

Ritual Pedagogy and Islamic Educational Values in the Panggih Manten Tradition amongst the Muslim Javanese Diaspora Community in Parepare, Indonesia

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Abstract: *Panggih Manten*, the ceremonial meeting of the bride and groom after the marriage contract, remains practised by Javanese communities living outside Java. This study examines how the tradition is practised, adapted, and interpreted as a medium of Islamic education among Javanese Muslims in Parepare, South Sulawesi. Using a qualitative case study, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving five key informants: a traditional custodian, a religious figure, the chairperson of the Kerukunan Keluarga Jawa (KKJ), and a married couple who had undergone the ceremony. Data were analysed through reduction, presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing, with triangulation and member checking used to strengthen credibility. Eleven stages remain recognised in Parepare, although equipment, timing, and technical arrangements have been simplified. Their meanings cluster into four domains of Islamic education: 'aqidah, worship-oriented responsibility, akhlak, and social ethics. Acceptance of the tradition is further shaped by a religious filter that directs prayer to Allah and rejects meanings associated with shirk. The findings show that *Panggih Manten* functions as informal ritual pedagogy through selective adaptation, symbolic interaction, religious filtering, and intergenerational transmission.

Keywords: Panggih Manten; Islamic education; Javanese Muslim society; ritual pedagogy; symbolic interaction; cultural adaptation.

INTRODUCTION

Religion and local culture in Indonesian Muslim communities are often related through accommodation, negotiation, and acculturation rather than a rigid opposition between doctrine and tradition. Islamic principles provide normative guidance for faith, worship, ethics, family life, and social relations, while local customs offer inherited symbolic forms through which values are communicated. Consequently, traditions may be retained, reinterpreted, simplified, or abandoned according to religious and social considerations (Adiansya, 2017; Akmal & Prasista, 2023; Nainggolan, 2020).

Javanese marriage traditions illustrate this interaction clearly. A wedding may include tarub, siraman, midodareni, akad nikah, and panggih or temu manten. *Panggih Manten*, held after the marriage contract, uses objects, gestures, parental participation, food, textiles, and forms of respect to communicate expectations about married life, responsibility, respect for parents, and the union of two families (Bangunjiwo, 2019; Widodo & Santiawan, 2022). The ritual can therefore be read as a social text through which family and community norms are embodied rather than merely verbalised.

Previous studies have identified Islamic educational, moral, and cultural meanings within *Panggih Manten* in Java and Lampung (Fazri,

2019; Maharyani, 2023; Wulandari & Anwar, 2024), while ethnolinguistic and migration-focused studies show how ritual expressions preserve Javanese cultural values beyond their region of origin (Buchori *et al.*, 2025; Istiana *et al.*, 2025). Much of this work, however, centres on ritual sequences and symbolic meanings. Less attention has been paid to how a diaspora community decides which elements to preserve, simplify, or reinterpret when ritual infrastructure and cultural surroundings differ from Java.

Parepare provides such a setting. Its Javanese Muslim community lives within a predominantly non-Javanese environment, where *Panggih Manten* must be deliberately remembered, organised, and adapted. The Kerukunan Keluarga Jawa (KKJ), which developed from informal gatherings in the 1980s into a more structured organisation, supports cultural continuity and social solidarity. In practice, families retain the ceremonial core while adjusting materials, timing, and technical arrangements to local conditions. This context shifts the analytical question from what symbols mean to how meanings are selected, legitimised, and transmitted.

Islamic educational values provide the first analytical lens. Here, education extends beyond schools to the formation of belief, conduct, responsibility, and social ethics (Jaya *et al.*, 2024).

The study groups these values into four connected domains: ‘aqidah, ‘ibadah understood through responsible action, akhlak, and social values. These categories link faith with halal livelihood, family obligations, cooperation, respect, humility, compassion, justice, social ties, and communal harmony (Frimayanti, 2017; Mahfud, 2011; Muhaimin, 2012).

Symbolic interactionism explains how ritual actions acquire educational significance. From Blumer’s perspective, people act on the basis of meanings formed through interaction and open to reinterpretation (Soeprapto, 2002). Betel leaves, eggs, sindur cloth, rice, coins, or a keris therefore carry no automatic educational power; their significance emerges when elders, religious figures, parents, organisers, and the couple connect them with expected family conduct.

The concept of al-‘urf further clarifies the normative boundary of cultural continuity. Customs may be accepted when they are beneficial and do not conflict with fundamental Islamic principles. Informants repeatedly stressed that prayers must be directed to Allah and that ritual objects must not be treated as possessing independent power. Tradition is therefore preserved through a religious filter based on intention, interpretation, and tawhid (Siregar *et al.*, 2025).

This study asks: (1) how is *Panggih Manten* practised and adapted by the Javanese Muslim community in Parepare, and (2) how are Islamic educational values produced through its symbols and interactions? It argues that, in a diaspora setting, *Panggih Manten* operates as informal ritual pedagogy sustained by selective adaptation,

religious filtering, symbolic interaction, and intergenerational transmission. This moves the discussion beyond cataloguing ritual values towards explaining how those values are reproduced under conditions of migration.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design and Location

This study used a qualitative case study with fieldwork because it examined one bounded cultural practice within a specific community and sought to understand participants’ interpretations in context (Ridlo, 2023). Fieldwork was conducted for approximately two months in 2026 in Parepare and surrounding areas, South Sulawesi, where an organised Javanese diaspora community continues to practise *Panggih Manten* while interacting intensively with Bugis-Makassar society.

The main social setting was the Kerukunan Keluarga Jawa (KKJ). Informants described its development from informal gatherings around 1982–1986, to the group known as Kepuja around 2000, and a more formal organisational structure from 2017. KKJ provides a relevant setting for examining how identity, solidarity, and ritual practices are maintained outside Java.

Informants and Data Sources

Five purposively selected key informants provided primary data: A1, a traditional custodian; R1, a religious figure; C1, the KKJ chairperson; and P1 and P2, a groom and bride who had undergone *Panggih Manten*. Their roles enabled comparison among customary authority, religious interpretation, organisational memory, and personal experience.

Table 1: Key informants and analytical contributions

Code	Role of informant	Main analytical contribution
A1	Traditional leader	Ritual sequences, paraphernalia, the significance of heritage, and the continuity of Javanese customs
R1	Religious figure	Islamic interpretation, theological boundaries, prayer, tawhid, and the acceptance of tradition
C1	Chairperson of the KKJ community	Community history, organisational continuity, and the practice of conducting processions
P1	Groom	First-hand experience, moral lessons, respect for parents, and marital responsibilities
P2	Bride	First-hand experience, reflection on the meaning of the ritual, marital responsibilities, and cultural continuity

Secondary sources included books, academic articles, documents, archives, and photographs. Visual material was used to corroborate the sequence of the procession, ritual paraphernalia,

bodily positions, and family involvement rather than to replace field evidence.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation focused on ritual sequence, symbolic objects, bodily movements, parental involvement, and the roles of those directing the ceremony, including the use of gantal, eggs, flower water, sindur cloth, rice, coins, and the posture adopted during sungkeman.

Semi-structured interviews explored the meaning and purpose of *Panggih Manten*, changes in its practice in Parepare, the significance of each stage, participating actors, its relationship with Islamic teachings, and reasons for preservation. Interviews with the couple also addressed emotional experience, memorable stages, perceived moral lessons, Islamic values, and understandings of household responsibility. Documentation was used to compare these accounts with photographs and relevant literature.

Data Analysis and Validity

Analysis proceeded iteratively through data reduction, presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing. Data were first organised according to the ritual sequence, then meanings were compared across the traditional custodian, religious figure, community leader, and couple. Identified meanings were grouped into 'aqidah, worship-oriented responsibility, akhlak, and social values, followed by interpretation of whether diaspora adaptations changed the meanings attached to the ritual.

Credibility was strengthened through prolonged field engagement, source and technique triangulation, checks across time and situations, and member checking. Interview, observation, and documentation data were cross-checked to minimise interpretive deviation from participants' accounts (Husnullail et al., 2024; Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019).

RESULTS

Panggih Manten as a Tradition of Migration that is Preserved Yet Adaptive

Informants defined *Panggih Manten* as the formal meeting of the bride and groom after the marriage contract. R1 emphasised that the couple meet only after the marriage has become religiously valid. The sequence therefore marks two linked transitions: the akad establishes marital legitimacy, while panggih publicly recognises the new relationship and the formation of kinship between two families.

A1 regarded the ritual sequence as an interconnected inheritance that should not be changed arbitrarily, whereas C1 stressed that not every detail must always be performed in full. These positions reveal a shared preservation strategy: continuity is sought at the level of core meaning, while implementation remains flexible according to time, venue, family capacity, and availability of ritual materials.

Observation confirmed this adaptation. During *Wiji dadi*, for example, the egg was wrapped in transparent plastic to avoid soiling the venue; flower water in *wiji suku* used locally available materials; and the procession was commonly held soon after the marriage contract and followed directly by the reception. Such adjustments change technical form without eliminating the symbolic sequence considered important by participants.

The Sequence of the Procession and its Educational Significance

Eleven stages were documented: *balangan gantal*, *Wiji dadi* or *ngidak hatigan*, *wiji suku*, *junjung drajat*, *sindur binayang*, *pangkon timbang*, *kacar-kucur*, *dahar klimah*, *mapak besan*, *lolos duwung*, and *sungkeman*. Together they move from the couple's ceremonial meeting to lessons about partnership, livelihood, family integration, humility, and parental blessing.

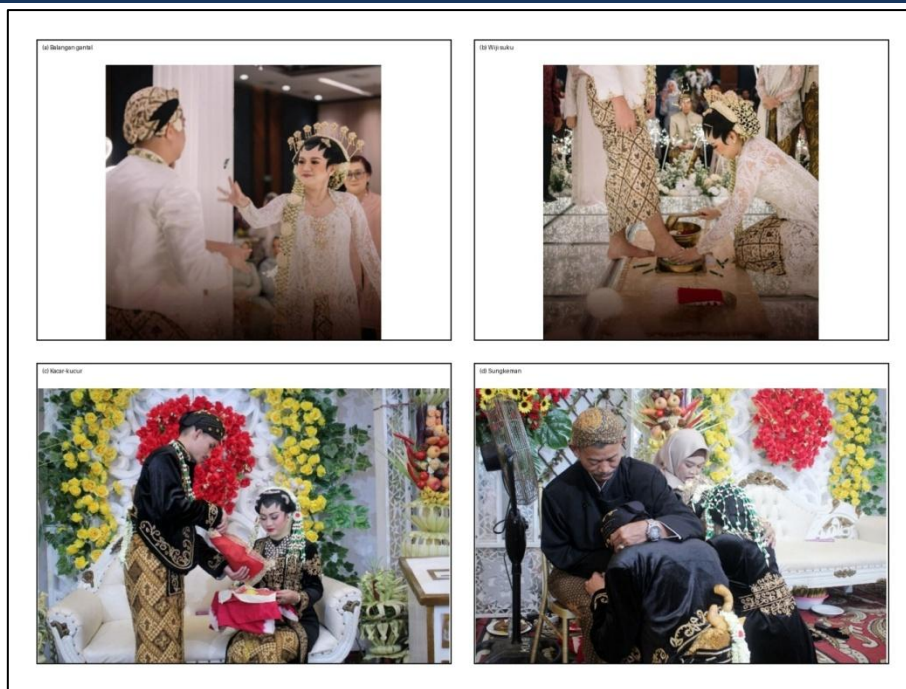


Figure 1: Several stages of the Panggih Manten documented in Parepare: (a) balangan gantal, (b) wiji suku, (c) kacar-kucur, and (d) sungkeman. Source: original field research documentation (2026).

Participants did not treat the sequence as empty choreography. Meaning was produced through explanation, action, and personal experience.

Table 2 summarises the dominant symbolic actions and Islamic educational meanings identified across the eleven stages.

Table 2: Ritual stages and dominant Islamic educational values

Ritual stage	Main symbolic actions	Dominant educational meanings
<i>Balangan gantal</i>	The bride and groom throw tied rolls of betel leaves at each other	<i>Akidah</i> — prayer, good intentions, and a symbol of the couple's union
<i>Wiji dadi</i>	The groom steps on an egg	<i>Akidah</i> — the transition to married life and the recognition of marriage in accordance with God's will
<i>Wiji suku</i>	The bride washes the groom's feet with flower-scented water	Worship/responsibility — devotion, service and responsibility within the household
<i>Junjung drajat</i>	The groom helps the bride to stand	<i>Akhlak</i> — respect, partnership, and treating one's partner with dignity
<i>Sindur binayang</i>	Parents guide the couple with sindur cloth	<i>Akhlak</i> — parental guidance, example, motivation, and support
<i>Pangkon timbang</i>	The bride's father symbolically receives the bride and groom	Social ethics — fairness and equal treatment of children and in-laws
<i>Kacar-kucur</i>	The husband pours rice and coins onto a cloth held by his wife	Worship/responsibility — lawful provision and meeting family needs
<i>Dahar klimah</i>	The bride and groom feed each other	Worship/responsibility — reciprocity, cooperation, and shared hardship
<i>Mapak besan</i>	The groom's parents are formally welcomed	Social ethics — kinship, mutual acceptance, and maintaining ties
<i>Lolos duwung</i>	The groom removes his keris and footwear before presenting himself to his parents	<i>Akhlak</i> — humility, self-control, and respect
<i>Sungkeman</i>	The couple kneel before their parents to ask for their blessing and forgiveness	<i>Akhlak</i> — gratitude, birr al-walidayn, humility, and parental blessing

Balangan gantal and *Wiji dadi* were most closely associated with 'aqidah. R1 interpreted *balangan gantal* as expressing prayer, union, and good intentions, not ascribing power to the betel leaves themselves. *Wiji dadi* marks entry into married life within a lawful union. In both cases, the religious meaning lies in directing gratitude and destiny towards Allah rather than in the ritual objects.

Wiji suku, *kacar-kucur*, and *dahar klimah* emphasised worship through responsibility. *Wiji suku* was understood as devotion within marriage; *kacar-kucur* represented the husband's duty to seek halal livelihood and meet family needs while the wife helps manage the household; and *dahar klimah*, in which the couple feed each other, stressed reciprocity, cooperation, and willingness to share hardship.

Akhlaq was particularly visible in *junjung drajat* and *sindur binayang*. Helping the bride to stand was interpreted as respect and partnership, while parents guiding the couple with *sindur* signified continuing advice, encouragement, and support after marriage.

Lolos duwung and *sungkeman* further conveyed humility and respect for parents. Removing the *keris* and footwear before approaching parents symbolised restraint and deference. During *sungkeman*, the couple kneel, ask forgiveness, seek permission, and receive blessings. P1 described this as the most memorable and sacred moment because it combined awareness of parental sacrifice with hope for their blessing, making *birr al-walidayn* an embodied emotional experience.

Social ethics were clearest in *pangkon timbang* and *mapak besan*. *Pangkon timbang* symbolised the bride's father accepting his child and son-in-law fairly, while *mapak besan* formalised mutual acceptance between the two families. The ritual thus educates not only a married couple but also a wider kinship network.

Religious Filtering: Traditions are Upheld, But Not without Limits

Religious acceptance of *Panggih Manten* was conditional. R1 understood the meeting as part of

Allah's decree and the ceremony as gratitude for a lawful marriage, but insisted that intentions and prayers remain directed solely to God. Ritual objects and actions could not be regarded as possessing independent supernatural power.

This constitutes a process of religious filtering. Ancestral origin alone neither invalidates nor legitimises a custom; acceptability depends on how it is interpreted, its purpose, and whether it conflicts with Islamic principles. The community therefore preserves advice and virtue embedded in the ritual while rejecting meanings considered inconsistent with *tawhid*.

Communal Participation and Intergenerational Transmission

Panggih Manten involves parents, extended families, traditional and religious figures, relatives, make-up artists, and event coordinators. Organisers direct bodily positions and movement; parents provide blessing and symbolic guidance; traditional custodians explain customary norms; and religious figures define acceptable theological interpretations.

The ceremony consequently becomes a communal learning environment. P2 noted that some meanings became clearer only after the ritual was explained and reflected upon. Values are transmitted through instruction, observation, emotional experience, advice, and participation rather than through verbal teaching alone.

The *Panggih Manten* as a Means of Cultural Continuity in the Diaspora

For Javanese Muslims in Parepare, maintaining *Panggih Manten* is also a conscious means of cultural continuity. A1 and C1 both stressed the need to preserve the ritual outside Java, while allowing simplification. Cultural preservation therefore operates through selection of essential elements, adaptation of negotiable technical forms, and explanation of their meanings to younger generations.

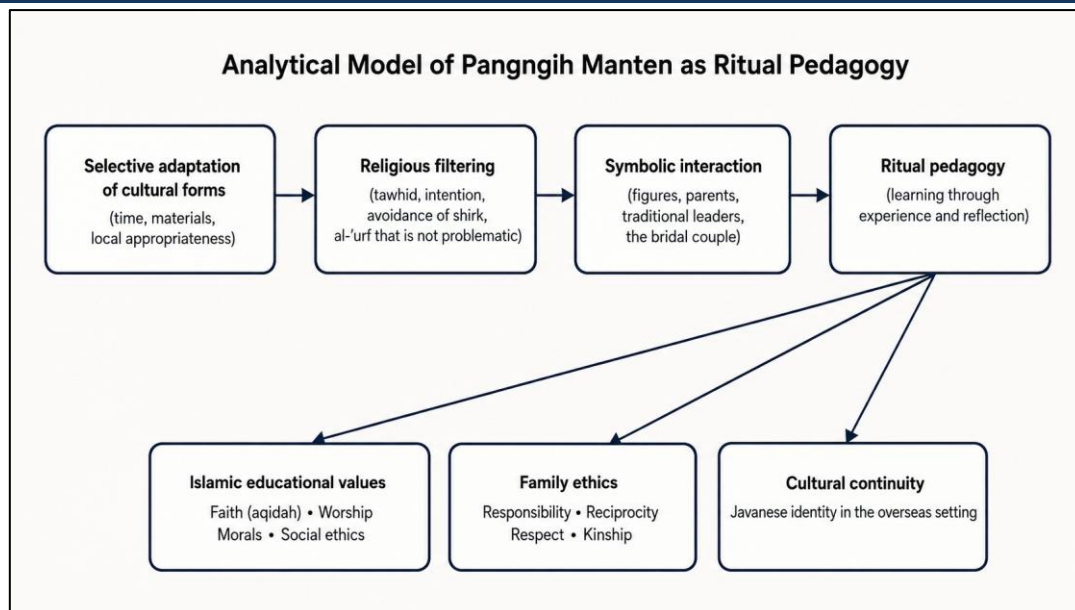


Figure 2: An analytical model of the Pangngih Manten as ritual pedagogy: selective adaptation, religious filtering, symbolic interaction, and intergenerational transmission.

DISCUSSION

The Parepare case shows that *Pangngih Manten* is neither an unchanged remnant of Javanese custom nor simply a tradition that has been 'Islamised'. Its continuity depends on negotiation among cultural identity, practical conditions of diaspora life, and Islamic normativity. Core stages are retained because they carry recognised moral messages, while materials and technical arrangements remain adaptable. Continuity therefore rests more on shared meaning than on exact replication of form.

This finding extends earlier research from Banyumas, Sragen, and Lampung that identified Islamic educational values in individual ritual stages (Fazri, 2019; Maharyani, 2023; Wulandari & Anwar, 2024). Parepare adds a diaspora mechanism: the community must actively decide what to preserve, simplify, and explain in a setting where Javanese ritual infrastructure is less secure. The analytical contribution is thus a shift from an inventory of symbols to the process through which their meanings are reproduced.

Symbolic interactionism clarifies this process. Meaning is not inherent in an object but develops through interaction and interpretation (Soeprapto, 2002). Betel leaves become associated with prayer and union because participants explain them that way; sindur signifies parental guidance through its use in the procession; and sungkeman becomes educational because bodily posture, requests for forgiveness, parental advice, and emotional response occur together. Ritual meaning is therefore relational and performative.

Meaning-making is also normatively selective. The insistence that prayer be directed only to Allah and that ritual practice avoid shirk reflects an internal theological boundary. In terms of al-'urf, customs may remain legitimate when they produce benefit without contradicting fundamental religious principles. Acculturation in this setting is therefore not unrestricted blending but a disciplined process of preservation, reinterpretation, and rejection (Siregar *et al.*, 2025).

The interdependence of ritual stages is important. Wiji suku, viewed alone, may appear to represent one-sided female devotion. Read together with junjung drajat, kacar-kucur, and dahar klimah, however, the procession articulates a reciprocal ethic: the wife shows respect, the husband assumes responsibility for provision and dignity, and both partners are expected to cooperate. Isolating a single symbol would therefore obscure the moral framework constructed by the ceremony as a whole.

The four educational domains are similarly interconnected. 'Aqidah establishes marriage within divine will and gratitude; worship-oriented responsibility translates this orientation into livelihood, family obligations, and cooperation; akhlak regulates respect, humility, affection, and treatment of one's spouse; and social ethics extend these commitments to parents, in-laws, relatives, and the community. *Pangngih Manten* consequently presents Islamic education as an integrated relationship between belief and social practice.

The findings also demonstrate that Islamic education occurs beyond formal institutions. Parents, traditional leaders, religious figures, organisers, and KKJ perform educational roles in a temporary learning space created by the wedding. Unlike classroom instruction, this pedagogy combines movement, objects, emotion, advice, and family relationships. P1's response to sungkeman and P2's later reflection illustrate how learning emerges through lived experience followed by interpretation.

Cultural identity is inseparable from this educational function. Local wedding ceremonies can preserve social memory and collective values (Istiana et al., 2025; Manshur & Anas, 2026), and this role becomes especially visible outside the region of origin. In Parepare, changes in timing, available materials, and technical detail show that participants distinguish between a symbolic core and negotiable forms. Javanese identity is therefore reproduced through both continuity and change.

These findings support a ritual pedagogy model comprising four linked processes: selective adaptation keeps the ceremony practicable in a new environment; religious filtering establishes boundaries consistent with tawhid; symbolic interaction converts objects and actions into moral messages; and intergenerational transmission passes ritual knowledge and family ethics through elders, religious figures, community organisations, and young couples.

The model also explains why simplification does not necessarily reduce relevance. A ritual remains meaningful when participants can translate its symbols into responsibility, parental respect, fairness, kinship, and monotheism. Without explanation, the same sequence risks becoming habitual performance. Cultural preservation therefore requires not only repetition of ritual stages but also deliberate interpretation and reflection.

This study is limited to one organised Javanese Muslim community and five purposively selected key informants; its findings are therefore not intended to represent all variations of *Panggih Manten* in Parepare or across Indonesia. It also emphasises present interpretations rather than longitudinal change. Future research could compare diaspora communities across cities, include couples from different generations, and examine the influence of social media and the

wedding-services industry on ritual standardisation and meaning.

CONCLUSION

Panggih Manten among Javanese Muslims in Parepare demonstrates how a diaspora community preserves a distinctive marriage tradition while adapting its material and technical forms. Eleven stages remain recognised, although not always performed with identical completeness. The community distinguishes between forms that can be adjusted and core meanings considered essential, making selective adaptation central to cultural continuity.

Four connected domains of Islamic educational values were identified: 'aqidah through prayer, intention, gratitude, and recognition of Allah's decree; worship through responsibility, lawful provision, cooperation, and fulfilment of family obligations; akhlak through respect, humility, parental guidance, and care for one's spouse; and social ethics through fairness, kinship, and relations with in-laws. These values are transmitted through symbolic action and communal participation rather than formal instruction.

The study's principal contribution is to conceptualise *Panggih Manten* as informal ritual pedagogy. In Parepare, it simultaneously teaches family ethics, reproduces Javanese identity, and negotiates custom with Islamic norms through selective adaptation, religious filtering, symbolic interaction, and intergenerational transmission. Its continuity therefore depends less on preserving every ceremonial detail than on the community's capacity to interpret and pass on meanings considered beneficial for Muslim family life in a multicultural setting.

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