

# Educational Values Contained in The Art of Barongan in Demak Regency as a Learning Resource for Elementary School Students

Febrianti, Adhelia Putri<sup>1\*</sup> & Fajrie, Nur<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Muria Kudus University, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author: [202233219@std.umk.ac.i](mailto:202233219@std.umk.ac.i)

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**Abstract:** Demak barongan art is one of the local arts and traditions passed down since the days of the Demak Kingdom. Demak barongan art still exists and is preserved by the local government of Demak Regency and the people of Demak Regency. Barongan art contains positive values in it, one of which is educational values which can be used as a learning resource for elementary school students. The purpose of this research is to explain in detail about the educational values contained in the Demak barongan art as a learning resource for elementary school students. The research method used is narrative qualitative method. The data in this study were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results showed that the Demak barongan art is very suitable to be used as a learning resource for elementary school students, because it contains educational values consisting of: understanding the value of local culture and traditions, art education and creativity, character education, and ethical moral messages. This research is expected to be an input for elementary school teachers to integrate the art of barongan in the school curriculum.

**Keywords:** Barongan art, Demak regency, educational values, culture, learning resources for elementary students

## 1. Introduction

Art is a source of ideas from various Nusantara heritages that grow and develop in local communities. The development of art in the archipelago needs to be preserved and cultivated to fulfill the integrative needs of community patterns related to daily habits that have been carried out. The adaptive strategy of the community shows the existence of potential values contained implicitly or explicitly. The position of traditional arts is a socio-cultural aspect that develops in the identity of society in general. Socio-cultural resources in developing traditional arts to contribute to the next generation to appreciate the existence of culture (Rohendi, 2021). Art is one form of culture resulting from human thought that characterizes the local community. Various kinds of arts grow and develop in the lives of Indonesian people. These arts live together with the activities of the local community, one of which is the traditional art of Javanese society which has a potential function in human life. Barongan art is a traditional art for Javanese people whose existence is always juxtaposed with ritual ceremonies and sacredness (Sundari, 2021).

Barongan art is a work of art in the form of mask art visualized to resemble fauna with various attributes that aim to entertain the public. Barongan has a folklore that is identical to the form of a lion played by two people on the head and tail in groups. Barongan art in Demak district is a rich art that has been passed down from generation to generation and preserved by the surrounding community (Khoiroh & Kusumastuti, 2020). Barongan art is usually performed on special occasions such as earth alms, circumcision, weddings, and big grebeg events. The enthusiasm of the community is very large in watching the barongan art performance which is used as folk entertainment. Many communities also hold these events to improve the people's economy in the form of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. Economic and cultural shifts have a general impact on the welfare of community groups that support the existence of barongan art performances. The impact of the barongan performance has practical benefits for people who are business, cultural, economic and social actors. The community is also presented with local cultural literacy education to preserve learning based on cultural values for elementary school students. Cultural education provides learning resources for elementary school students to understand and understand the contextual material around them (Iryanto et al., 2022).

Barongan art is a cultural heritage of ancestors that contains moral, cultural, aesthetic, educational, and educational values and beliefs. Indirectly, barongan art contains messages or meanings for the community to become better and more advanced humans, besides that this art can foster aesthetic and ethical values in students (Widiastuti, 2019).

According to Tani Utina (2020), that the art of barong is one of the arts that is very popular among the public, in the art of barong reflects the characteristics of family, simple, hard, rough, cohesiveness, and courage based on truth.

Barongan art in the field of education is a medium or source of learning in humanizing humans through acculturation. The historical stories contained in the Barongan story can be used as a source of student learning, especially moral education (Iryanto et al., 2022).

Barongan art has characteristics that can be applied in the field of education, because every movement reflects civic traits such as family values, simplicity, uniformity, discipline, honesty and courage, which can be implemented as a source or media in the student learning process (Iryanto et al., 2022).

Based on the assumptions above, the researcher aims to explain the educational values contained in barongan art in Demak Regency as a learning resource for elementary school students. A more detailed description can be explained in the scientific framework that will be designed as an initial step to explore local cultural arts.

## 2. Literature Review

Education is the process of enabling people to reach their full potential to become citizens and members of society with the abilities they need, as well as possessing strength in their religion and spirituality, self-control, intelligence, and noble character (Srirahmawati & Hunaifi, 2022). Furthermore, one of the most significant factors in assessing a country's success is its level of education. Indonesia is a culturally diverse nation. The people of Indonesia are immensely proud of the various cultures throughout the country.

The art of the barongan mask was one of the learning resources based on Indonesian culture, which is rich with the values of local wisdom in the research area and needs to be maintained. In Barongan, an evil dragon snake represents a mythical creature that rises to conquer the forest (Qur'aniyah et al., 2023). A barongan mask, which is a character in the traditional Jaranan dance, is also described as a mask with elongated canine teeth and protruding eyes. On the island of Java, jaranan is a well-liked traditional art form with somewhat varied titles and attributes in each location. For example, this form of art is most often known as jepaplok or caplokan in the Jombang, East Java, area. On the other hand, it is known as jaranan in Kediri (Ningsih, 2022). Barongan dance is distinctive because each movement embodies a feature of the people in the culture, such as spontaneity, simplicity, kinship, compactness, toughness, rudeness, and courage grounded in reality (Lutfiah & Hidayati, 2023). Hopefully, the "barongan mask" learning media, with its distinctiveness and diversity of values, can be utilized as a medium to educate the characters of the students, particularly at the elementary school level, so that they can develop into human beings with noble character and adhere to the Pancasila values that form the foundation of the Indonesian state.

Moral principles ingrained in barongan art have the power to develop character, which is the cornerstone of the establishment of order in a rich and civilized community. Barongan, or singo barong, is a folk theatre form incorporating dance, music, and song elements. It features characters from Javanese and Balinese mythology and a cohesive narrative passed down through the generations (Malarsih & Hartono, 2022). This barongan art is always performed, and its existence is concentrated and interwoven into people's lives, as demonstrated in celebrations and traditional rites. Harmony is displayed throughout this barongan art performance in the arrangement of the narrative, performers, costumes, accessories, and background music. Despite being practised as a performance art today, barongan art has a number of purposes, including providing entertainment, serving as a tool for education, serving as a requirement in traditional ceremonies, and providing a platform for the expression of artistic talent and efforts to preserve folk art (Guntaris et al., 2019). It is right that the community keeps working to preserve this barongan art because of its purpose.

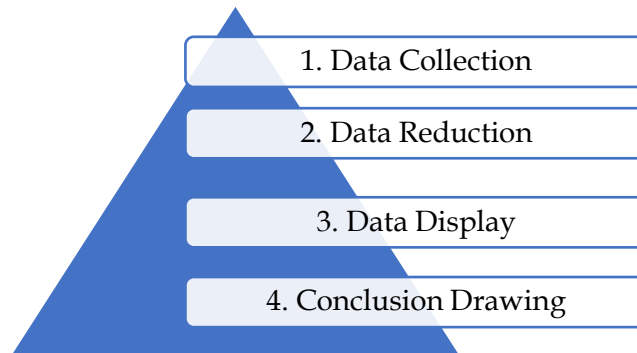
## 3. Methodology

This research uses basic research with a narrative qualitative research form. Narrative is a research method by describing or explaining an event and a series of events that are connected chronologically. Narratives in qualitative research are in the form of presenting information in the form of text and images, such as photos. In narrative research, researchers and participants have a close relationship, because participants provide detailed information and researchers listen and report back the information. Researchers in writing information from participants use a qualitative approach, because writing information is literary and persuasive (Darmanita & Yusri, 2020).

The research location chosen in this study is Trengguli Village, Wonosalam Subdistrict, Demak Regency, precisely at Sanggar "Duto Simo Rekso". This research activity examines the educational values contained in the art of Barongan Demak which can be used as a learning resource for elementary school students. The data sources in this research are divided into two, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources in this research are sources. The primary source of research is Endi Wardana as a wiyaga and dancer in Barongan art. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are books, journals, documentation, archives, references, and previous studies. The subject of this research is the Duto Simo Rekso Demak Barongan Art. While the object of this research is to examine the educational values

contained in Barongan art that can be used as a learning resource for elementary school students. The author uses data collection techniques using interviews, observations, and documentation.

The data analysis technique in this study was carried out using the Miles and Huberman data analysis model which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The first step is through data collection, data collection by conducting interviews with sources so that researchers obtain information which will later be developed in the form of reports. The second step is data reduction, reducing the data in question is summarizing, selecting key things, and focusing on important things and discarding unnecessary ones. Thus the data that has been reduced will more easily provide a clear picture for researchers. The third step is data presentation, Miles and Huberman stated that in presenting data in qualitative research, the most commonly used is narrative text. The last step is the conclusion, the conclusion in qualitative research is expected to be new findings that did not exist before, it can be a description or description of an object that was previously unclear so that after further research it becomes clearer (Sidiq et al., 2019).



**Figure 1.** Miles and Huberman's qualitative research technique

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

The results showed that Demak Regency is rich in history and the legacy of the saints, so Demak Regency is known as the "City of Guardians". In addition to religious heritage, Demak is also rich in culture and traditions that are still attached and preserved today, one of which is the art of barongan. Demak barongan art is an artistic tradition that has been passed down since the days of the Demak Kingdom and still exists among the Demak people today. Demak barongan art is very popular among young people, this is evidenced by the interest of many young people in joining various Demak barongan art studios, one of which is the Duto Simo Rekso studio in Trengguli Village, Wonosalam District, Demak Regency. With so many barongan studios in Demak district, it is hoped that it can become a place of learning for young people, especially school students who want to participate in preserving and developing the local art of barongan. Barongan art is not only entertainment for children, but barongan art can also contribute in shaping character and positive values towards students. Therefore, it is important to continue to support barongan art as local wisdom and understand the educational values contained in it.



**Figure 2.** Welcome gate in Demak

Demak's barongan art contains various positive values, one of which is educational value which is certainly beneficial for elementary school students' learning resources, if applied properly in the school environment. For a more complete explanation, here are some of the educational values contained in the art of barongan.

#### 4.1 Understanding of Local Cultural Values

Local culture is a culture that contains goodness for human life and is recognized by the local community and can grow according to the times (Ihsan et al., 2019). One of the local cultures in Demak is barongan art. Barongan is one of the unique arts that must be preserved because it has local cultural wisdom values (Ibda, 2019). Barongan art is not only an art performance, but also a reflection of the culture and traditions of the Demak people. By introducing barongan local culture to elementary school students, students can learn about cultural heritage and train students to participate in preserving local culture. In addition, students will also gain an understanding of the uniqueness of the tradition, its history, positive values and the role of local culture in society. Through barongan art as a learning resource, it is hoped that it can bring out a sense of love and pride in students towards their local culture. Therefore, barongan art is very appropriate to be used as a learning resource for students, because the local cultural values contained in barongan art make a significant contribution to the education and development of students regarding local cultural history.



Figure 3. Barongan art performance (documentation: duto simo rekso studio)

#### 4.2 Performing Arts Education and Creativity

According to Wulandari & Hartono (2018) that art education in early childhood must be instilled, because children of that age often respond to what they see in their environment, besides that children are also always curious about something that attracts their attention. Therefore, this barongan art can be used as a learning resource for elementary school students as a form of art appreciation and understanding the importance of creativity in creating interesting performances. In addition, students can also see various creative elements contained in barongan art performances, such as colorful costumes, dance movements, and of course traditional gamelan music. The use of traditional musical instruments in barongan art introduces students to the many traditional Indonesian music, besides that students can also learn playing techniques and melodies of musical instruments that are unique to their region.

Based on the results of interviews with barongan players, it can be obtained that learning barongan art can encourage students to be more creative and innovative. According to Susanti (2019), that an alternative technique to increase student creativity is to express themselves through local cultural performances around where students live. This can be implemented in the school environment by collaborating barongan art with cultural arts subjects. Through cultural arts learning, teachers and students can work together to create barongan performances with their own style and movements. Not only creating the movements, students are also trained to make their own costumes, decorations, and accessories for their barongan performances. This activity can certainly stimulate students' creativity and innovation to perform barongan art with their own characteristics.

#### 4.3 Character Education

Character is a character or personality of a person formed from an internalization result that is believed and used as a basis for perspective, thinking, attitude, and action (Ningsih, 2022). Character education can be applied and instilled in students through the introduction of local culture, for example by introducing barongan art as a form of love for the country and can strengthen students' sense of identity and personality. Ihsan (2019), explains that teaching character education in the elementary school environment through local culture learning is very appropriate, because teaching local culture makes students closer to the real situations faced daily. The character education values contained in barongan art include:

- a. Religious. The religious value contained in barongan art lies in the meaning of the story, which is an invitation to always be grateful and have faith in God.
- b. Tolerance. Barongan art teaches mutual respect and appreciation for all differences, whether ethnicity, customs, traditions, languages, or opinions.

- c. Nationalism. The spirit of nationalism and love for the country can be instilled in every student by introducing the art of barongan. Nationalism towards barongan art means a sense of love and pride in traditional art as an asset of Indonesian cultural wealth.

#### 4.4 Collaboration

Every performing art is a collective art, meaning that it requires several components that require them to work together harmoniously (Widiastuti, 2019). Likewise with the barongan art performance which certainly cannot be separated from the cooperation between team members both between dancers and wiyaga, they all work together to create a good and interesting barongan performance. One form of cooperation in the art of barongan is in the singo barong dance. The costume worn by the singo barong player consists of a barong head that weighs around 8-10 kg, so it requires 2 players to lift the singo barong, they work together in moving the singo barong head during the barongan performance. Without cooperation, the barongan movements would be messy and the aesthetic element would be lost (Halimah & Sabardila, 2023). Cooperation in barongan art brings educational values to students. One of them is by seeing barongan art performances, students can better understand the meaning of teamwork, besides that students can better understand and appreciate roles and be responsible for their duties.



Figure 4. Singo barong costume (documentation: duto simo rekso studio)

#### 4.5 Moral and Ethical Messages

Indonesia's traditional art performances contain many moral and ethical messages that can be used as learning resources for students. The moral value contained in a performance is the process of incorporating moral messages in each performance (Agustin & Firmansah, 2018). Based on observations, the moral stories in Demak barongan art provide many moral and ethical lessons to students. The messages contained in barongan art such as honesty, friendship, kindness, obedience, courage, and never giving up.

This is evidenced by the dances contained in barongan, one of which is the hussar dance, this dance means that we as humans must be gallant, strong, alert, in the face of anything that prevents us from the path of truth. Therefore, barongan art is often used as a tool to convey the message that life is always side by side with the environment (Iryanto, 2022).



Figure 5. Jaranan dance on barongan (documentation: duto simo rekso studio)



## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, it is concluded that Demak barongan art is not just entertainment, but also has educational values that can be used as a learning resource for elementary school students. Some of the educational values described in this article include understanding local culture and traditions, character education, performing arts education and creativity, teamwork, and moral and ethical messages in the art of barongan. By understanding and applying the educational values contained in this barongan art, it is hoped that students can grow into individuals who are characterized, cultured, creative, and responsible for maintaining Indonesia's local cultural heritage.

Barongan art not only stimulates creativity and artistic skills in each student, but also gives students direct experience of local culture and traditions. Through barongan art, students also gain multicultural experiences which teach students to appreciate cultural diversity, love the country, and build high tolerance. Thus, barongan art is very suitable to be used as a learning resource for elementary school students, because it contains many educational values that are beneficial for students.

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