



Preserving Bun Ya Ho Dance: A Bun Ya Ho Dance Procession Analysis in the Apitan Tradition in Kudus

Muh Rafi Alfaris^{✉1}, Agung Supriyanto^{✉2}

Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Tarbiyah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Indonesia.

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Abstract

Bun Ya Ho dance is a colossal dance brought by KH Abdul Jalil Tamyiz around the 1950s from Bumiayu, Brebes Regency. He responded to the condition of the Megawon community. At that time, many hobbies were contrary to religious law. The revitalization of Bun Ya Ho dance is based on the need for a typical Megawon art form to be performed on religious holidays, one of which is the Apitan tradition. The following note will explore more deeply the meaning and cultural values of the Bun Ya Ho dance procession in the Apitan (alms of earth) tradition in Megawon, Kudus Regency, the dynamics and challenges faced by dancers in the Bun Ya Ho dance procession, and the role of the younger generation of Megawon in preserving Bun Ya Ho dance. The research method carried out by researchers is literature. Results of this study explain that first, the meaning of Bun Ya Ho dance movements, namely: *tayub* (drunkenness) movement, war movement, and standing movement on a jug. Then, the cultural values in Bun Ya Ho dance are social value, aesthetic value, and educational value. Second, the dynamics of Bun Ya Ho dance, namely the dynamics of the Bun Ya Ho dance performers, the dynamics of the number of Bun Ya Ho dance personnel, and the dynamics of Bun Ya Ho Dance costumes. Third, the role of Megawon's young generation in preserving Bun Ya Ho Dance, namely paying attention and studying Bun Ya Ho dance, disseminating Bun Ya Ho dance information through social media, and participating in Apitan events actively.

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[✉] Corresponding Author:

Email : 1. rafialfaris30@gmail.com

2. agungsupriyanto0108@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Dance is one of the arts that can be used as a means of spreading the teachings of Islam in various regions. One of the dances used as a means of spreading the teachings of Islam is the Bun Ya Ho dance, which is used to spread the teachings of Islam in Megawon Village, Jati Sub-District, Kudus Regency (Putri 2020).

The creation of Bun Ya Ho Dance was based on the idea that there was a need for a typical art form of the santri to be performed on religious holidays at the mosque or for residents who had a wish, such as weddings, circumcisions, and births of children. The situation of the Megawon Village community at that time was still lacking in religious knowledge. There are still many people's favorite activities that are contrary to religious laws. The Bun Ya Ho dance succeeded in attracting Megawon residents to go to the mosque to watch the Bun Ya Ho dance performance (Adib Tamariansyah et al. 2021).

Bun Ya Ho dance is unique in the form of a dance that has a meaning. It symbolizes the gratitude of the Megawon Village community for the abundant rice harvest. It is reflected in the dance movement, where the dancer will stand on a jug. This dance also has a high cultural value in the form of a manifestation of gratitude for the harvest and respect for nature. It is expressed in the process, where the Megawon village community will gather at the Megawon village field with offerings, including tied rice plants, ketupat, lepet, and snacks (Khairina Adila 2021). Normally, there is news circulated in the media about it, and it is already known by many people, but it is quite the opposite. Therefore, it is important to raise this topic in an article to introduce the Bun Ya Ho dance to the general public and help its revitalization efforts.

It should be noted that the Bun Ya Ho Dance has several characteristics and distinctiveness that distinguish it from other traditional dances, including Bun Yo Ho dance movements inspired by war dance movements as a symbol of the beginning of the entry of Islamic civilization into Megawon Village, Bun Ya Ho dance

costumes are bright red dominant, these costumes add to the beauty of the dance, Bun Ya Ho dance accompaniment music uses tambourines (*terbang*) accompanied by chanting *Shalawat Badar* to add the spirit and excitement of the dance (Adib Tamariansyah et al. 2021).

Starting from the uniqueness of Bun Yato Dance, it turns out that there are different versions related to the origin of Bun Ya Ho Dance in Megawon Village, Kudus, namely: 1) This dance was brought by KH Abdul Jalil Tamyiz, a Sufi Scholar from Bumiayu, Brebes Regency, Central Java (Adib Tamariansyah et al. 2021). 2) This version is not very popular and this dance was brought by one of the students of Walisongo (Sunan Kudus) who was ordered to spread his soldiers and students to live in a village that was already crowded with people, one of whom is Mbah Ronggo. He was assigned to live and lead the Megawon Village community (Nafi'i 2022).

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method carried out by researchers is a literature review. The literature research method is a research approach that focuses on collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing the existing data, such as books, articles, journals, and other theoretical sources related to the topic of the study (Arikunto 2013; Reay 2014; Márquez et al. 2024). This method allows researchers to explore various perspectives, theories, and previous findings that are relevant to the research problem so they can provide a solid basis for the study being conducted or have a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Graue 2015; Niam et al. 2024).

There are several important steps in carrying out literature research methods, including keyword searches to find relevant literature, evaluating sources to determine their credibility and relevance, and synthesizing the found information to contribute to the research being carried out (Fona 2023). This process is a key component in literature research, allowing researchers to build a solid theoretical foundation or identify gaps in existing literature that can then serve as a basis for

further research (Noble & Smith 2014; Grbich 2012; Tigh 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Meaning and Cultural Values in Bun Ya Ho Dance Procession of Apitan Tradition in Megawon Kudus

Initially, the Apitan tradition in Megawon was just a gathering event between residents, who were carried out routinely and rotated in people's homes. In the past in Megawon village, there was a dance called Bun Ya Ho Dance brought by KH Abdul Jalil Tamyiz a Sufi Scholar from Bumiayu, Brebes Regency, Central Java. The dance movement symbolizes the process of the entry of Islam in Megawon (Adib Tamariansyah et al. 2021). The process of performing the Bun Ya Ho Dance in the Apitan Tradition in Megawon is based on the idea that there needs to be an art form that is typical of Megawon to be performed on religious holidays, one of which is the Apitan Tradition. According to the author's analysis of the meaning of the Bun Ya Ho Dance movement, namely:

A. Tayub (drunkenness) movement

The meaning of the movement is to express that in the past the Megawon community used to carry out activities that were contrary to the teachings of Islam, as a place of sin such as: getting drunk, playing with women, and gambling. The details are as follows:

1. The movement of hands waving above the head while holding a shawl is identical to people who gamble in a state of intoxication.
2. Head movements that are shaken are synonymous with the effects of drunkenness and cause dizziness and hallucinations.
3. The movement of the feet jumping up and down is synonymous with party activities when drunk.

B. War movement

The meaning of the movement is to attack the enemy's abdomen to weaken the enemy and also as an expression of the entry of Islam into Megawon which causes conflict. There are pros and cons below:

1. Forward movement and clenched fists, as a form of punch to the opponent.
2. The movement of the foot forward one step forward, is a form of preparation when attacking the enemy.
3. Head movements focus forward and finish attacking/paralyzing the new enemy and looking right/left, as anticipation when the enemy attacks from a different direction.

C. Standing movement on a jug

The meaning of the movement is to express that the Megawon community, which initially caused conflict, finally reunited to build a better Megawon without looking at religious differences. Here are more details:

1. The movement of the right and left hands waving while playing the shawl is synonymous with harmony between residents.
2. The motion of the feet that are silent and straight is identical to the belief that if it holds fast (many movements), it will collapse.



Figure 1. Standing movement on a jug
(Source: Megawon Village Archives,
March 26, 2024)

According to the author's analysis, there are the cultural values in Bun Ya Ho Dance as follows:

A. Social Value

In the implementation of the Bun Ya Ho Dance, we can observe the dancers who perform the Bun Ya Ho

Dance cooperate and work hand in hand in performing dance movements that are compact and unison. It reflects the high value of cooperation between the dancers of the Bun Ya Ho dance.

B. Aesthetic value

In the implementation of the Bun Ya Ho dance, we can observe the dancers wearing bright red and glittering dance costumes as a symbol of the spirit of building Megawon village. It reflects the excitement and joy of the Apitan Ceremony. Then, the Bun Ya Ho Dance movement when holding a shawl can add to the beauty of the Bun Ya Ho dance.

C. Educational Value

When approaching the implementation of Bun Ya Ho dance, we can observe that there is self-improvement of dancers who were initially less proficient and now become proficient in teamwork in Bun Ya Ho Dance training and practice. The dancers must follow the instructions of the Bun Ya Ho Dance teacher (Mrs. Lestari), practice regularly, and work together with their colleagues. It strengthens the value of teamwork, and perseverance in achieving a common goal, namely the creation of a solid dance.

Dynamics and Challenges Faced by Dancers in The Bun Ya Ho Dance Procession

According to the author's analysis, there are the dynamics and challenges faced by dancers in the Bun Ya Ho Dance procession, namely:

A. Dynamics of the Bun Ya Ho Dance Performers

The first change is the change of the Bun Ya Ho Dance performers. The beginning of this dance was only performed by women. However, there is a change in the composition of the Bun Ya Ho dance performers. Currently, not only women participate, but also the addition of personnel from men (the number depends on the interest of the

community/the decision of the dance teacher, usually 3-5 people).

B. Dynamics of the number of Bun Ya Ho Dance personnel

Initially, the dance members were only performed by 1 group with 13 dancers, with details of 2 male dancers acting as prayer warriors and 11 female dancers acting as umbrella and jug carriers. However, now it has changed to be played by 2 groups of 20 dancers, with details of 10 dancers performing war dances, while the second group synergizes with the first group (demonstrating war movements).

C. Dynamics of Bun Ya Ho Dance costumes

Initially, the Bun Ya Ho dance costumes were revealing clothes (translucent clothes) and only dominated by bright red colors. However, now it has changed to covered costumes and the colors are more varied such as red, blue, green, and yellow. This change occurred because of input from religious leaders and the community began to understand religion. Therefore, now, it has been agreed to wear covered costumes.

Furthermore, according to the author's analysis, there are the challenges faced by dancers in the Bun Ya Ho Dance procession:

A. Lack of regeneration of young dancers

The most obvious challenge that needs to be anticipated is the lack of interest from the younger generation to be involved in the Bun Ya Ho dance performance. Currently, there are not a few children who are less willing or have the opportunity to take part in Bun Ya Ho dance training. It happens because of the lack of human knowledge to preserve the Bun Ya Ho dance, especially because Bun Ya Ho Dance training is only held when approaching the Apitan Ceremony, approximately 15 days before the implementation of the Bun Ya Ho dance.

B. Lack of regeneration of Bun Ya Ho dance teachers

Another challenge is the lack of dance teachers who can teach the Bun Ya Ho dance to the next generation. Currently, only Mrs. Lestari is still active as a dance teacher who can spread the knowledge of Bun Ya Ho dance movements to young people because no one is considered capable of continuing her role and struggle. Mrs. Lestari hopes that with the Bun Ya Ho dance training, there will be the superior generation who can become the next generation maintaining the continuity of Bun Ya Ho Dance in the future.

C. Lack of consistency in Bun Ya Ho Dance training

In addition, another challenge is the lack of regular training. The dance training led by Mrs. Lestari will only be done when the Apitan Ceremony comes, (15 days) before the implementation. If the training is only carried out during that certain period and sometimes Mrs. Lestari cannot assist directly, the children will forget and even no longer enthusiastic to practice consistently in the future.

The Role of Megawon's Young Generation in Preserving Bun Ya Ho Dance

The younger generation has an urgent role in maintaining and introducing their culture, especially preserving the Bun Ya Ho dance in Megawon Village, Jati, Kudus. According to the author's analysis, there are several roles played by the young generation of Megawon village in efforts to preserve the Bun Ya Ho dance:

A. Paying attention and learning Bun Ya Ho Dance

The young generation of Megawon village can show their concern for Bun Ya Ho dance by maintaining their knowledge of Bun Ya Ho Dance movements. They can take advantage of the opportunity to join the Bun Ya Ho Dance training with Mrs. Lestari to learn and practice so that they can

commit to maintaining and preserving the Bun Ya Ho dance. Therefore, it remains sustainable.

B. Disseminating Bun Ya Ho Dance information through social media

Social media is a social tool for the younger generation to spread information about the Bun Ya Ho dance to other people. They can utilize platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to share stories, photos, videos, and information related to the Bun Ya Ho dance so it can reach a wider audience, provoke people to attend, and build awareness of the importance of preserving the Bun Ya Ho dance in Megawon, Kudus Regency.

C. Participating in the Apitan event actively

The younger generation in Megawon Village not only attend but also actively participate in every Apitan event held in Megawon Village. They can join as committee members, and presenters, following the cultural procession, and playing a role in ensuring that the Bun Ya Ho dance in the Apitan Tradition continues to be held and preserved.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is the process of performing the Bun Ya Ho Dance in the Apitan tradition because it is based on the idea that there is a need for a typical Megawan art form to be performed on religious holidays, one of which is Apitan. The meaning of Bun Ya Ho dance movements are 3 namely: *tayub* (drunkenness) movement, war movement, and standing movement on a jug. In addition, the cultural values of the Bun Ya Ho dance are Social value, aesthetic value, and educational value. Furthermore, there are 3 dynamics and challenges faced by dancers in the Bun Ya Ho dance procession. First, the dynamics of the Bun Ya Ho dance performers, the dynamics of the number of the Bun Ya Ho dance personnel, and the dynamics of the Bun Ya Ho dance costumes. Second, there are 3 challenges including the lack of

regeneration of young dancers, the lack of regeneration of dance teachers, and the lack of consistent training. Additionally, the roles of the younger generation in preserving the Bun Ya Ho dance are paying attention and learning the Bun Ya Ho dance, disseminating Bun Ya Ho dance information through social media, and participating in Apitan events actively.

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