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Pdf   **Identity and Wisdom of Decorative Patterns on the Religious Buildings in Keng Tung, Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

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The study on the Identity and Wisdom of Decorative Patterns on the Religious Buildings in Keng Tung, Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a study and analysis of the forms and patterns of the decorations on religious buildings in Keng Tung, Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Qualitative research methods were used in collecting the documents and field research data in Keng Tung. The populations of the study were experts, practitioners and related people in Keng Tung. The research tools used were surveys, observations and interviews. The data was analysed using ideology on identity and wisdom, structural-functional theory and cultural-diffusion theory. The result was presented using descriptive analysis. From this study it was found that most production of the decorative patterns on religious buildings is based on the wisdom of local sculptors that had been passed down. Burmese sculptors played an important role in the creation of the religious buildings decorations in recent eras, especially those from Mandalay. The identity of the patterns of religious buildings in Keng Tung can be categorised into two major categories of local Keng Tung patterns. This group of patterns originates from the traditional art form of Keng Tung, influenced by the Lanna arts. During the 21st – 24th Buddhist centuries, traditional patterns from the Tai Khoen people mixed in with the Lanna influence and led to the kind of art that consists of the relationship between history, society and culture. Pages 1 to 12

Pdf   **Borrowed Economic Terms in Vietnamese Linguistics**

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The phenomenon of borrowing words from contact between languages to build a business language layer in Vietnamese is a basic and dynamic trend. Borrowed words are an important complement to Vietnamese vocabulary in terms of both quantity and quality. By statistical and descriptive methods, this paper focuses on research of borrowing sources and trends in creating borrowed economic terms in Vietnamese. Since then, the article has questioned the word's consistency and standardisation for economic sectors, avoiding the form of coercion and rigidity in using words or "floating" and letting the word be "self-active". In this way, The Vietnamese economic vocabulary system in general, and the borrowed economic vocabulary sector in particular, can meet the requirements of a developed society. Pages 13 to 30

Pdf   **Modality in Palestinian Sign Language**

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The linguistic features of sign languages are as intricate as those of spoken languages and in many cases, there are common universal features that they share. Modality is one important feature that sign and spoken languages exhibit, yet modality in sign languages differs from spoken languages in certain basic ways: grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic. This research is an attempt to investigate modality in Palestinian Sign Language, in particular, and Arabic Sign Language, in general, using a descriptive approach by looking at the most frequent "modal devices" used in an endeavour to explore how basic modal meanings are expressed in Palestinian Sign Language. Data sources include but are not limited to Palestinian and Arabic Sign Language Dictionaries and sign user informants with various backgrounds. In order to identify the signs that express the meanings and to trace their possible motivations and their relation to other similar signs, data will be compared to some of the current signs that may have developed in the Arab world. The study will also investigate the characteristics of modality to arrive at an understanding to its function and examine how signs express modality in general, in an attempt to provide insights into sign language grammar. Pages 31 to 58

Pdf   **The Role of Judicial Presumption in Criminal Evidence**

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This study aimed to clarify the extent of authentic judicial presumption of criminal proof, and the authority limits of taking the presumptions as the evidence and determine the extent of authoritative judicial presumption in criminal prosecution. The study followed a descriptive approach through the literature review of theoretical and previous studies that addressed both the context of presumptions and evidence penal code, and the analytical method through the discussion of the authoritative context presumptions' proof penal legislation, and the comparative approach through the identification of the position of each seceral legislature proof presumptions. The results of the study showed that the judicial presumption is not sufficient alone as evidence that can be invoked in conviction or innocence but is indirect evidence that contributes to the strengthening of the sentence of conviction. The study recommended the importance of considering the crucial judicial case, which has a definite scientific basis such as genetic imprint, as crucial evidence in the judgment of conviction or innocence, in view of the fact that this presumption of scientific evidence is unquestionable in all cases. Pages 59 to 73

Pdf   **Investigating Firm Performance Outcomes Under Inter-organizational, Firm level, and Environmental Factors that Motivate Supply Chain Integration**

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This research aims to investigate corporate performance results (financial performance, non-financial performance and operational performance) based on driving forces and contributing factors of supply chain integration (SCI), including three types of factors: corporate-level factors, internal factors-stimulus The organizational factors and environmental factors of SCI in Saudi industrial companies, the research objects include industrial companies operating in the eastern provinces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (11 provinces). For the purposes of testing the hypotheses of the study and the validity of its model, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was used based on the AMOS21 program. One of the most important contributions of the current study is that it gathered the drivers and enablers of SCI in its various aspects, as well as the dimensions of the SCI measurement and finally the outcomes of the firms' performance, while integrating all of these elements into one common topic. The study found that supply chain integration is always driven by drivers and enablers: firm-level factors, inter-organizational factors, and environmental factors that stimulate the SCI in firms, In addition, SCI and all its elements (9 sub-dimensions) affect the company's performance results (financial performance, non-financial performance and operational performance) in some way. In addition, the conclusion of this article is that integration plays an important role in improving performance through three different factors, but the maturity of integration may be directly related to performance. In addition, the study also found that people's desire for improvement and environmental factors prompted Saudi organizations to integrate with partners to achieve desired results. The study recommended working on raising the level of trust, honesty, commitment, and concern for the interest of each party from the supply chain to maintain a good level of SCI. The paper presented some recommendations as proposals for further study, while identifying some areas for future studies. Pages 74 to 113

Pdf   **How Saudi Arabian Counselors Think about Online Counseling?**

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The study aimed to reveal the counselors' perceptions towards Online Counseling OC in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, and both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. A questionnaire prepared by researchers was applied to (441) counselors, a semi-structured interview was used with (8) of them to monitor their perceptions and practices. The psychometric properties of the study tools were evaluated, the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, and the quantitative results showed that the OC has pros and cons according to the perceptions of the counselors, the qualitative analysis results are consistent with the results of the quantitative analysis, as the qualitative data by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) showed four themes about the counselors' perceptions of OC namely: the reality of the OC, the satisfaction of the counselors with the OC, the clients of the OC, and the future of the OC. The study recommended increasing interest in OC and investing in its pros, without neglecting its ethical challenges. Pages 114 to 134

Pdf   **The Impact of Participatory Leadership on The Quality of Life in Secondary Schools in The Dammam Education District**

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This study aimed to reveal the impact of participative leadership practice on the quality of life of teachers in secondary schools in the Dammam Education district. To achieve the objectives of the study, a tool was developed to collect the responses of the study sample that dealt with two sections: the first section (participative leadership) and the second section (quality of life). The study sample consisted of 350 individuals, of whom 313 responded and the study was conducted on secondary school teachers in the Dammam area Education Department in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The results of the study reveal a high degree of appreciation by teachers for practicing participative leadership with the "strongly agree" degree, while the degree of appreciation for the level of quality of life prevailed with the "Agree" degree. The study also reveals a statistically significant relationship between the degree of participative leadership practice and the level of quality of life prevailing in secondary schools for the dimension of human relations only. In light of the results, the study recommends: 1) increasing interest in the participation of teachers in the decision-making process, by expanding the circle of discussions related to studying those decisions and accepting constructive criticisms that are in line with the goals and aspirations of the school leadership, and; 2) holding more training courses for school leaders to increase awareness of the concept of participative leadership as a modern method that enables them to develop leadership practices more effectively. Pages 135 to 154

Pdf **The Relationship Between Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Job Performance for Public Kindergarten Teachers in Dammam And Khobar**

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This research aimed to identify the level of organizational citizenship behavior with its five dimensions: (Altruism, Civic Virtue, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, Consciousness), to identify the level of job performance, and to reveal the relationship between them among government kindergarten teachers in the cities of Dammam and Khobar. To achieve the goals of the research the relational descriptive approach was used, a questionnaire was designed consisting of two main dimensions: the behavior of organizational citizenship and the dimension of job performance. The research was applied to all members of the population of 70 leaders, and 54 completed questionnaires were retrieved (77.0% of the research population). The results of the research showed that the level of organizational citizenship behavior among government kindergarten teachers in the cities of Dammam and Khobar was with an arithmetic mean of 4.34 and with a very high degree, and that the level of job performance among government kindergarten teachers in the cities of Dammam and Khobar was with an arithmetic mean of 4.46 and a very high degree, and that there is a statistically significant positive correlation at level ($\alpha \le 0.01$) between the level of organizational citizenship behavior, its dimensions, and the job performance of kindergarten teachers in the cities of Dammam and Khobar, the research also included the viewpoints of kindergarten leaders about some behaviors that promotes the behavior of organizational citizenship in Kindergarten teachers. Pages 155 to 180

Pdf **The Degree of Achievement of Learning Organisation Dimensions in the Schools of the Royal Commission in Jubail by Using Senge's Model**

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This research used Senge's model to examine the extent to which the Royal Commission schools in Jubail achieved, according to school leaders, learning organisation dimensions. It explored the differences among the respondents based upon work experience, school stage, and current position. To achieve the aims of this research, the researchers adopted a descriptive approach. They constructed a survey as the main data gathering tool and applied it to all 83 respondents, which included 29 school principals, and 54 school deputies. The results indicated that school leaders believed the degree of achievement of learning organisation dimensions to be very high in the Royal Commission schools in Jubail. The average mean across all areas of the survey was 4.20, with the highest in systems thinking (4.24), and the lowest in shared vision (4.16). The results also showed a statistically significant difference in the mental models among the school leaders who had worked the most. However, no statistically significant differences emerged in terms of the school stage. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended the need to include school staff in formulating the school's vision and objectives, as well as engaging in the ongoing review and evaluation of the vision, in order to help steer its course and achieve its goals. Pages 181 to 202

Pdf **Revitalising Competition Through Transparency Tools: The Role of Rankings in Shaping the Business Education Market**

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Rankings play a key role as a transparency tool of market governance for higher education. Despite the increasing interest in these mechanisms, our academic understanding is limited on the role rankings play as a tool of governance and the construction of perceptions through these transparency tools. The current empirical study attempts to critically analyse the introduction of rankings in business education and the responses of business schools to this mechanism in a relatively newly introduced ranking system for the Pakistan higher education sector. The current study examines how higher education commission Pakistan rankings have shaped perceptions of the national business education market and competition among Pakistani business schools through two significant processes: shaping comparability by constructing a perception of 'product' and the 'customer' in Pakistani market, and by shaping mechanisms for competition among Pakistani business schools. This suggests that higher education commission rankings play an important role in constructing competition and forming a national market for business schools in Pakistan, thus contributing to what can be termed as the 'marketisation' of the business education sector. Pages 203 to 217

Pdf **Meaningful Parental Contribution to Ensure Children's Freedom of Expression at Early Ages: A Sustainable Development Approach**

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The cultural practices of Gilgit-Baltistan appeared to be discouraging children un/consciously in expressing their feelings, emotions, and views freely in front of their parents including other elders that create hindrance for the children to face people and situations even at their later years. Children in such situations may face with developmental delays and speech issues that could lead towards a kind of autism. The purpose of this study was to explore parents' practices and perceptions about their meaningful contribution towards children' freedom of expression and its effects on sustainable development of their societies. The researcher used focus group discussions and in/formal observations as data collection tools within qualitative paradigm to capture experiences and perceptions of 18 parents cum ECD teachers and the practices of nine research participants from three districts. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis approach and emerging themes were recorded. The findings confirmed that the parents who focused on how to enhance their children' freedom of expression in early ages, they could better develop children' complex dimensions of holistic development such as physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual etc. Children from such family backgrounds could better contribute towards sustainable development of societies at later stages where they live and work. Whereas parents who could not allow children to express their ideas and feelings they became less confident, poorly performed in their practical lives with poor interactions with others. The study recommends that parents should ensure their meaningful involvement in developing their children's freedom of expression at early ages by creating a friendly yet enabling environment at home and beyond. Pages 218 to 241

Pdf **Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behaviour: Role of Work Meaningfulness and Personal Identification with Leader**

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The goal of this study is to find out the effect of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour through work meaningfulness. We also modelled the moderating effect of personal identification on the association between transformational leadership and innovative behaviour. We based our hypotheses on the theory of positive emotions, and the interpersonal social cognitive paradigm. The participants of the study were managerial level workers (supervisor-subordinate dyads) in the manufacturing sector of Gujrat-Sialkot-Gujranwala (aka, the Golden Triangle) industrial cluster of Pakistan. We implemented the two-step structural equations modelling technique on our sample of 273 respondents. Results reveal that transformational leaders do not only have a direct influence on innovative behaviour but also affect employee innovative behaviour through work meaningfulness. The employees who identified more with their transformational leaders were more innovative. The study adds to our understanding about how transformational leadership enhances innovative behaviour by introducing new mechanisms into this linkage. The results also establish the external validity, in a South Asian context, of the theory of positive emotions and an interpersonal social cognitive paradigm. Pages 242 to 261

Pdf **The Governance of Tourism Development on North Rupat Island as a Destination: A Branding Exercise in Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia**

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Rupat Island in the Bengkalis Regency of Riau Province is being developed as a destination of natural and cultural tourism and has become a part of the National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN) through Indonesia's Presidential Regulation in 2011. The development is followed by the local government through the Regional Medium-Range Development Plan (RPJMD). This research aims to investigate the awareness of the local community on the potential of traditional arts as the main attraction, and the effectiveness of communication and promotion to support the management of the Northern Rupat Island as a tourist destination. This research uses qualitative methods and uses primary and secondary data as the main source. The results of the study found that high levels of community tourism awareness are not matched by infrastructure. Another result has shown cultural tourism programs are not prepared as comprehensively as natural tourism programs. Moreover, evidence of a significant promotional program was not found in either print or digital media formats. Pages 262 to 279

Pdf **Analysis of People's Business Credit Distribution for MSMEs Based on Non-Performing Loans, the Number of Debtors, and MSME's Revenue Growth**

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This research discusses the distribution of People's Business Credit or MSME credit, which is influenced by NPLs, the number of debtors, and MSME's revenue growth. The main research issue focuses on KUR's use for MSME expansion, which will pay attention to the amount of NPLs as part of credit risk, the number of debtors who use KUR, and the amount of MSME revenue to finance KUR payments. This research becomes a benchmark for making bankable software to be designed. The study uses data of MSME credit from 1989 to 2019, with adjustment of data from 1989 to 2008 due to change of regulation. The findings show that revenue growth has a negative effect on KUR distribution; this is due to the fact that successful MSMEs will borrow using the investment credit scheme instead of continuing to use KUR. Meanwhile, NPLs and the number of debtors does not affect the distribution of KUR. The results of this study are used as the basis for determining the logarithm of bankable software calculations. The beta version of this software is complete but requires further revision. Pages 280 to 294

Pdf **An Early Glance into Smartphone Dependence in a Rural LMIC and Relationships with Mindfulness and Depressive Symptoms**

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A rising issue in the child and adolescent global mental health pandemic is smartphone addiction. However, most evidence has come from urbanised countries in the developed world or university undergraduate students in LAMICs. This study aims to ascertain core psychometric properties of a previously unvalidated brief smartphone addiction scale for adolescents, determine gender-based prevalence of smartphone addiction in adolescents in rural areas, and assess relationships with concurrent measures of a state of mindfulness and depression. Secondary data from a health screening in a Dusun-speaking village in rural Borneo was analysed, with respondents filling in sociodemographic questionnaires and three Malay-language scales: MAAS, PHQ-9, and SAS-SV, which measure the state of mindfulness, depression, and smartphone addiction respectively. The SAS-SV-M exhibited satisfactory internal consistency and was consistent with a unifactorial model in the original paper. There were significant gender differences for smartphone addiction, but no significant difference between all 3 measured variables for age. Significant inverse correlations existed between mindfulness and depression, but not with neither and smartphone addiction, with these correlations persistent upon multiple regression. This study pioneeringly establishes prevalence by gender for smartphone addiction in a rural LAMIC setting, and concurs with extant findings that mindfulness and depression are inversely correlated. Pages 295 to 313

Pdf **Social Media Attitude as a Predictor of Social Media Advertisement Engagement**

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Individuals conveniently engage with social media advertisements, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat when reposting, sharing and commenting on the advertisement they see. This research seeks to examine the factors affecting social media advertising engagement, such as attitude, immersion, usage, and the effectiveness of social media advertisement messages using the context of online social media platforms, like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. This research aims to examine these factors using a quantitative research approach where a survey was utilized to measure and analyze the factors affecting social media advertisement engagement, with a sample size of 210 respondents [N = 210]. The results of analyzing the respondent's feedback were that social media attitude have a positive impact on social media advertisement engagement, while social media immersion and social media usage hypothesis was rejected because, they were statistically insignificant. Other interesting findings were that older people (over 24) have better social media advertisement engagement than younger people (under 24) and that most youngsters do not care for social media advertisements. The research findings showed that for marketers who are targeting Saudi Arabians it is better if they use advertising through Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram, as for Facebook most of the respondents do not use this platform. Pages 314 to 353

Pdf **The Hidden Messages within Laesan Traditional Performance in Lasem, Central Java**

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This paper discusses *laesan*, an Indonesian traditional performance, which originates from Lasem in Central Java, Indonesia. It aims to uncover the hidden messages of the laesan through the interaction between *laes*, as the dancer who falls into a trance, and the scenes in *laesan*, namely *ngenuwun, kurungan, dolanan, pengobatan, pamitan*, and *penutupan*. This qualitative study uses a phenomenology approach, as a research design. The data was collected through observations and interviews, completing the analysis. The findings present that the *laesan* is not merely a traditional performance, but a symbol of balance and simplicity that reveals through the messages which relate it to the human life cycle. It is expected that this study could add to the richness of Lasem cultural heritage. Moreover, the traditional performance of *laesan* ensures the continuation, preservation and maintenance of Lasem cultural component through times. Pages 354 to 370

Pdf **Influencer Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, and the Formation of Trends**

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Social media has, as discussed in prior research, significantly influenced modern lifestyle, communication forms, and consumer behaviour. Its business potential has transformed it into a new advertising platform, and social media is gradually becoming an alternative to conventional advertising, strongly impacting the relationship between brands and consumers. Directly targeting social media users through influencer marketing, a new form of advertising which identifies and utilises individuals with an influence over potential customers, brands orient their marketing and advertising activities around these influencers using social media. These brand advocates drive the brand message to the consumer market, impacting consumer behaviour. As traditional marketing strategies are becoming less effective, influencer marketing is proving more effective. This study aims to measure the impact of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour and the reasons behind this impact, using the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to conceptualise how consumers are persuaded by promotional messages which lead to attitude and behaviour change. Pages 371 to 389

Pdf **Ethics of the Governor and Vice Governor Political Campaign in South Sulawesi 2018**

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This study discusses the ethical meaning of political campaigns related to the local wisdom of the people of South Sulawesi, specifically the Bugis tribe with the culture of *sipakatau, sipakalebbi', sipakainge'*. This culture has a noble value that upholds mutual respect, mutual remembrance, and mutual respect between fellow humans in attitudes and behaviour, including in the context of competition for power in the election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi in 2018. The research was conducted to find out the experiences and strategies used by each of the 2018 candidates for the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi in conducting political campaigns while prioritising the values of the Bugis philosophy of *sipakatau, sipakainge', sipakalebbi'*. The research method used is a qualitative method with a phenomenological study approach. In-depth interview techniques were carried out with the winning teams from the four election contestants for the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi as informants with diverse backgrounds, namely as politicians, activists, businessmen, and former journalists. The results showed that the 2018 South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor election contestation was full of competition. From the time of the nomination until the election day there was a war of opinion which brought down one another. The winning teams compete with each other and tackle the other candidates. All candidates for Governor and South Sulawesi Deputy Governor are subjected to negative campaigns and tend to be black campaigns. Disclosure of negative things has led to the slander of the killing of the character of each candidate pair, by ignoring the ethical philosophy of the Bugis who uphold the principles in human relations namely: *sipakatau* (determination, polite speaking), *a'bulo sibatang* (unity), *mali'u sipakainge'* (remind each other when something goes wrong), *warani* (courage), *malempu* (honest), *mali'u* (solidarity or togetherness), *sipakalebbi'* (mutual respect), *sibaliperri* (same destiny), *sisaro mase* (love each other), and *tudang sipulung* (deliberation). Pages 390 to 404

Pdf **The Five-Fingers Communication Model in the Leadership of "Uwatta" in the Tolotang Benteng Community in Amparita, Sidenreng Rappang Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia**

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This study examines The Uwatta Five-Finger Communication Model Leadership based on the ancestral belief of the Tolotang Benteng Community. Tolotang Benteng means people who are strong in maintaining the ancestral beliefs. This research is a qualitative descriptive study of the social structure of both the vertical and horizontal dimensions in the Tolotang Benteng Community. The researcher selected 21 informants by means of snowball sampling in which the researcher was the key instrument. The informants were selected from various groups, namely: traditional leaders, community leaders (Toma), religious leaders (Toga), youth leaders (Topem), as well as formal figures from the community. Miles and Huberman model data analysis techniques were used and involved data collection, data processing, data reduction and data analysis. The developmental stages were then described in the research report. Observation, in-depth interviews and documentation revealed patterns of social relations within the Tolotang Bentang Community. Initial conclusions were proven credible based on valid and consistent data in the field. In conclusion, The Five-Finger Communication Model in the Leadership of Uwatta is based on ancestral beliefs implementing the meaning of the five fingers. The thumb symbolises Uwatta (The Leader). The thumb is the strongest digit, gives balance to leadership, and points upward to opportunity. Leaders are to provide opportunity. The index finger points to command symbolising formal or government leaders. The middle finger stands tall and symbolises a man's virility. It also represents those who are respected and strong in the middle of the community such as: community leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders and Wija Arung (Royal Descendants). The role model finger is the ring finger representing patience and steadfastness. Awards and gifts of rings worth billions are given to patient and steadfast leaders. The wealthy, the honourable, the distinguished, the entrepreneur are represented by this finger. The little finger is considered the weak and obedient finger. The general public or ordinary people and also the people of Tolotang Benteng are symbolised by the little finger. Pages 405 to 419

Pdf   **Big Data Analytics in the perspective of Digital Businesses: A Case Study Approach**

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The evolution of digital mining tools has resulted in the ease of access to massive quantities of information that can be used by digital businesses. Data analysis methodologies are utilised to scan enormous quantities of data for critical business guidance. The process of digging and drilling through data is used to obtain market insights, as well as to access obscure information in a wide range of data sources or even the existing real-time increasing web data ocean. Data analytics tools certainly extract concealed associations, forecast potential events, and further interpret and distribute business supplies. Such hidden knowledge seeks to achieve competitive advantages, strengthen client interactions, and even prevent fraudulent activities. In this study, quantitative analysis was performed with Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) techniques by using three different case studies. These cases were analysed using secondary datasets for digital businesses by utilising data mining tools and secondary datasets from Kaggle. Our results showed that data mining tools like Rapidminer and/or Tableau can efficiently handle diverse kinds of data from various digital organisations, and hence, big data from diverse organisations with high volume, high velocity, and high veracity. The three case studies resulted in the conclusion that the extracted data can be tactfully transformed into valuable information using the market available data mining tools. Pages 420 to 431

The Hidden Messages within Laesan Traditional Performance in Lasem, Central Java

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This paper discusses *laesan*, an Indonesian traditional performance, which originates from Lasem in Central Java, Indonesia. It aims to uncover the hidden messages of the laesan through the interaction between *laes*[1], as the dancer who falls into a trance, and the scenes in *laesan*, namely *ngenuwun, kurungan, dolanan, pengobatan, pamitan,* and *penutupan*[2]. This qualitative study uses a phenomenology approach, as a research design. The data was collected through observations and interviews, completing the analysis. The findings present that the *laesan* is not merely a traditional performance, but a symbol of balance and simplicity that reveals through the messages which relate it to the human life cycle. It is expected that this study could add to the richness of Lasem cultural heritage. Moreover, the traditional performance of *laesan* ensures the continuation, preservation and maintenance of Lasem cultural component through times.

Keywords: *Laesan, Lasem, Traditional performance, Hidden messages.*

Introduction

Messages are a part of human life, which are conveyed through a medium. Every message finds its way to convey its meaning through any available medium. It spreads quickly within the medium, and to anyone who is able to sense it. Messages are transmitted from one place to another, and our task is to find out what they are and where they are heading. Depending on its value, a message can be more significant than its medium of transmission. Cassone (2009)

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[1] The *laesan* is a traditional Javanese performance, and *laes* is the *laesan* dancer.
[2] These words are Javanese terminologies - *Ngenuwun* (opening), *Kurungan* (the cage), *Dolanan* (playing), *Pengobatan* (healing), *Pamitan* (farewell), and *Penutupan* (closing).

classifies a message as content, and medium as a carrier. Sometimes, the message can also be the medium itself. The medium may look light, however, the message is heavy. This statement is in line with the embodiment of the *laesan*, one of the creative and humble traditional performances from Lasem, a small area on the north coast of the Rembang Regency in Central Java, Indonesia. Lasem was formerly an important region and a significant port in Central Java under the greatest Hindu-Buddhist Majapahit Empire. This was proven by the visit of Sri Rajasanagara — also known as Hayam Wuruk, a supreme leader of the empire — to Lasem in 1354 (Suroyo, 1994; Darmayanti et al., 2019 & 2020). During the fifteenth and sixteenth century, when Islam entered Java, the northern coast area, including Lasem, were influenced. The expansion of Islam in Java was more an assimilative process than a revolutionary process. Therefore, it resulted in syncretism and localisation between Hinduism-Buddhism, as previous beliefs and Islamic elements, forming the indigenous matrix of Javanese culture. Moreover, the early Islamisation of Java, which was dominated by Sufi Islam, supported traditional performing arts that could endure and develop. This was due to their beliefs on the power of music as a conduit for the union of man with God (Sumarsam, 1995: 6). Consequently, although Islam is mostly practised in Lasem, several traditional ceremonies, rituals, and performing arts are still carried out today with the influence of previous beliefs. One of which is *laesan*, which contains a hidden message concerning human life.

Despite the value in the *laesan*, this traditional performance is threatened with extinction, and is rarely seen. Subsequently, the performance is almost unknown to the broader community. From a tourism perspective, the unpredictable duration of the show is assumed to be the reason for a lack of enthusiasm from tourists. However, this unpredictability should be seen as an advantage, and not a disadvantage, because the value of the *laesan*'s wisdom cannot be found in other shows. The performance itself is not solely connected to the aesthetic value; it also involves all other senses and feelings. Another cause for the 'rarely seen' *laesan* performance is because of political and religious issues, which have negatively impacted the performance. The *laesan* was once banned because it was considered to be related to the prohibited party at the time, and was incompatible with Islamic teachings (Unjiya, 2014).

It is difficult to find an exact history of the *laesan*, especially due to a lack of written records. However, the history of this performance can still be obtained from the local people, the dancers and singers who received a verbal history from previous generations. Unjiya (2014) noted that the *laesan* has been in existence since the fifteenth century and has remained popular among the local community. However, the incoming New Order Government outlawed the *laesan* because it was used in the political propaganda of the communist party. Umar (2017) classified the journey of the *laesan* within the time range of 1940–1987, and into three distinct periods. The first period was the development period, which took part from 1940–1969. It was followed by the vacuity period, which occurred from 1970–1986, and finally, the revitalisation period in 1987. During the third and final period, *laesan* experienced a transformation into ritualistic and aesthetic performances of traditional festivals. This is because during the

development period, *laesan* only served as a folk art. Whereas, in the vacuity period, there was never a *laesan* performance due to the stigma from the *santri*[3], who declared that the performance is illegal. Notwithstanding, the knowledge of this traditional performance is still limited. Therefore, this study is important, as it might extend the message to a broader audience.

Material and Methods

Previous studies by local scholars and researchers have mostly focussed upon a male dancer who dances in a trance because the angel (*bidadari*) spirit enters his body. This story has been known for a long time, as it was mentioned in an old magazine published in 1955, named *Bahasa and Budaja*: "… *Djika sekiranja laesan ternjata sudah kerasukan roh, maka dibukalah kurunganja…*" (If the dancer is now in trance by a spirit, then the cage is opened). Kusumastuti (2006) identified the symbolic relationship between *laesan* players and viewers. A better understanding of the relationship was further explained by Kusumastuti in 2009. Furthermore, Anggrahita et al. (2016) discussed the functions and conflicts inherent in *laesan* performance. Although these previous studies have covered certain areas in the *laesan*, there has been no discussion about the messages within the performance, and how these messages are delivered to the *laesan* audience. Therefore, this study fills the research gap by studying prior records, including photographs and videos, and exploring and experiencing every scene, including the chant lyrics in this performance. Based upon this, the research question has been formulated to discuss how *laesan* performance creates and conveys the messages of human life.

The approach adopted for this study is qualitative, which means exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups. The process of research involves collecting data in the participants' setting, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2014). The authors were the spectators of a few performances specifically on the 29th September 2018 around 7:30 pm and conducted a few in-depth interviews using Indonesian and Javanese languages with the *laesan* experts and laesan performers on 19th, 23rd, 29th September and 1stOctober 2018. The participants were Mr. Ngalim, 84 years old; Mr. Yon Suprayoga, 60 years old; Mr. Ernantoro, and Mr. Moh Hatta, both who were 59 years old. Most of the interviews were conducted at Mr Suprayoga's house in the Soditan Village of the Lasem District, Rembang Regency, Central Java. Mr Suprayoga is an expert in the *laesan* and sometimes participates as a player. The only interview not to occur at this location was the interview with Mr. Ngalim, which took place at his house in the Soditan Village. A separate interview regarding the dancers' experience was conducted with Mr. Ripto, who is 46 years old, at the *laesan* performance venue. He is a talented laesan dancer who performs a daily activity as a pedicab driver. To support the findings, secondary data sources, such as magazines and academic reports, were also used. In an effort to obtain a deeper understanding, present a new perspective in observing, and unveil the messages of human life which rest behind the *laesan*, as the cultural heritage of Lasem, the authors applied a phenomenology approach. Through

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[3] A student of Islamic boarding school in Indonesia known as *Pesantren.*

phenomenology, the authors could excavate human experience, specifically in terms of persons and groups in particular places, situations, and historical moments. Phenomenology also serves to remind us of the significance of the full range of human experience, and helps to comprehend human behaviour in its fullness (Seamon, 2008; Stefanovic, 2014). Based on the explanation, this study is expected to enrich the value of human experience, local wisdom, and the nation's identity.

The Components of the *Laesan*

The laesan is performed by at least eleven men, and each person has a role. There is a dancer (*laes*), dancer's bodyguard (*cantrik*), *laesan* controller (*pawang*), four singers (*penembang*), and four hand drummers (*penabuh*). If the performance consists of men only, it is known as *laesan,* and if it is performed by only women, it is called *Sintren* (Koentjaraningrat, 1993). The term '*laesan'* comes from the word, '*laes',* which means 'empty' (*hampa*) or 'dead' in Javanese, and the end of the word, '*an',* means 'as if' (*seolah-olah*). Based on this explanation, *laesan* means 'dead-alive' (Poerwadarminta, 1983). *The laesan* is usually performed at night in an open space and it involves four components, which individually play an important role and are closely related to one another. The components are: (1) the players; (2) the properties, which consist of *kurungan, kemenyan, sesajen, nyiru*, and *sapu*[4], as detailed in Table 1; and (3) the musical components, which are grouped into two. Firstly, the musical instruments are made of different sizes of bamboos called *bumbung*, and *jun*, which is a form of clay jug. Pictures and definitions are presented in Table 2. Secondly, the *laesan*'s chanting is written in Javanese that is sung in simple repetitive tones, which resemble a *jampi-jampi* [5]or spells. It also reflects the beautiful feeling and meaning of life. In 1955, *Bahasa dan Budaja* magazine mentioned that the *laesan*'s chants can be used to summon occult spirits: "*Njanji-njanjian tersebut di atas itu dipergunakan untuk memanggil sesuatu roh gaib, agar merasuk ke dalam djiwa orang jang dijadikan laes*" (These songs are used to summon an invisible spirit so that it will penetrate the soul of the person who is made *laes*). The *laesan* has 25 types of chantings and rhythm, which are divided into four main themes: friendship, romance, satire, and games. However, not all chants are sung during the show due to the comfort of the performers and audiences. The essential part of the *laesan*'s chanting is the lyric. It is believed that before a chant was made, it was preceded by special rituals (Ngalim, personal communication, September 23, 2018). Last, but not least, is *Penonton*, which refers to the audiences that support the performance in becoming livelier.

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[4] *Kurungan* means the cage that usually made from bamboo; *kemenyan* is an incense; *sesajen* is known as the offering presented to appease or cajole the invisible or spiritual beings (Mulder, 2005); *nyiru* is the circle bamboo trays, and *sapu* is broom that used in the performance (*dolanan* scene).
[5] A text of spells with notes on various topic.

Table 1: The Properties in the Laesan Performance

Laesan's Properties	
1. *Kurungan:*	A bamboo cage that is covered by two layers of white fabric called *kain mori*. The cage is used as contemplation, conversation, and a bargaining space between the dancer (*laes*), *cantrik*, *bidadari*, and *Pangeran*[6].
2. *Kemenyan:*	It is normally kept in a cage with the goal of being a dancer's charm. It also acts as a proponent of strength and tranquillity in the cage and inspires all components of the show. In classical performances, incense is seen as an 'impetus' to all the components of the performance, especially the dancer. It can also be a charm that invites spirits to come and dance during the performance.
3. *Sesajen:*	The offering presented to appease or cajole the invisible or spiritual beings (Mulder, 2005). However, findings from the interview conducted with Mr Suprayoga in September 2018 revealed that *laesan* can be successful without an offering. Music and songs can also serve as an influence. The offering usually consists of a special banana called *Pisang mas*[7]. and three variations of flower in different colours, one of which must be the kemuning flower (*Murraya paniculata*). Kemuning is believed to repel the evil power of magic and has many health benefits. According to the herbal expert Wijayakusuma (2000), this flower contains the same nutrients as various medicines. Since the offering can provide various benefits to everyone, in treatment scenes (*pengobatan*) the flower is given to the audience as selected by *laes*.

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[6] *Cantrik* is known as the dancer's bodyguard, while *bidadari* is the name for the manifestation of an angel, and *Pangeran* is the term for God for the Javanese people.

[7] *Pisang Mas* is translated from Indonesian language as golden banana. This variety is botanically classified as *Musa acuminate*, also known as Lady Finger bananas.

4. *Nyiru and Sapu:*	The circle bamboo trays (*nyiru or nampan*) and brooms (*sapu*) are used in the play scene (*dolanan*). *Nyiru* is used for playing the sale of gambir (*ador gambir*). Gambir is a known type of plant with the scientific name *uncaria gambir*. The broom is used for playing *jaran dawuk* (unseen or magical horse), known in West Java as *kuda lumping*. Each play has different music and chants.

Table 2: The Laesan's Musical Instruments

Laesan's Musical Instruments	How to Play
1. *Bumbung* The *bumbung* made of bamboo are beaten on a stone, creating different tones and a special rhythm.	
2 *Jun* and *Sendal* A special round black vessel made of baked clay with a slightly flared neck and rounded bottom. They are of two sizes that produce	

different tones when beaten with rubber slippers, which local people called *sendal*.

The Old Art Performance of the Laesan

The ancient values of *laesan* can be seen from simple musical instruments made of bamboo (*bumbung*), which are rich in creativity. This type of instrument has been used in the traditional performance for many years (Yon Suprayoga, personal communication, October 1, 2018), with old Javanese literature frequently mentioning it. A passage from the sixteenth century poem called, *Malat*, mentions this musical instrument made of bamboo and named *guntang*, as a bamboo zither instrument (Zoetmulder, 1974: 154). This instrument, which is still used in Bali, in Indonesia, has a similar shape to the *bumbung* that is used in the *laesan* performance.

In *laesan* traditional performance, the musical instruments result in tones called *selendro* or *slendro*. These tones are often found in Javanese ensemble music. *Slendro* has several different tones called *ji, lo, lu, mo,* and *nem,* while tone *pat* is hidden or eliminated[8]. The term *slendro* arose in the eighth century and comes from the name, 'Sailendra', the ruler of the Medang and Sriwijaya Kingdom. *Slendro* was allegedly brought to Sriwijaya by a Mahayana-Buddhist priest from Gandhara, in India, and was later developed to Java and Bali (Kunst, 1949; Sumarsam, 1995). Other ancient tales based on historical background stated that the performance was often an entertaining performance when Prince Diponegoro's army was resting. After Prince Diponegoro and his troops were captured by the Dutch around 1830, the *laesan* performance was no longer performed. However, there was a soldier who was able to escape to Cirebon, West Java. He created a similar performance, but it was played by women. The costumes used were more decorative and had a definite show time known as *Sintren* (Ernantoro & Yon Suprayoga, personal communication, September 19, 2018).

Laesan: The Message of the Human Life Cycle

Every movement in each *laesan*'s scene was accompanied by a unique musical rhythm and meaningful poetic chants. The performance incited curiosity and raised a lot of questions. Through self-experience, the author explored the messages beyond every scene of the performance. During the performance, the author experienced various feelings. The author's attention was first drawn to the bamboo torch, which was installed at every corner of the performance area. As a reflective practioners, the author's heartbeat pounded harder, causing an impatience during the wait for the performance to begin. At 8.00 pm, the musical instruments started to produce a repetitive rhythm that 'invited' people to come and join the show and for the audience to gather around.

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[8] Representation of musical scales derived from the abbreviation of Javanese numerals; *ji* is from *siji* (one - Do), *ro* is from *loro* (two - Re), *lu* is from *telu* (three - Mi), *pat* is from *papat* (four - Fa), *mo* is from *limo* (five - Sol), and *nem* is from *enem* (six - La).

The *laesan* performance features six scenes, namely *Ngenuwun* (opening), *Kurungan* (the cage), *Dolanan* (playing), *Pengobatan* (healing), *Pamitan* (farewell), and *Penutupan* (closing). Each scene possessed a variety of meanings to be deciphered from the Javanese chant lyrics. The details are shown in Table 3. In the first scene, the chant entitled, *Ela Elo,* as the opening of the *laesan,* narrates a particular story, and the beginning of the lyric was changed from *Ela Elo Lailolah* to *Lailaha Illallah*. This change was the initiative of Yon Suprayoga to respond to *laesan*'s performance refusal by Lasem society, which is dominated by Muslims. They believe that the opening lyrics do not represent Islam. The change was also an attempt to eliminate the negative stigma towards the show (Yon Suprayoga & Ernantoro, personal communication, 19 September 2018). Eventually, after the change in 1998, the *laesan* gave its first performance within the Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) area in Lasem.

Table 3: Scenes and Chants in the Laesan

Scenes	Javanese Chants and English Translations
1. Ngenuwun	Ela – Elo: *Lailaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasullallah, pangerane gawe laes haa…* Translation: There is no deity, but God Muhammad is the messenger of God, God will make **laes** (in trance dancer).
2. Kurungan	Banda Nira: *Uculno Banda Nira iki sari laes, dunung ngala dunung x2. Laes sing ucul li bahu kiwo kejobo pangeran iro sari laes.* Translation: *Laes* can untie the rope, *laes* searches for understanding (repeated twice). *Laes* cannot be surrendered except to **pangeran** (God).
3. Dolanan:	Pencak Silat: *Santri ne ajar pencak* Translation: The muslim man teaching **pencak** (martial art).
	Jaran Dawuk: *Jaran ne jaran dawuk x2, Jaran ne mbo Srinawuk* Translation: The unseen horse (repeated twice), the horse of Madam Srinawuk.
	Ador Gambir: *Santri ne ador gambir* Translation: The muslim man selling a **gambir.**
4. Pengobatan	Luru O Sintren: *Luru O Sintren, Sintren ne widodari, mambu kembang kelayungan, kembange putro Laesan, Widodari tumuruno sing ngenjingi awak iro*

		Translation: Looking for *sintren* (female dancer), the *sintren* is an angel that smells like flowers, the flower of the *Laesan's* man, the angel comes down and comes into your body.
5.	*Pamitan*	Kembang Jamur: *Bang, kembang jamur widodari bade kundor x2.. Kundor pisan widodari go laesan* Translation: The angel is willing to go home (repeated)… really wants to go home, the angel away from *laesan*.
6.	*Penutupan*	Loro Tangis: *Loro tangis layung-layung x2… Loro ne wong wedi mati sopo biso ngeling no kejobo pangeran iro haa…* Translation: The painful cry (repeated)… the pain of people who fear death, who can remind you except your God.

In *laesan*, music and chants are the keys to a successful performance because they influence the storyline. The dance moves depend upon the melodiousness of the sound of music and the voices of the singers. It creates emotional feelings among the audience and performers, especially, the dancer, and the angel (*bidadari*) within him. The better the music and voices of the singers, the happier the *laes,* and the performance (Yon, personal communication, October 1, 2018). The *laes* gracefully sways when the singer and the audience repeatedly shout a Javanese word, '*kewat*' (meaning: flirty; *genit* in Indonesian). Although the *laes* is a man, he displays effeminate dance movements that are gentle and delicate. These movements raise a question in the author's mind about why the *bidadari* chooses and influences the *laes*? What kind of message does the *bidadari* want to convey to the audience? Why invite her from another world when we can still do it in the real world? This causes the author to immediately think back and find answers to all the questions. In reality, we have many questions from various moments in our lives, whether they are happy or sad. We cannot choose the moments, and sometimes we need to go through them, without asking questions. Life often involves challenges and events that cannot be predicted, but an interpretation is needed to gain wisdom about life. This is in line with the variety of the *laesan*'s scenes, where there are a number of challenges and unpredictable moments, which could be thrilling, pleasant or sad, and all of this happens without planning.

The following explanations provide a better enlightenment regarding the message of life in each *laesan* scene:

1) The lyrics, '*Ela-Elo',* in the opening (*ngenuwun*) scene contain a message that the performance can take place with Allah's permission, as only he can make it possible. The Figure 1 shows the first scene, depicting the *laes* in a sitting position with his body tied by using a rope, while he is conscious.

Figure 1. The First Scene of the Laesan: *Ngenuwun*
Source: Author's collection, 2018

2) In the next scene (*kurungan*), the *cantrik* covered the *laes* with a cage, as the chant of *Banda Nira* was sung, as pictured in Figure 2. The lyric of the chant means that letting go of the rope can only happen with God's permission. Inside the cage, the *laes* unties the rope that represents various problems, and when the knot is released, life becomes more pleasant. However, the meaning can also be interpreted from another perspective. Ernantoro (personal communication, September 19, 2018), an expert of *laesan* performance said, "The cage symbolises a mother's womb, and the effort to untie the rope represents the struggle and the survival within the womb". After being 'born into the world', as he successfully breaks free from the ropes, the *laes*, who is accompanied by the spirit, begins to experience 'real life'. At this stage, the merging of the *laes* and the angel spirit is settled, and the *laes* becomes *bidadari*, and vice versa.

Figure 2. Second Scene of Laesan: *Kurungan*
Source: Author's collection, 2018

After the cage opened, the *laes* stands up and begins to dance like a woman with eyes closed, as shown in Figure 3. His gesture is gentle and slow, with a short step. Sometimes, his direction is unstable, staggering right and left, until the *cantrik*, who acts as a guide, touches his body slightly to return to the 'path'. Similar to the journey of life, the 'soul' may unconsciously follow a wrong direction and need to be reminded to return to a better path. The *Kurungan* scene can also represent the process of someone coming out of the comfort zone. The *laes* is viewed as a *tukang becak* (pedicab driver) in real life, which is closely associated with 'physical work', and requires significant energy that can cause fatigue. Being a *laesan* dancer is related to 'mental work' with different feelings of exhaustion. The transformation is clear, making the audience able to watch the entire process (Ripto, personal communication, September 29, 2018). Coming out from the comfort zone is not easy, especially when crossing between the real to magical world, and from the physical to the mental work. This relates more to the soul, where everyone cannot see. The dancer must recognise, accept, and give access to the angel spirit. After the spirit enters the body, 'awake mode' turns to 'sleeping mode', as they enter a new and different world.

Figure 3. *Kurungan* Scene: Laes Dance with Eyes Closed
Source: Author's collection, 2018

3) In the playing (*dolanan*) scene, a spatial experience between the *laes* and the audience is created. If there is a member of the audience (must be a man) who wants to participate in the performance, the *cantrik* will bring him on stage and the *laes* will blow smoke into his ear to transfer the spirit of the angel, as pictured in the Figure 4. At that moment, something extraordinary happens; the man becomes a temporary *laes,* and the *laes* was covered in a cage to wait until the scene ended. The temporary *laes* plays according to the *laes'* request. The most

requested *dolanan* by *laes* performers are *pencak silat, jaran dawuk*, and *ador gambir*[9], as shown in Figure 5. Previously, there were *dolanan* related to *keris*[10].However, for safety, this is no longer carried out. Moreover, if that *dolanan* is requested, the *cantrik* often tries to persuade the *laes* to choose another game.

Figure 4. Third Scene of the Laesan: *Dolanan – The Process of Transferring Spirits*
Source: Author's collection, 2018

Figure 5. *Dolanan* Scence: *Ador Gambir* (left) and *Jaran Dawuk* (right)
Source: Author's collection, 2018

[9] *Pencak silat* is Indonesian martial arts; *Jaran dawuk* is terminology for a "unseen or magical horse", and *Ador gambir* is Javanese terminology for *gambir* seller. *Gambir* is a crude, dried extract of the leaves of *Uncaria gambir*.
[10] Indonesian traditional daggers with asymmetrical blade-patterning.

4) After the *dolanan*, is the healing scene (*pengobatan*). This scene is the most anticipated scene for the audience. The *laes* walks on stage carrying a bamboo tray of offerings (*sesajen*), which are given to the audience in accordance with his wishes. At this stage, the chant, '*Luru O Sintren*', is sung. The giving of offerings is not done randomly because the *laes* can 'see' and give to people who need his 'help'. The distribution of the offering is not limited to the audience at the performance alone. In the past, the *laes* went to the houses around the village to provide the offerings (Yon Suprayoga, personal communication, September 23, 2018).

5) Before the performance comes to an end, the *laes* asks for *pamitan* or permission to 'go home' as the *Kembang Jamur* was sung. The lyric reveals that the angel spirit (*bidadari* or *widodari* in Javanese) inside the *laes* is asking for permission to return. At this scene, even though the face of the *laes* is not expressive, the sadness is seen in the dance movement. The *laes*' dance becomes weak and the pace slows down, as pictured in Figure 6. This is probably because the *laes* and the angel spirit have formed a bond, which makes them sad to break it apart. While watching the show, a simple question came to mind: who asked for permission to go home? Based on the lyrics of the song, the *widodari* asked for permission. However, is the *widodari* asking the *laes* or the audience? From the interview with Mr Suprayoga, in 2018, it was revealed that the show was performed without an audience. Therefore, the permission was addressed to the body and soul of the *laes,* which was borrowed by the *widodari*.

Figure 6. Fifth Scence of the Laesan: Pamit
Source: Author's collection, 2018

6) The last scene of the performance was marked by the chant of *Lara Tangis Layung-Layung*, which means '*kesedihan teramat sangat'* or 'an extreme sorrow'. In that scene, the author watched the *laes* weep, and wondered, who is crying? The *laes* or *widodari*? In reference to the lyrics of the chant, it does not indicate if it is the *widodari* or *laes*. It generally refers

to the people or '*wong*', in Javanese. Based on that statement, the author tried to explore the matter with an inner discussion. Why should the *laes* cry? He must be happy because he will return to the real world and reunite with his consciousness. If he does not become a *laes*, he could always experience a variety of real-life activities, and if so, we can be sure that the one crying is the *widodari*. She was sad to leave the real world, which is full with the colours of life, where she could meet a lot of people, play, and share. Sadness and fear are a part of life that must be faced, whether one is prepared to accept it or not, such as the time of separation or even death. However, if we remember God or *pangeran* (which is often used within *laesan*'s chant), any kind of fear and sadness will disappear. This is because, in the end, death cannot be avoided. After all, it is a part of destiny. At the end of this scene, the *pawang* [11]wakes the *laes* up. His eyes are open again, and he immediately takes a deep breath. At this point, the author had a chance to ask: "how do you feel right now?". He answered: "*Koyo bangun tidur dari mimpi yang panjang*" (It was like waking up from a long dream) (Ripto, personal communication, September 29, 2018).

There is various uniqueness in *laesan*. Although *laes* is a man who engages with *bidadari* (*female*) in the soul that influences his dance moves to be more lady-like, the *cantrik* still refers to the *laes* as '*mbah*'. *Mbah* is a term in Javanese for both grandfather and grandmother. Surely, there is no statement about gender in this performance, but what the *cantrik* means during the *laesan* is 'the grandfather'. The statement explores another view of the performance, which is about the balance between male and female nature. Another perspective of balance is the balance in life. From the lyrics of the chant in each session, there is an encounter with the *bidadari* that represents the soul in the *ngenuwun* scene, as well as separation in *the penutupan* scene. There is also a female (*sintren*) and a man (*santri* or *laesan*), birth in the *kurungan* scene and death in the closing scene, and there is joy in the *dolanan* scene, and pain in the *pengobatan*, and *pamitan* scenes.

Apart from all the above, *laesan* also showcased a message about the horizontal and vertical communications. It specifically focussed on the communication between the *laes* with God, the *bidadari*, the *cantrik*, and the audience. The horizontal communication with the *cantrik* occurs when the *laes* was inside the cage because he does not talk when he is outside. There are three conditions in which the *laes* must be in the cage: when his body is tied, if he falls while dancing, and when he is waiting for the *dolanan* scene. The horizontal space is also created between the *laes* and audience during the *pengobatan* scene; the *laes* has direct contact with the audience. The vertical communications take place inside the cage between the *laes*, *bidadari*, and *pangeran*. The *bidadari* is believed to provide additional energy to the *laes*, making him able to untie the rope during the *kurungan* scene, and exchange clothes inside the cage, within a space of only one metre in diameter and height (Yon Suprayoga and Moh Hatta, personal communication, September 23, 2018). The term, '*pangeran*', in most of the *laesan*

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[11] The *pawang* is the *laesan* controller. He usually initiates, maintains, controls and closes the performance after the dancer (*laes*) and angel spirit have finished dancing.
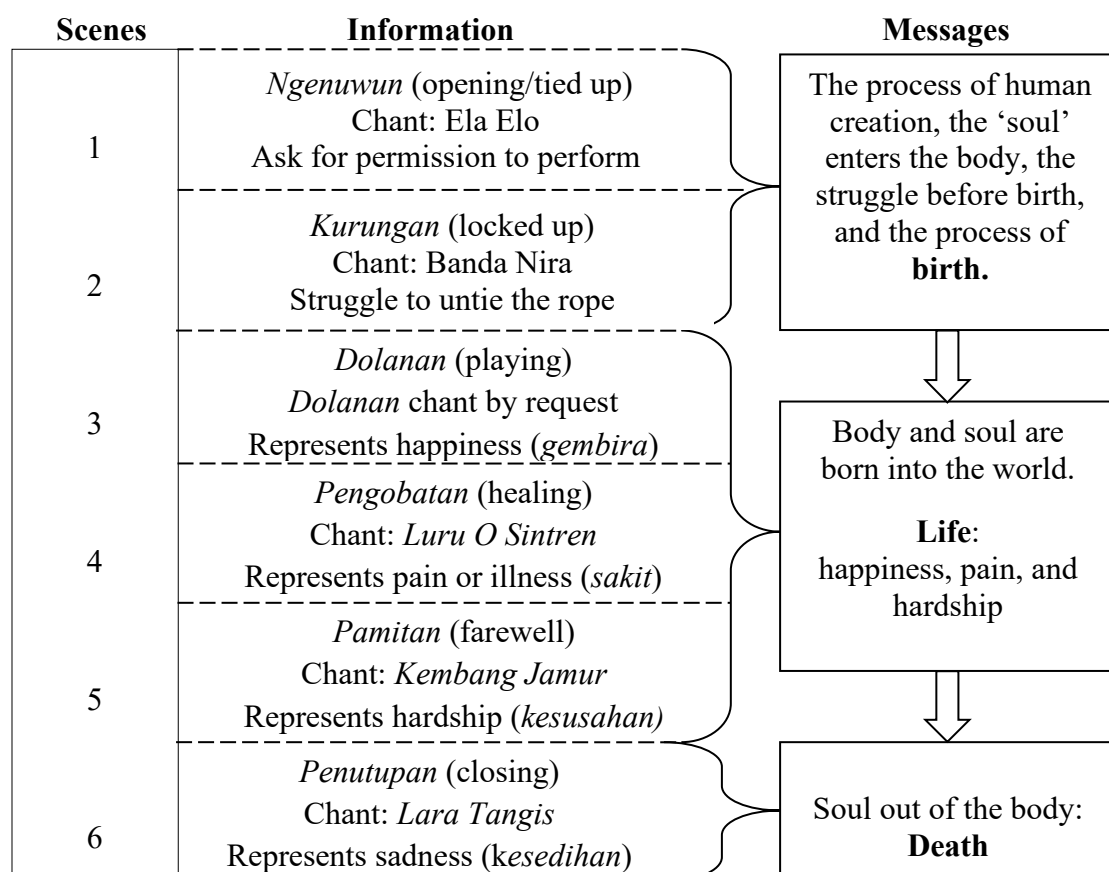
lyrics, also contributes vertical communication between the *laes* and God. In English, the term *pangeran* can be interpreted as the prince, and in the Javanese perspective, it is to become the prince of life or God. The word is also a symbol of the highest position that can make everything possible. With the introduction of Islam into Java, the word *pangeran* was regarded as Allah S.W.T.

Conclusion

The embodiment of *laesan* in Lasem is not easy, as there are many challenges to be faced. *Laesan* was once stopped but eventually revived, and it was able to penetrate several eras and still survive until this day, without losing its identity. *Laesan* has a sacred value, especially for the performers because they believe the existence of *bidadari* inside the dancer is the extension of God. The performance contains messages that depict the complexity of human life and each message contains different meanings that are presented through the scenes. Each scene is expected to be a gentle reminder about the message of life to the wider community. The Chart 1 below pictures the findings of this study regarding the messages of life that start from birth and continue until death. Although *laesan* is not a popular art performance in Indonesia, especially in Java, this study confirms that *laesan*, as a traditional performance, transmits a symbolic and philosophical Javanese culture that may be widely applied.

Chart. 1 The Hidden Message of the Laesan: The Cycle of Human Life

Scenes	Information	Messages
1	*Ngenuwun* (opening/tied up) Chant: Ela Elo Ask for permission to perform	The process of human creation, the 'soul' enters the body, the struggle before birth, and the process of **birth.**
2	*Kurungan* (locked up) Chant: Banda Nira Struggle to untie the rope	
3	*Dolanan* (playing) *Dolanan* chant by request Represents happiness (*gembira*)	Body and soul are born into the world. **Life**: happiness, pain, and hardship
4	*Pengobatan* (healing) Chant: *Luru O Sintren* Represents pain or illness (*sakit*)	
5	*Pamitan* (farewell) Chant: *Kembang Jamur* Represents hardship (*kesusahan)*	
6	*Penutupan* (closing) Chant: *Lara Tangis* Represents sadness (*kesedihan*)	Soul out of the body: **Death**

Acknowledgments

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