

Conservation of Andun Dance in the community South Bengkulu

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Abstract. The Andun dance is a traditional art form, cultural heritage, and religious practice of the people of South Bengkulu. It is an integral part of their social fabric, embodying Islam and preserving their unique customs. Despite its modernization, the Andun dance remains an essential component of marriage ceremonies, which are traditionally held over seven days and seven nights. While some may perceive these lengthy processes as excessive and time-consuming, they are deeply ingrained in the community's traditions. Despite its significance, the Andun dance has faced challenges in maintaining its relevance and popularity among younger generations. This research aims to address this issue by exploring the preservation efforts being made by the government, community, and artists. The government organizes festivals, performances, and educational programs to promote the Andun dance, while schools incorporate it into their extracurricular activities. Community members actively participate in deliberations to ensure that the dance is accessible to the middle and lower socioeconomic classes. Artists provide coaching and training to their students, fostering the development of the Andun dance.

Keywords: Preservation, Andun Dance, South Bengkulu.

INTRODUCTION

Art serves as a fundamental element that sustains culture. It evolves in response to specific cultural conditions. One such art form is dance. It is impossible to discuss dance without delving into its sociological aspects, as dance is an expression of human aesthetics that cannot exist independently.

The Andun dance is a traditional dance that has flourished and developed among the people of South Bengkulu. Its origins are shrouded in mystery, with no known creator or the year of its inception. It is believed to have always existed. Andun dance is an integral part of every traditional wedding ceremony for the people of South Bengkulu. It was previously performed in conjunction with a seven-day, seven-night wedding feast known as the Bimbang Adat during the Bimbang Adat (wedding feast).

According to legend, the Andun dance was first performed at a wedding ceremony between the youngest daughter of Sungai Ngiang Ruyung and Dangku Rajau Mudau in the Dang Tuanku Limau Serumpun kingdom from South Bengkulu. The dance was a gesture of gratitude to Dayang Remunai, the mother of Rajau Nudau, for the safety of the Youngest Princess, who had been abducted by Imam Jaya from the Sangkalawi kingdom. On Dayang Remunai's orders, Cindur Matau from Rajau Mudau was tasked with rescuing the Youngest Princess by presenting Si Benuang (a bull) as a gift to the Sangkalawi kingdom, thereby concealing his true identity. Si Gumarang (a horse) served as Cindur Matau's mode of transportation.

Following the rescue and return of the Youngest Princess by Cindur Matau, the marriage ceremony between the youngest daughter and Rajau Mudau was solemnized within the kingdom of Dang Tuanku Limau Serumpun. This ceremony, known as Bimbang Adat, was conducted over a period of seven days and seven nights.

During the Bimbang Adat ceremony, the entire community engaged in a joyous dance known as the Andun Dance. This dance is divided into two distinct forms based on the group of dancers: the Andun Dance

and the Andun Lelawanan Dance. The Andun Dance is typically performed by groups comprising more than ten dancers, and the majority of participants are of the same sex. For instance, if the groom is dancing, his entourage must consist exclusively of men, while the bride's entourage must be composed of women.

In each presentation of the Andun Dance, the group that emerges first or performs the dance from the groom's group typically initiates the sequence. This sequence involves seven turns to the right and seven turns to the left. Subsequently, the bride's group follows the same pattern.

The Andun Dance typically involves various groups, including both the elderly and the young, as well as children. Notably, most children participate in this dance.

The Andun Lelawanan Dance is a dance performed in pairs by unmarried men and women (singles and girls). In this dance, three pairs are presented (three boys and three girls). In the Lelawanan Andun Dance, the men initiate and conclude the movement, while the women follow and imitate.

In the traditional weddings of South Bengkulu, the Andun dance is commonly performed. It is also known locally as Bimbang Adat. The dance's name is derived from the Andun language, which translates to "indecisiveness." However, the term "indecisiveness" in this context encompasses a range of emotions, including doubt, fear, bravery, and uncertainty. Individuals who participate in the wedding ceremony experience a sense of doubt regarding the success of the event, as well as the potential for a harmonious and fulfilling marriage for the bride and groom.

The central theme of the Andun dance revolves around the concept of respect. This respect encompasses various aspects, including gratitude towards the divine, gratitude towards parents, and gratitude towards those who facilitate the execution of the ceremony.



Figure 1. Andun's dance property is a long shawl/songket cloth

The Andun dance is characterized by a long, flowing scarf or songket cloth. The shawl is utilized in the final movement, Nyantang. Both men and women execute stretching movements while holding the scarves on their chests (for women) or behind their waists (for men).



Figure 2. Andun's dance instruments, namely kelintang and dim

The Andun dance is performed by bachelors, girls, hosts, and musicians. In this context, the term "bachelors" refers to unmarried men with families, while "girls" refers to unmarried women with families. When the dance program commences, these individuals will perform the Andun dance. The number of participants is not restricted, but typically, during the show, there are three pairs of boys and girls dancing, and they take turns according to the turn set by the host.

The host is an adult companion who understands adat (traditional customs) and is either already married or married. The host's primary responsibility is to ensure the smooth execution of the Andun dance during the Bimbang Adat ceremony. Additionally, the host serves as an advisor to single girls who will participate in the dance. The host is permitted only one person, regardless of gender.

The musician is responsible for playing or accompanying the dance. In this case, the musician holds the dim and kelintang musical instruments. Typically, there are three musicians, two of whom play the kelintang instrument, while the third plays the dim instrument (drum). The function of the dance music is to

establish the tempo. The tempo of the music remains consistent throughout the dance, neither increasing nor decreasing. The kelintang musical instrument is crafted from metal to enhance its sound, while the muffler regulates the rhythm, which is combined with the rhythm of the kelintang music.

The Andun dance is a performance art that not only provides entertainment but also conveys profound cultural and societal values. Its significance lies in its portrayal of the principles of marriage and family life. Typically performed in communal settings, such as large yards of residential houses, open fields, or arenas, the dance ensures an unobstructed view for the audience. To sustain the Andun dance within the South Bengkulu community, its preservation requires the collective efforts of the community and individuals associated with dance. In order to enhance the preservation of the Andun dance for the people of South Bengkulu, a comprehensive study is necessary. This study should encompass a detailed description and analysis of the dance's preservation, including an identification of the parties involved and the values that must be safeguarded.

METHOD

According to Agus and Haryanti (2020), the research method is the procedure for conducting a research study, specifically tailored to achieve predetermined objectives. The research method employed in this study is a qualitative research method. As stated by Muhajidin (2014: 123), qualitative research involves the collection of descriptive data, expressed in written form, from interviewees and observed individuals. This data is interpreted to gain insights and understanding.

This research utilizes a descriptive research approach. As outlined by Arikunto et al. (2009: 26), the descriptive method is designed to gather data and information about the subject of study. This includes describing the condition of a particular entity or event, accompanied by information about the underlying causes. The data is systematically presented and presented in an honest and accurate manner. Data collection involves conducting a literature review through searching online databases and various written sources, such as books and journals. Additionally, interviews with multiple informants who possess firsthand knowledge of the research object are conducted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, preservation originates from the fundamental word sustainable, which signifies enduring immutability and unchanging nature. The term encompasses nurturing, maintaining, and sustaining, as well as fostering and developing. Culture encompasses the comprehensive system of ideas, actions, and outcomes of human endeavors within the context of community life, acquired through learning and making it the collective property of humanity. It is an integral aspect of human life, both individually and communally. The cultural system is dynamic and subject to change and development, influenced by both internal and external factors.

Preserving culture entails maintaining artistic and traditional cultural values and practices by developing and promoting existing artistic products. A dynamic art form can be nurtured in evolving and ever-changing circumstances. Preservation is an endeavor rooted in the capabilities and resources of cultural and artistic actors, and these factors serve as both internal and external support. Preserving a culture necessitates its continued existence, ensuring that it remains viable and known, even as it undergoes development and erosion. Effective preservation requires the ongoing use and relevance of the objects being conserved. If a culture ceases to be utilized, it risks disappearing. Similarly, cultural tools that are no longer utilized by the community risk vanishing. As a product of human labor, culture is a responsibility and obligation that falls upon individuals to maintain and preserve.

According to the Indonesian Dictionary, value refers to the estimated price of an item. However, there is no definitive measure to determine its value. Value is considered good or bad for life and is an abstract concept that guides people's behavior. Social value is the appreciation given by a community to items that have functional utility for common life. For values in society to be realized, norms are established. Norms are provisions that contain orders and prohibitions that must be obeyed by members of society to achieve these values. In society, individuals and groups adhere to and believe in various values. These values can be categorized based on the purpose of assessment, their formation process, and their source.

The Andun dance, a cultural heritage of the people of South Bengkulu, demands preservation due to its inherent values. For instance, the dance movement embodies principles such as:

1) Religious Values (Religion)

The prayer movement emphasizes the value of respecting God Almighty and the ancestors. Similarly, the worship movement upholds an ethical principle, recognizing the dignity and respect due to all individuals, regardless of age, as fellow human beings.

2) Social Value

Open motion is characterized by an attitude of openness that must be owned by an individual. This openness is susceptible to mutual understanding, cooperation, and adherence to a close kinship system. Social values are also inherent in the Naup movement, which embodies the act of embracing or gathering. The term “Naup” itself is closely associated with the socio-culture of the people of South Bengkulu, who have a tradition of embracing each other in social interactions. The Naup dance, an integral part of the Andun dance, symbolizes the transition from a nomadic lifestyle to a household existence. During this dance, a couple decides to establish a marital bond, agreeing to keep secrets, endure disgrace, and maintain strength in the face of future challenges..

3) Ethical Values

This value is inherent in the stretching movement because it retains a connection to the traditional concept of marriage. Historically, women have often deferred to their husbands’ decisions in matters of marriage, while men, as the heads of households, have been expected to make judicious choices regarding various aspects of life within changing family structures.

In addition to possessing these values, the Andun dance is also a cultural heritage that the people of South Bengkulu district take great pride in, as it is exclusively preserved within their region. South Bengkulu Regency organizes annual Singles and Girls events with the objective of fostering a deeper appreciation for their culture among young people and introducing the Andun dance to a broader audience. The winners of these contests serve as role models for other young individuals, embodying not only physical attractiveness but also a profound understanding of their region’s customs and culture.

The Singles and Girls event serves as a means of preserving the Andun dance, ensuring its continued enjoyment across generations. To effectively maintain the cultural significance of the Andun dance, it is imperative to enhance and develop the art and culture that it represents. Regular training and continuous exploration are essential components of this process.

Several Parties Related to the Preservation of Andun Dance:

1) Government of South Bengkulu Regency

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, government means a system of exercising authority and power to regulate the social, economic and political life of a country or its parts. So that it can be said that the government is an organization that has the duties and functions of managing the government system and establishing policies for state objectives.

2) Community (Customary Consultative Body)

Society is a collective of individuals who are directly or indirectly related to one another, forming a unit of life that possesses its own unique culture, distinct from that of other societies.

As a unit of life, a community typically occupies a designated area where its members reside and sustain themselves. This area serves as a resource base for the community, enabling its members to fulfill their basic human needs. A society is structured as a system of interrelated roles and citizens, whose actions are guided by prevailing norms.

The existence of culture in human life serves a functional purpose, facilitating the fulfillment of essential needs. As a category or class within the environment, culture encompasses various aspects that cater to the diverse needs of human beings.

The Customary Consultative Body (BMA) is an integral part of the South Bengkulu community. It serves as a platform for individuals concerned about the arts to report or discuss existing challenges. The BMA functions as a representative body of the government, directly engaging with the people. Members of the community who are passionate about preserving the Bimbang Adat (Andun Dance) approached the BMA seeking guidance on its preservation.

Given the rapid advancements in the modern era, coupled with the increasing complexity of activities and the evolving needs of individuals, the Bimbang Adat ceremony has become a subject of concern. It is characterized by its substantial financial requirements, extended duration, and specific attributes. Armed

with the concerns raised by individuals who care about the arts, the BMA has taken proactive steps to address these issues in collaboration with relevant government authorities.

3) Artist

South Bengkulu Regency boasts a thriving artistic community, evidenced by the numerous studios that still stand. Among these studios are South Rentak Studio, Gema Serunai Studio, Lenggang Duweyu Studio, Mentari Studio, Talenta Studio, Pandan Sekundang Studio, Melati Studio, and many others..

Discussion

Andun Dance Preservation Efforts

1. Government

a. Festival

According to KBBI, it is a joyous occasion or week dedicated to commemorating significant and historic events. Festivals are also organized to celebrate important events within a nation, such as commemorating a country's anniversary. In Indonesia, August 17th is celebrated by all Indonesian citizens as a day to commemorate the proclamation.

To refer to or anticipate students practicing art, particularly the Andun dance, the government through the Department of Education and Culture organizes junior and high school-level festivals or competitions during major holidays, such as the Republic of Indonesia's Independence Day, Manna City Birthday, and school art performances. These activities serve as encouragement for students to enhance their artistic achievements, particularly in the Andun dance.

Furthermore, efforts have been made to preserve the Andun dance within schools. This has been achieved through the teaching of Andun dance to junior high school (SMP) and high school (SMA) students, initiated by each school where the Andun dance has become an extracurricular activity. The researcher utilized the teaching method of teaching and explanation, followed by demonstration of dance moves. In this instance, the researcher directly taught the Andun dance moves.

b. Performance

Performance is an activity involving the presentation of artistic works to a large audience in a specific location. The primary objective of performance is to satisfy both the audience and the performers. Tourism plays a crucial role in this context, as it provides an opportunity to introduce and showcase cultural heritage. Consequently, governments actively seek to enhance the significance of traditional dances like the Andun dance within tourism initiatives. Not only does this preserve the dance's sustainability, but it also serves as a means of introducing the Andun dance to tourists through various events, such as guest reception ceremonies, reunion events, and even as an art ambassador at the Indonesian Archipelago Dance Event in Jakarta. This event aims to showcase the cultural diversity of each region within Taman Mini Indonesia Indah. Therefore, tourism holds immense importance in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Andun dance.

2. Society (Deliberation)

Efforts made by the community through the Customary Consultative Body (BMA) to preserve the Bimbang Adat ceremony, which requires significant financial resources, are aimed at ensuring its continued existence despite the rapid technological advancements. The community seeks solutions from the local government to minimize costs associated with the ceremony, while simultaneously striving to preserve the Andun dance, a traditional form of dance. This preservation effort involves extending the duration of the Andun dance from three days and two nights to accommodate the needs of the community and the younger generation.

Preserving traditional dances necessitates a balance between adaptation and maintaining the essence of the dance. Trainers employ various techniques to shorten the duration of the dance while preserving its movement techniques. This approach ensures that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the dance forms they will learn, particularly the Andun dance.

Andun Dance Movement

There are 3 kinds of motion in the Andun dance, namely:

1. Open Motion

In this position, all fingers are fully extended with the palms facing outward. For women, the fingers should also be positioned upward, and the palms must be parallel to the shoulders. For men, the fingers should be extended and the palms should be as wide as the ears.



Figure 3. Example of the hand opening motion in the Andun dance

This movement involves taking four steps forward and four steps backward. Its significance lies in its representation of a prayer for the establishment of openness and communication between spouses as they navigate the challenges of married life.

2. Naup Motion

In essence, the entire finger closes inward, or the finger assumes a fist-like position. The hands of male dancers are positioned at ear level, while those of female dancers are positioned at shoulder level.



Figure 4. Naup Motion

3. Lod (Off)

In this dance, both genders perform a sideways movement parallel to their shoulders. The female dancers clench their four fingers into a fist while the male dancers spread their hands out. They then take four steps forward and four steps backward while simultaneously turning in four directions: forward, backward, right, and left.



Figure 5. Louf (Off)

The significance of this movement is a prayer for the bride and groom to experience abundant fortune, live in harmony, and be in close proximity. The four fingers resting on the thumb symbolizes the wife's unwavering obedience to her husband.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Andun dance is a traditional dance originating from Bengkulu Province, specifically in South Bengkulu Regency. It is a social dance performed by both male and female dancers. The dance's origins are unknown, and its exact creation date is uncertain. However, it is believed to have existed for centuries. The Andun dance is an integral part of the traditional wedding ceremony of the South Bengkulu community. Originally, it served as an entertainment form, enhancing the festivities of the event. Over time, it evolved

into a performance dance. The dance is performed during the Bimbang Adat (wedding feast), a seven-day and seven-night celebration. The Andun dance is interpreted as an expression of gratitude and happiness for the blessings received. It also reflects the social spirit of the community, emphasizing the importance of togetherness and unity.

To preserve and promote the Andun dance, the government has implemented various conservation efforts. These efforts include organizing competitions and incorporating the dance into the curriculum of junior and senior high schools. Additionally, artists dedicated to preserving the dance have established studios to teach it. Furthermore, the community government has taken steps to preserve the dance, such as adjusting the duration of the Bimbang Adat ceremony from seven days and seven nights to three days and two nights for the middle and lower classes, while ensuring that the essence of the event remains intact.

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