially in the ritual activity of dance performances. This technique was carried out by the time they were doing the offerings especially before the show started with the aim to know from within the necessary conditions and information. In-depth interviews with the offerings and the family members who watched with and invited their children. From their offerings and family members who watched with and invited their children to obtain detailed, complete, and insightful information about the ritual of dance performances. Data validation, this study with reference (Creswell, 2012:284-286) that the validity of qualitative data is an attempt to audit the accuracy of the research results. Thus by triangulating different data sources by examining the existing data evidence and utilized to build the justification of the themes thoroughly. Then do member checking to allow the speaker to comment on the results of the study. The final step of the researcher gave detailed, insightful, and thorough descriptions. This research data analysis technique referred (Miles and Huberman, 1992) that the analysis process, conducted during the research process, was done with a series of measures that include the data reduction process, data presentation, and data verification. This was done with all the data or information that has been obtained will be analyzed inductive using a cycle-interactive model during the research process.

## 3 DISCUSSION

Offerings are also called Sajen (Javanese Language) of a kind offering to the spirits of ancestors at traditional ceremonies (birth, marriage, death, feast, performing arts). Offerings contain spells or metaphysically or supernatural powers. The offerings from the word "Saji" got a prefix of the word Se-. That "Sa" meant sole, "aji" meaning doctrine. Another word was the sole teaching or worship of the one true God. It was hinted that to maintain the dynamism of nature, with the effort of unifying itself with nature. Offerings as a ritual of dance performances are a form of a human unification metaphor with nature. Check ([https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sesajen#cite\\_note-Yogyakarta](https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sesajen#cite_note-Yogyakarta)). The objects of the offering were generally based on Tampah (Javanese) on top of which were given banana leaves, to place flower arrangements (jasmine, kantil, sliced pandanus leaves) and bananas, as well as market snacks

(apem, cucur, sticky rice, lepet). Then also don't miss the young coconut, a glass of water and Cananga flowers, one glass of black coffee, cigarettes. The procession was carried out by older people by saying prayers, some were accompanied by burning incense. Man, when creating art based on his observations by the values of his cultural social environment. Because the socio-cultural environment contained a value for human life. This was as stated by (Williams, 1981) culture is seen as the "whole way of Life", which was worth organizing in social life. It related to the offerings, that the offerings meant of doctrine. So offerings to the ritual of dance performances were a part of the education process for early childhood in the effort to introduce, instill, and hang out as a part of community life. It was as stated by (Spradley 1979:3) that the culture was learned by the cultural support community. In this offering, children gained lessons relating to the meaning of togetherness and balance in life. According to Rahmtha (2002:34), Early childhood was a period of development and growth that was very decisive for the child in his future. Child education was a fundamental form of education in one's life. Soemiarti (2002:36) Early childhood education is very important because it has multi-dimensional including social-moral. According to Rachman (2002:51) The potential that needed to be developed in children to grow balanced and optimal, namely spiritual potential, potential feelings, potential intellect, social potential, and physical potential. Related to the offerings and dance of the people, as a cultural expression, compiled based on human perception and observation, that the physical element as a form of art. The dance element is the motion of the human body. According to Soedarsono (1986:83), The dance element is a part of the human body formed and rhythmic. In line with the opinion, (Benny, 1986:241), suggests that dance is a movement deliberately formed through the body. According to the movement of the human body was the main material in the cultivation of a dance. Dance, as the elements of the performing arts that play a role in the presentation, were the perpetrators, facilities and infrastructure, and connoisseurs. Whoever watched the offerings, as a ritual event in the dance performances, including the actors was a category of connoisseurs. It was as art functions, individually and in groups. Individuals and groups were children who also watched the process. When children were watched the offerings, it was an educational process with no deliberate intent. This means that the education process in early childhood occurs naturally, without being programmed and planned. As with the game, inadvertently the child will be embedded in attitude to be able to understand himself. The results of the study Setyo et al (2020) Traditional games can develop patience, honesty, sportsmanship, discipline, persistence, independence, confidence, and cooperation. Of course, these things can not be separated from the role of parents. The results of the study of Putri (2020) that parents are the primary key in relieving the awkward sense and role in the family for the child. Artwork, as a form of performance, can not loose with actors, connoisseurs, and facilities, and infrastructure, it as a system and reflects the social institution. The social institution, among them, was reflected in the traditional artwork which does not loose with ritual activities. This was as stated by (Koentjaraningrat, 1982) Also check (Pamadhi, 1985), that the culture in which it is the art that emphasizes the hospitality and also the life of the

spiritual, mystical, pre-logical mind. About this (the sacred, mystical, pre-logical mind) was poured in the form of offerings. The offerings were part of the ritual excitement in the dance performances, was a system that gave each other a function and strengthening. Referring to the opinion (Pamadhi, 1985) mystical offerings give a strong spirit that was invisible to the naked eye. Therefore, the offering procession was done before the dance show. It was intended to be if the show was safe for people who want to dance as well as cultural owners. The offerings ceremony as a ritual of dance performances, was aesthetic to make the performances more vivid and more interesting, even though the naked eye and mind make it seem illogical. Therefore, the offerings can not be separated in every dance performance in Indonesia. Education for early childhood gave understanding and convincing that there was invisible energy that gave power in life. It was as stated by Rachman (2002:51) that each child has spiritual potential. Offerings



have a magical meaning especially for the perpetrators both individually and for the community supporting the arts. The results of the study (Wuryaningrum, et al., 2017), that the process of ritual interaction in the form of symbolic interactions contained in ritual offerings before the show began. The offerings were many kinds and the form was expressed in various media. The offerings include banana fruit, young coconut, rose and jasmine, grass, cooking materials, and some kinds of market snacks. In fact that offerings as a means of communication to which created the natural universe. It is also used as a communication to its "ancestors" and also the "ruler of supernatural nature" around its territory. The process of education for early childhood, the fact that human beings live next to each other in the universe. It was a process of awareness. One of the main obligations and objectives of human beings living on earth was to respect each other, cherish each other, compassionate and loving among the living creatures. The main education process in the effort to instill slowly but certainly related to the philosophy of living Java. Human beings must cherish, honor, and treat all things of life and things not living in a just way, compassion and wisdom. Man, in manifesting gratitude in a tangible manifestation of real deeds or actions was beneficial to life among one by alms. The Media used was very diverse among the group/group of art with each other. Diversity was influenced by the natural environment and also human resource factors and the economic Support society. According to Firduansyah, et al. (2016), that the supporters of the arts served as a suggestion of media with the creator. The education that can be for early childhood is that the intent and purpose of a person makes offerings, Sajen to realize a sense of respect, appreciate, a form of gratitude to God as well as the expression of a real attitude of compassion to all creatures of the universe. Offerings of Wayang Topeng Soneyan Kendi, gemblong, tape, crackers, goose eggs, salted fish, chilies, mboreh flowers, bananas, cigarettes, ingkung, tempe, salted fish, rice (Any 2018 document) The Sasaji procession is led by the people who are accused and watched by the local community, including children also participated in ritual events. For children, the offerings as a

ritual process became tools to the planting of individual controls in behavior. Or as an option for the grip to behave in life. It was as expressed by (Spradley, 1972) that culture as a series of rules, which were used selectively by humans, according to the environment faced. This indicated that each individual may not be equal in addressing even though it has become a mutual "agreement". According to (Suparlan, 1990) Differences in attitudes and behavior as a result of the cultural knowledge that each individual has is not the same. The same thing is stated by (Budhisantoso, 1982); (Bahtiar, 1980) that each individual relates to non-free attitudes and behaviors of culture that contain knowledge, values, ideas, and beliefs or beliefs that he believes.



For early childhood who watched the offerings, as the educational process of planting value in the form (Belief, stability, tranquility, and confidence), to behave and as a guideline in behavior. Also aesthetic value, the results of the research (Hartono & Lanjari 2019) that children, in general, have an aesthetic potential (motion, music, appearance). So what was done based on knowledge and value? Children watching the offerings can be a means of preservation. According to (Salam, 2002); (Semiawan, 2004) Cultural preservation needed a transfer from the one who knew (adults) to the next generation (children). The regeneration process can occur due to planned and programmatic but also be natural or "deliberate". The natural form, among them, witnessed the event of offerings. This means that it doesn't take a long time, but it's exactly the target. Check out the research results (Daryanti, et al., 2020) that the preservation of dance automatically to defend the inheritance. The transfer of the offerings as a ritual of dance performances was a part of the culture as a process of switching from generation to generation. Through the show, as an educational strategy in maintaining the culture from one generation to another most effective and efficient. The value of offerings instilled in children early on was an infestation of importance. This was as expressed by Hidayat (2002:9) The growth and development of children who were always concerned early was an investment that is very important for the development of quality human resources in the future. The things that were recorded in the child in the form of belief, that is the nature of this world, not only the real but also some creatures are invisible to the eye. It was also taught a vengeance for people who do good and evil deeds. Whatever the deeds are done if not hurt the other (human, spirit, animal, vegetation) heart feels calm. So steady in every step of living life. At this level, a part of the culture was to be inherited. Regarding such matters as results (Hartono, et al., 2019) that the culture in the context of education was a process of learning as a legacy. Meanwhile, the research (Imran, et.al., 2020) was a cultural heritage (social tradition) in which there were beliefs and values. The child as a cultural heir was the hope of all parents. Parents were very hopeful that their children were growing and developing optimally. According to Akil (2002:35), growth and development occurred from the interaction between congenital genetic and the environment where a person

resides. The growth and development of children should be sought with a detailed plan and the earnest effort especially of parents, who are very familiar with the characteristics of children. Every child has a variety of potential. This is as the result of research (Meriyanti, 2016) that children have a variety of abilities that are still hidden. According to (S. Rahmitha, 2002:34) that the future of the child is determined by the development and growth in the previous days. Other opinions expressed by (Rachman, 2002:51) need to pay attention to the balance of growth and development of children both knowledge and moral, physical, and psychotic. The same thing is also pointed out by (Linda, 2002); (Soemartini, 2002) for children's social and culture to grow well the need for conditioning early. According to (Rohidi, 2000:160) that the process of cultural formation in one's self occurred since the age of the children. The culture of one of them has to be his successor, the most urgent successor being was the children. Therefore, it was appropriate if the traditional arts were used as educational media for children, because the traditional arts in it contained the teachings about belief, and give peace of soul, and never give up. Those values must be saved, distributed, and also preserved. The child as the heir to the values also to stimulate all its artistic potential.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Offerings are part of a popular dance performance. Offerings as a ritual of dance performances are one of the cultural richness of the Indonesian nation. The offerings form is very diverse from each area that is very dependent on various factors, both natural environment, economy, human resources. The educational value for early childhood gives you knowledge of belief, stability, tranquility, and confidence. In general, the value of education for early childhood instills the understanding that the offerings function as a means of applying for salvation to the one true God. In addition to the educational value for early childhood is to realize us, that one of the main obligations and objectives of human beings living on earth is to respect each other, mutual respect, compassion, and love among our fellow beings. Therefore the necessity to instill mutual respect, respect, and treat all around us both in the form of living objects and dead objects in a just, and wise manner. The offerings have therefore the magical significance of both the individual and the community.

#### RESEARCH IMPLICATION

Offerings, not different from the language, as a means of communication, both fellow and with supernatural nature. Offerings as a ritual of dance performances can be used as a model of cultural preservation. The offerings serve both individual and group events. Individual functions: Emotional disclosure, aesthetic stewardship, entertainment, communication. Group functions: Togetherness, cooperation, symbolism, social norms, social institutions, cultural sustainability, community integration. The educational value of belief in the existence of life beyond the visible, education is run democratically, the participation of individuals who are supported by public awareness of society.

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