

# The Character Education in *Ngabungbang* Tradition in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar Indigenous Community

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## ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the curiosity about the indigenous traditions of *Ngabungbang* in Kampung Adat Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, Sukabumi Regency, held every 14th of *Mulud*, the month of the Prophet Muhammad's birth. Sundanese Ciptagelar people have the view that the 14th night of the month *Mulud* has special privileges. Therefore, the residents of the community of Ciptagelar always use the night to seek blessings, especially for the supernatural Seekers (*kanuragan*). One of the activities that are commonly implemented is flower *batha* in Cibareno River. The purpose of this research is to identify the values of character education found in the indigenous traditions of *Ngabungbang* in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar. This research is a descriptive analysis of research using interviews and observation techniques. The result shows that *Ngabungbang* indigenous traditions of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar embody some values of character education such as honesty, religious, tolerance, creative, love of Homeland, communicative, caring for the environment, social care, and responsibility. In addition, in this tradition there is also the values of Sundanese character education (tri-SILAS-three principles), namely *silih asih*, *silih asah*, and *silih asuh*.

**Keywords:** *Character education, indigenous traditions, local wisdom, local traditions*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Society is a group of people who have a habit with certain characteristics and traits (J.P. Gillin in Harsojo, 1977). These habits are the result of thoughts and behaviours in accordance with the habits of their ancestors or be called custom.

Custom is born from habits caused by the relationship between humans and the natural environment. This is confirmed by Indrawardana (2012), that human beings are an integral part of the environment and live alongside each other. From this habit, an activity called tradition is born. Tradition is a habit of people born in generations and continues to be implemented from generation to generation. This tradition was created because of the intent that the community wants to convey. It is in line with Rusyana (2020) arguing that tradition is a product of the past that passed on to the next generation. In the view of Darwin's evolutionary theory, it can be mentioned that human life has evolved in maintaining the existence of their generation with other beings, so that humans have

managed to exist defeating other creatures that are equally strong and dangerous (Indrawardana, 2012). Thus, it can be concluded that every society has its traditions, one of which is a tradition in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar.

Kasepuhan Ciptagelar belongs to the indigenous unity of Banten Kidul community located in Halimun mountain area, precisely in Sirnaresmi village, Cisolok district, Sukabumi Regency. *Kasepuhan* is scattered in several areas, i.e., Sukabumi Regency, Bogor Regency, and Lebak Banten Regency (Firmansyah, et al., 2018). *Kasepuhan* led by an elder *Sesepuh Girang* who still uphold the belief of his ancestors, as until now the tradition activities implemented by the community serve as a guideline of their life. One of the traditions still hold in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar is indigenous tradition of *Ngabungbang*.

*Ngabungbang*, according to Sundanese language, comes from the word *bungbang* which means *indit* (Indonesian; go or wander) and is merged with the affix

*Nga-* which shows the work (Indonesian; the affixes *me-* or *be-*). Therefore, *Ngabungbang* literally means wandering to a place. There are some Sundanese literary scholars who say that the word *Ngabungbang* is not an immutated word, but a syllable; "*nyaring sapeupeuting di luareun wawangunan, biasana di tempat-tempat anu dianggap aya karamatan dina malem tanggal 14 Mulud*" (wandering and staying overnight outside the house which is usually performed in places deemed sacred or holy on the night of 14<sup>th</sup> Mulud) (Sondarika, 2019, p. 210). According to Satjadibrata (2008, p. 83), *Ngabungbang* is *tradisi cicing dina luhur taneuh atawa leumpang dina waktu caang bulan, kalawan dilaksanakeun dina tanggal 14 Mulud*. It is in accordance with the one mentioned by Mustapa (2010, p. 154) that the *Ngabungbang* is sitting in the yard to enjoy the light of the full moon, which is held on 14<sup>th</sup> *Mulud*. In general, the activity on the tradition of *Ngabungbang* i.e., bathing seven times, diving in a *lubuk* (the deepest area of a river) seven times, immerse yourself in the river, bathing in the waterfalls, etc. In addition, there are other opinions expressed by Danadibrata (2015, p. 113), that *Ngabungbang* is "*ulin ngalantung atawa jarah ka makam karamat atawa ngadon mandi di pamandian anu aya karamatna dina waktu keur caang bulan ngebrak dina tanggal 14 bulan Komariah, biasana dina bulan anu diagungkeun ku Islam, upamana dina bulan Mulud, supaya meunang berkah*" (play outside the house, or make a pilgrimage to the sacred tomb, or take a bath in holy bathing place, at the time of the full moon, the 14<sup>th</sup> month of *Komariah*, for example the month of *Mulud/Rabiul Awal* to get blessings).

According to the literature, the time of the implementation of *Ngabungbang* tradition coincides with the month of *Mulud* or the month of the Prophet Muhammad's birth. Sundanese people of Islam, especially in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar have the view that the time has special privileges. Therefore, there are some people, especially the supernatural seekers (*kanuragan*), on that night doing some activities, such as meditation and cleaning themselves. Therefore, the supernatural seeker usually seeks sacred places to obtain the supernatural powers of the Sacred place or objects (Sondarika, 2019).

Nowadays, *Ngabungbang* tradition activities are rarely known to society in general because the current globalization erodes the passion for the local cultural tradition and sense of pride as Sundanese society. As stated by Sondarika, Wijayanti, and Budiman (2017), the tradition of *Ngabungbang* is an indigenous tradition of the Sundanese people who are almost extinct and have

been forgotten by many people in the land of Sunda. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study to revitalize the tradition of *Ngabungbang*, so that the tradition will be recognized by the wider community and the effort to preserve the cultural assets.

The *Ngabungbang* is not only a tradition that is carried out everyone year with the aim of purifying and gaining strength (*kanuragan*), but the tradition of *Ngabungbang* imparts character education values that are currently rarely known to the society. Not only do the character's educational values need to be extracted but also, they need to be introduced so that they are applied by the community. As stated by Suherman (2018), the formation of such characters must be done entirely and balanced, not only emphasizing the material aspect or infrastructure but also the mental-spiritual element. To explore the values of the character education found in this tradition, the theory is used based on 18 values of character education expressed by *Kementrian Pendidikan Nasional* (2010) and Sundanese character education (Tri-SILAS), namely *silih asih, silih asah, dan silih asuh* (Sudaryat & Solehudin, 2013).

Among the significances of this research is to introduce the traditions of Sundanese people, especially the activities of self-purifying organized in the series of *Ngabungbang* traditions. In addition, this research is to introduce the purpose of the *Ngabungbang*, its activities series, its properties and materials used, and most importantly is to uncover the values of the character education contained therein.

Research on *Ngabungbang* is not new. There are other studies that support the research i.e. the research conducted by Sondarika (2019) entitled "*Kebudayaan Ngabungbang dari Tahun 1915-2009 di Kota Banjar*" that discusses the procession of *Ngabungbang* indigenous traditions and change factors in the ritual process of *Ngabungbang*. Another study conducted by Sondarika, Wijayanti, and Budiman (2017) under the title "*Pewarisan Nilai Tradisi Ngabungbang dalam Pembelajaran Sejarah Lokal dengan Metode Ekskursi pada Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Sejarah FKIP Universitas Galuh*" explores the values of the history of *Ngabungbang* tradition in the study of history by using the method of excretion. In addition, there are other studies conducted by Diana and Pasha (2015) entitled "*Pelestarian dan Peran Masyarakat di Kawasan Sekitar Situ Cisanti*" discussing the local wisdom practiced by the community, identifying area zoning, reducing the population pressure in the land use of protected areas, identifying the role of reformer agents,

community members, and the results of community effort in preserving the area around Cisanti Lake.

Based on the previous studies, including the theories used, in this study, there are similarities and differences. The similarity between this study and the previous research is that both studies discuss the tradition of *Ngabungbang*, while the difference lies in the research location and the theories used. The research conducted by Sondarika (2019) was carried out in Banjar by employing a historical theory. Sondarika, Wijayanti, and Budiman's research (2017) was conducted at The University of Galuh, Ciamis, through a case study of the 1<sup>st</sup>-semester students using the excursion method. Diana and Pasha's research (2015) was conducted around Cisanti Lake, using a phenomenological approach. Meanwhile, this research was conducted at Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, employing a qualitative approach, the theory of 18-character education, and Sundanese ethnopedagogy, *silih asih*, *silih asah* and *silih asuh* (Sudaryat & Solehudin, 2013). Besides, this research not only focuses on the process of its activities but also examines the value of character education based on tradition philosophy. Therefore, the position of the researcher in this study is the initial researcher in investigating the value of character education in the indigenous tradition of *Ngabungbang* in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar.

## 2. METHOD

This study was conducted for six months, including planning, implementation, and reporting activities. This research was conducted in Kampung Adat Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, Sirnaresmi village, Cisolok district, Sukabumi Regency in West Java.

This research is qualitative. The methods used in this study are descriptive methods of analysis and observation. The descriptive method of analysis is a method commonly used to describe and provide an overview of the objects examined through the data or samples that have been collected by the researchers. Simply put, this method is used to describe the indigenous traditions of *Ngabungbang* and the educational values of the characters contained therein.

The subject of this study is a tradition of indigenous *Ngabungbang* which is hold everyone year in the Kampung Adat Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, Sirnaresmi village, Cisolok district, Sukabumi Regency in West Java.

The data collection techniques are observation and interviews. Researchers went directly to the field and interviewed respondents (elders) and recorded them. The results of these recordings are employed as research data.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 *Ngabungbang* Indigenous Traditions

The word *Ngabungbang* formed by the word *nga* and the word *bungbang*. The word *Nga* means to unite, while the *bungbang* means to purify. *Ngabungbang* is a traditional tradition for Sundanese people that commonly implemented people outside the house and not sleeping overnight. According to Satjadibrata (2008) *Ngabungbang* is a tradition on the ground or walking in the full moon period that was held on 14<sup>th</sup> of *Mulud*. According to Mustapa (2010) *Ngabungbang* is sitting on the yard to enjoy the full moon or carrying out activities in the light of the full moon held on 14<sup>th</sup> of *Mulud*. From the two opinions, it can be concluded that the *Ngabungbang* is one of the traditions hold on 14<sup>th</sup> of *Mulud* under the light of the full moon.

The tradition of *Ngabungbang* is interpreted as a holy bath by uniting the thoughts, feelings and behaviors to cleanse the bad nature of human beings both born and inwardly. The tradition of *Ngabungbang* has a purpose to open the expanse of heart (the inspiration of the heart) in order to be able to show the right path. Apart from that, the purpose of this activity is to pray desperately to God Almighty to apologize and repent of the mistakes made. This activity is carried out by men and women who are of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar.

### 3.2 *The Process of Ngabungbang Indigenous Tradition*

*Ngabungbang* is carried out by Kasepuhan Ciptagelar community as a tradition activity within a year. *Ngabungbang* according to Sundanese language comes from the word *bungbang* which means *indit* (Indonesian; go or wander) which is combined with prefix *Nga-* which shows the work (Indonesian language; the prefix *me-* or *be-*). Thus, *Ngabungbang* means wandering into a place. There are some Sundanese literary scholars who say that the word *Ngabungbang* is not a word constructed by adding affixes, but a syllable which means; "*nyaring sapeupeuting di luareun wawangunan, biasana di tempat-tempat anu dianggap aya karamatan dina malem tanggal 14 Mulud*" (wandering and staying overnight outside the house that is usually done in sacred places, on the night of 14<sup>th</sup> *Mulud*) (Sondarika, 2019, p. 210). The activity is hold on 14<sup>th</sup> of *Mulud* and begins after performing the tradition of *Salametan Opat Belasna*. The tradition of *Salametan Opat Belasna* is a customary activity hold every month

on the 13<sup>th</sup> night of 14<sup>th</sup>, when the moon's position illuminates the Earth.

After *Salametan Opat Belasna* is conducted, it will be followed by *Ngabungbang* preparation. The event of *Ngabungbang* is a sacred bathing which is usually done in Cibareno River. People flock at midnight to Cibareno River to carry out the traditions of their ancestors.

On the other hand, there are some people who perform *Ngabungbang* traditions such as rubbing their heirlooms on human body by trying/hone it on the hands, feet, or other body parts. In addition, the tradition of *Ngabungbang* is usually done by flower bathing and using the water of rice straw broom at home.

### **3.3 Properties, Tools, and Materials of Ngabungbang**

The properties, tools, and materials used in this tradition are adapted to the activities undertaken during the 14<sup>th</sup> night of the *Mulud* month. It is commonly done by residents of the Ciptagelar people is flower baths. Based on the results of the interview with Mamah Alit Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, the property, tools, and also the materials that are commonly used in the *Ngabungbang* event are flowers. Among the various kinds of flowers used for flower baths are *malati, mawar, pacing, sedep malem, kacapiring, tangkal pacing, kumis ucing, lidah mertua, bakung laut, cucuk genep belas, ros kancing, kembang kantil, telon*. In addition, the properties, tools, and other materials used in this tradition are also rice straw broom, *gayung batok*, and a place to keep the water (container/bucket/*buyung*).

### **3.4 Character Education Values of Ngabungbang**

*Ngabungbang* indigenous tradition has so many important values. The philosophical values found in *Ngabungbang* for the community of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar include *caang manah (pure hearted), caang pikir (smart), and caang diri (physically and psychologically healthy)*. In line with this, the materials prepared for *Ngabungbang* have a certain meaning, such as flower baths means that the community of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar can spread the virtues to others. In addition, rubbing the water of rice straw broom on the head means that purifying the human mind will generate good and correct thinking. A healthy mind tends to live the good life. The above philosophical values provide a synthesis of character education values as follows:

*Caang Manah (pure hearted)*. *Caang* means shining, glowing, spreading light or brightness. *Manah* means heart or soul. It can then be concluded from both terms that the *Caang Manah* is a philosophy in the tradition of *Ngabungbang*, which means light of heart. Hopefully this tradition will make the citizens of the Ciptagelar *Caang Manah* open their hearts for the truth. Thus, every activity will be based on conviction from the deepest heart and the belief that every of their activity will always be overseen by God, the creator of nature. Hence, they have no courage doing evil matters to themselves or others. Thus, it can be concluded that *Ngabungbang* has character education values of religious and honesty. If honesty and religiosity have been embedded in the human heart, of course, every measure will always be in accordance with religious teachings.

*Caang Pikir (smart)*. It is the desired expectation of the community of the Ciptagelar people to be a thoughtful leader or mind for the people around them. Thus, this second philosophical virtue has character education values of creativity.

*Caang Diri (physically and psychologically healthy)*. It is a hope of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar community, that after performing the tradition of *Ngabungbang*, one is able to become a messenger, in the sense of being able to be someone who gives the people around them benefits and assistance to everyone around. Thus, in the philosophy of *Caang Diri*, the tradition of *ngabungbang* has some values of character education like tolerance, love of the country, communicative, environment care, social care, and responsibility.

Besides the nine values of the above character education, *Ngabungbang* tradition has also the value of Sundanese character education (tri-SILAS) i.e. *silih asih, silih asah, and silih asuh (to love, to teach, and to care each other)* *Silih asih (to love)* is related to conformable and harmonious human values. It is found in one of the philosophies of *ngabungbang*, namely *Caang Manah*. *Silih asah (to teach)* is related to science, insight, and thinking. It can be seen in the second philosophy of *Ngabungbang* i.e. *Caang Pikir (smart)*. Then, *Silih asuh (to care)* that is related to social life; guiding, directing, caring for others, with the hope of physical and spiritual happiness which is found in the third philosophy of the *Ngabungbang* i.e. *Caang diri*.

For that reason, based on the results of the analysis, in *Ngabungbang* tradition, there are good character education values to be used as models, both in the field

of education and in others. In Islam, character is synonymous with morals, morals, and ethics. Thus, when someone has good character, supposedly that person has good characters and morals. As previously discussed, there are nine values of character education contained in *Ngabungbang* tradition i.e., honesty, religiosity, creativity, tolerance, love of the country, communicativeness, environmental care, social care, and responsibility. In addition, in this tradition, there is also the value of Tri-silas character education, which includes *silih asih, silih asah, and silih asuh* (to love, to teach, and to care for each other). The results of the identification of character education in this study are in line with Lickona's opinion in Sukanta, Koswara, and Ruhaliah (2011) which emphasizes the three components of good character, including moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. If linked together, the character education emphasized by Lickona has also been incorporated in *Ngabungbang* tradition i.e., *silih asih, silih asah, and silih asuh* extracted from its philosophical values, including *caang manah, caang pikir, and caang diri* (pure hearted, smart and healthy).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, the aim of this study is to explore the indigenous traditions of *Ngabungbang*, especially the value of character education in it. Analysis reveals that *Ngabungbang* tradition is an annual tradition that is commonly performed in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar. This tradition is usually hold on the 14<sup>th</sup> night of the month of *Mulud*, typically preceded by *Salametan Opat Belasna*, after which the tradition of *Ngabungbang* is carried out. At the heart of the tradition of *Ngabungbang* in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar is a sacred bath which is usually performed in Cibareno River. People flock at midnight to the Cibareno River to carry out the customary traditions of their ancestors. Properties, tools, and materials commonly used in *Ngabungbang* events are flowers (*malati, mawar, pacing, sedep malem, kacapiring, tangkal pacing*), rice straw brooms, *gayung batok*, and a place to keep its water (container/bucket/*buyung*). *Ngabungbang* indigenous tradition contain the values of character education studied from the philosophy, process, and the purpose of the implementation of this tradition. The character education values are honesty, religiosity, tolerance, creativity, love of the country, communicativeness, environmental care, social care, and responsibility. In addition, this tradition also has the value of character education of the Tri-SILAS, which includes *silih asih, silih asah, and silih asuh*. By

understanding the values of character education in this tradition, it is hoped that the society, especially the readers of this article, demonstrate good behavior, as reflected in the tradition of *Ngabungbang*. To conclude, it can be stated that *ngabungbang* tradition exhibits the value of character education that can be learned and used as a reflection of good behaviour in people's lives today, in the hope that the tradition of *Ngabungbang*, which is almost extinct, can be maintained and preserved.

Besides, based on the results of the analysis carried out, in this study, there are several implications for several scientific fields, especially regarding the cultural sciences related to the indigenous villages and *Ngabungbang* tradition which is usually carried out by the Sundanese people.

Furthermore, several recommendations are shown for several parties related to this research i.e. for further researchers, for educators (teachers), and the public. For future researchers, it is hoped that this research will provide a basis for broader research in the future. Educators (teachers) are expected to be able to use the results of this research as a source of reference or scientific basis, especially those related to the values of national character education. For the public at large, it is hoped that this research will be beneficial for a reference of reading, especially those related to the community's culture and traditions that are still maintained.

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