



Lekesan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Asia Pacific Arts

Journal homepage <http://jurnal.isi-dps.ac.id/index.php/lekesan>

ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL VALUE IN THE DRAMA GONG SAMPIK ENGTAY BY ISI DENPASAR STUDENTS

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This study aims to analyze the educational values embedded in the performance of the *drama gong Sampik Engtay* by students of the ISI Denpasar Performing Arts Education Study Program. The research focuses on the moral, social, cultural, and character-building values that emerge through the performance. The study employs a qualitative method with a symbolic interactionism approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interviews, and literature reviews. The analysis is conducted using Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory and George Herbert Mead's Self-Concept, which explore identity formation, role-playing, and social interaction within the context of performing arts. The findings indicate that *Sampik Engtay* conveys significant educational values, including moral integrity, perseverance, and cultural appreciation. These values are reflected in the depiction of identity conflicts, personal sacrifices, and the struggle of individuals in adhering to social norms. Additionally, the performance serves as a medium for reinforcing students' understanding of ethical principles, social responsibility, and the importance of preserving cultural heritage. The research highlights the role of traditional *drama gong* as an effective tool for education, fostering cultural appreciation, and strengthening the character of students. Furthermore, this study provides valuable insights for educators, performing arts practitioners, and policymakers in integrating performing arts into the educational curriculum and preserving Balinese traditional performances for future generations.

Keywords: Performing art, Education, Drama Gong

Received January 30, 2025; Accepted February 4, 2025; Published March 24, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.31091/lksn.v8i1.3137>

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INTRODUCTION

The performing art of *drama gong* Bali is a distinctive form of theater that integrates various elements of traditional Balinese art, including narrative structures, deep characterization, the kinesthetic expressiveness of performers, elaborate costumes and makeup, and the accompaniment of *karawitan* music, particularly *gamelan gong kebyar*. Unlike Balinese ballet, which emphasizes fluid, codified dance movements with minimal dialogue, or *arja*, which focuses more on sung dialogues (*tembang*) in a structured poetic form, *drama gong* combines both spoken dialogue and choreographed movement, creating a theatrical experience that is both dramatic and dynamic. Between the 1970s and 1980s, *drama gong* experienced its golden era, becoming not just a form of entertainment but an essential part of Balinese cultural and social life. As a type of *balih-balihan*, *drama gong* was performed regularly, often on a daily basis, making it a staple of community gatherings and public entertainment. Its popularity extended beyond urban centers, reaching rural areas where it was embraced as a primary form of artistic expression and social interaction (I. W. S. Sugita & Pastika, 2022). During this period, *drama gong* was deeply integrated into people's routines, strengthening communal ties and reinforcing Balinese identity through its storytelling, music, and performances.

However, the advent of modern media, particularly television, in the 1980s significantly altered the entertainment landscape, leading to the gradual decline of *drama gong*. Several key sociocultural and technological factors contributed to this shift. First, the increasing availability of television in Balinese households introduced new forms of entertainment that were more visually engaging and easily accessible. Unlike *drama gong*, which required audiences to physically attend performances, television provided on-demand entertainment in the comfort of one's home, reducing the necessity of communal gatherings for theatrical enjoyment (I. Wayan. Sugita, 2017).

Second, television stations began broadcasting diverse content, including Indonesian soap operas (*sinetron*), variety shows, and foreign films, which appealed to younger generations. These modern productions often featured contemporary narratives, high-quality cinematography, and global influences that contrasted with the traditional themes and stylized performances of *drama gong*. As audience preferences shifted toward modern storytelling techniques and visual effects, traditional performances struggled to compete in terms of engagement and production value.

Third, economic and infrastructural developments played a role in the marginalization of *drama gong*. With urbanization and the expansion of tourism-driven industries, many traditional performers sought alternative livelihoods, leading to a decline in skilled practitioners and reduced opportunities for staging performances. Furthermore, government and institutional support for *drama gong* was comparatively limited, as cultural policies often prioritized ritual-based performances tied to religious ceremonies over entertainment-focused art forms. Unlike sacred Balinese dances and temple rituals, which remained preserved due to their religious function, *drama gong* lacked a strong institutional framework for sustained cultural preservation.

Additionally, shifts in social habits and leisure activities contributed to the decline of live performances. The fast-paced modernization of Balinese society introduced new entertainment options, such as cinemas, digital media, and, eventually, internet-based platforms. This further eroded the traditional audience base of *drama gong*, as people became more accustomed to consuming entertainment passively rather than actively participating in communal theatrical events. In contrast to ritual-based performances that maintained relevance through religious functions, *drama gong* faced greater challenges in adaptation, as it primarily served an entertainment role. While certain adaptations attempted to modernize

drama gong by incorporating contemporary themes or utilizing media broadcasts, these efforts were insufficient to fully counteract its marginalization. The combination of technological advancements, evolving audience preferences, urbanization, and a lack of structural support ultimately led to the diminishing presence of *drama gong* in mainstream Balinese cultural life.

The story of *Sampik Engtay*, originating from a classic Chinese legend, has long been known and cherished by the public. It tells the tale of love and sacrifice between Sampik and Engtay, ultimately symbolizing the strength and sincerity of true love (Widagdo, 2024). Its popularity extends beyond the general public and has also attracted the attention of the academic and artistic communities. Over time, the story has continued to grow in prominence through various adaptations in media, including films, theater, and dramas, enriching its meaning and relevance for modern audiences.

In the Balinese cultural context, *Sampik Engtay* has undergone a process of cultural syncretism, blending Chinese artistic elements with the aesthetic principles of Balinese performing arts. One of the most prominent forms of this integration is in *drama gong*, where the classic narrative is adapted into Balinese theatrical conventions. For example, the dramatic structure, originally based on Chinese opera, has been modified to fit the storytelling style of *drama gong*, emphasizing expressive acting, natural dialogue delivery, and comedic elements that resonate with Balinese audiences.

Additionally, the musical components of *drama gong* reflect this cultural fusion. While traditional Chinese instruments once played a role in the story's early adaptations, they have been replaced or complemented by *gamelan gong kebyar*, creating a dramatic atmosphere that retains the emotional depth of the story while embracing Balinese musical identity. The visual aspects, such as costumes and makeup, have also been adjusted to align with local aesthetics. Although certain costume elements still reflect Chinese influences—such as long robes symbolizing the story's cultural roots—the colors and ornaments used are often adapted to fit Balinese artistic sensibilities. From an educational and artistic perspective, this cultural integration enhances the significance of *Sampik Engtay* for Balinese audiences. The process of syncretism not only illustrates how Chinese heritage coexists and evolves within Balinese society but also fosters a deeper understanding of Indonesia's rich cultural diversity. Artistically, these adaptations allow *drama gong* to maintain its relevance by presenting universal themes such as love, sacrifice, and resistance to social norms—ideas that continue to resonate with audiences across generations.

Adaptations of *Sampik Engtay* in various media have also influenced public reception of the story. In modern film and theater, the narrative is often reinterpreted with a more contemporary approach, altering elements such as dialogue, cinematography, and character portrayal. Some adaptations downplay supernatural or mythical aspects to focus on the social realities faced by the protagonists, making the story more relatable to real-life experiences. On the other hand, the increasing exposure of *Sampik Engtay* through modern media has had a two-way impact on *drama gong*. While media adaptations help introduce the story to broader audiences, they also influence audience expectations. For example, the fast-paced storytelling and dynamic cinematography of modern films contrast with the slower, more deliberate tempo of *drama gong*. As a result, younger audiences, accustomed to rapid narrative progression, may find traditional performances less engaging. This poses both a challenge and an opportunity for *drama gong* artists to adapt their storytelling techniques while preserving the essence of the art form. Thus, the adaptation of *Sampik Engtay* in *drama gong* is not only a testament to the successful integration of Chinese and Balinese cultural elements but also an effective medium for conveying universal values to society. Through continuous reinterpretation, *drama gong* remains a relevant artistic experience that bridges tradition and modernity while serving as an educational tool that deepens appreciation for cultural diversity and identity in Balinese performing arts.

In 2023, ISI Denpasar Performing Arts Education students staged the *Sampik Engtay drama gong*. This performance aimed to increase people's cultural appreciation of Indonesian folklore. The Performing Arts Education Study Program ultimately selected *Sampik Engtay* as the basis for their *drama gong* performance for several well-considered reasons. First, the story embodies universal values of love, sacrifice, and determination, which are not only timeless but also deeply relevant to the Balinese community and students in performing arts education. In Balinese society, where cultural values emphasize *tatwam asi* (the philosophy of unity and empathy), familial devotion, and social harmony, the struggles faced by Sampik and Engtay resonate strongly. Their perseverance against societal constraints mirrors the personal and artistic journeys of students, who must navigate challenges in their education and future careers. By performing this story, students engage with these themes on a deeper level, allowing them to internalize and reflect on their own personal growth and artistic commitment.

Second, the rich cultural and historical significance of *Sampik Engtay* provides a unique opportunity to introduce and appreciate Chinese heritage within the Balinese artistic landscape.

Given Bali's history of cultural exchange, especially through trade and migration, the inclusion of a Chinese-originated narrative within a Balinese performance medium highlights the island's long-standing openness to cultural diversity. This aligns with the educational goals of the program, which seeks to develop artists who are not only skilled performers but also culturally literate individuals capable of interpreting and recontextualizing diverse narratives within the Balinese artistic tradition.

Third, *drama gong* is an ideal medium for expressing *Sampik Engtay* due to its distinctive combination of theater, music, and dance. Unlike other theatrical forms that may rely primarily on dialogue or monologue, *drama gong* allows for a heightened emotional and aesthetic experience through its integration of *gamelan gong kebyar*, stylized choreography, and dynamic stage movements. The expressive nature of *drama gong* enhances the story's dramatic conflicts, such as identity struggles, social constraints, and the protagonists' unwavering determination. Furthermore, *drama gong* is deeply embedded in Balinese communal traditions, making it a powerful tool for engaging audiences in both an educational and emotional manner. By adapting *Sampik Engtay* into *drama gong*, students gain hands-on experience in fusing traditional techniques with new narratives, honing their skills as performers while contributing to the evolution of Balinese performing arts.

The primary objective of this study is to explore how performing arts can significantly contribute to character education and moral development, particularly through the lens of traditional cultural performances. By focusing on this aspect, the research aims to highlight the role of arts in fostering values such as empathy, resilience, and social responsibility among students. Additionally, the objectives of the study are expanded to assess the effectiveness of integrating modern educational practices with traditional art forms in higher education settings. This investigation seeks to understand how blending contemporary pedagogical approaches with traditional performances can enhance students' learning experiences and cultural appreciation. Thus, this article further examines how the didactic values present in the performance of *drama gong* by ISI Denpasar performing Arts Education students—particularly in the context of the story of *Sampik Engtay*—contribute to increasing cultural appreciation among students. By understanding and analyzing these dimensions, it is hoped that the study will provide deeper insights into the significance of this performance within the framework of performing arts education and its impact on student character formation.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research method grounded in a symbolic interactionism framework, focusing on the aspects of interaction characterized by the exchange of symbols between individuals (Ritzer & Douglas J. Goodman, 2008). Symbolic interactionism, as articulated by George Herbert Mead, posits that meaning is constructed through social interactions rather than arising from individual mental processes. In the context of the *Sampik Engtay* performance, this theoretical lens allows us to examine the emotional struggles and interpersonal dynamics between the characters, particularly Engtay and Sampik.

The interactions between Engtay and Sampik serve as a rich site for analysis, as their emotional conflicts and decisions reflect broader themes of love, sacrifice, and identity. For instance, Engtay's choice to disguise herself as a man to pursue education can be interpreted as a powerful symbol of resilience and defiance against societal norms. This act of disguise not only highlights her internal struggle but also engages with the societal expectations placed on women, thereby enriching the narrative's complexity. In analyzing the performance, we will focus on various symbols present in the drama, including objects, gestures, and dialogue. For example, the grave of Sampik serves as a poignant symbol of loyalty and the enduring nature of love, while the gestures and facial expressions of the characters during key emotional moments convey their inner turmoil and connections to one another. Dialogue, too, is crucial in revealing the characters' motivations and feelings, allowing audiences to grasp the depth of their relationships and conflicts.

Data collection for this research involves two primary methods: the gathering of primary data through direct observation and in-depth interviews, and the compilation of secondary data from documents and previous studies. Through observations, we will analyze how actors embody their characters and utilize symbols during the performance. In-depth interviews with the performers and directors will provide insight into their interpretations of the characters' interactions and the symbolic meanings they intend to convey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Artworks, including drama gong, play an important role as a medium of expression to convey messages or educational values. The message is expressed through stories and dialogues that are an integral part of the art of drama gong. Drama gong, as a form of dialogue drama, combines various elements of art such as movement, acting, gamelan, storytelling, staging, makeup, and fashion. The roots of this performing arts spread from traditional to modern, by combining elements of classical Balinese theater art and elements of modern western drama (I. W. Sugita & Pastika, 2021). Drama gong, as a typical Balinese performing art form, creates harmony between traditional theater and oral literature. Elements such as staging, makeup, acting, and performers are integral to traditional theater. On the other hand, as oral literature, this performing art has a constructive structure that aligns with literary works in general, as well as fictional prose in particular, which includes both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects (Mulia, 2017).

The importance of educational messages in drama gong performances is reflected through the theme of the story, scenes, and expressions of the performers. Drama gong performers are able to bring each character they play to life, demanding high involvement and dedication from the artists, who are an integral part of each character. In a more in-depth observation, drama gong can be understood from two perspectives: as a traditional theater that highlights staging, makeup, acting, and performers; and as oral literature that involves constructive elements similar to literary works in general. Uniquely, the drama gong manages to combine these two dimensions, creating a mesmerizing and profound work of performing art. As a Balinese performing art that blends tradition and modernity, the drama gong explores

the dominance of Balinese classical art that remains strong, while also introducing elements of modern Western theater such as decoration, sound effects, acting, and fashion. This blend creates a unique and immersive art experience for its observers (Sugita, 2016).

***Drama Gong Sampik Engtay* by Students of the Performing Arts Education Study Program ISI Denpasar.**

Folklore is an important part of culture that must be preserved because, apart from being form of entertainment, it is rich in ethical values and local wisdom, often referred to as folklore (Septika & Prasetya, 2020). Folklore itself is the heritage passed down by our ancestors from generation to generation. It is typically shared through storytelling to convey advice, packaged in an engaging way to make it easier to enjoy (Ruri & Rahmani, 2021). Students of the Performing Arts Education study program have the opportunity to explore and appreciate performing arts through involvement in the *drama gong Sampik Engtay*. As part of the curriculum, this experience serves not only as a platform to understand Balinese traditional art but also to explore various aspects of performing arts, such as costume roles, music, staging, and performance techniques involved in this dramatic form.

Through participation in *Sampik Engtay*, students can experience firsthand the essence of Chinese and Balinese cultural collaboration in performing arts. The Performing Arts Education provides a theoretical and practical foundation for students to delve deeper into the uniqueness of the artistic expression. They can learn about the use of costumes and staging that reflect cultural values and symbols, as well as how the music in *drama gong* create an atmosphere that supports the story.



Figure 1. Drama Gong Performance by PSP ISI Denpasar Study Program

(Source: Dewa Gede Satya Adi Maha Utamia, 2023)

In addition, students can apply their knowledge in understand the journey of the main characters, such as the role of Engtay, who disguises himself as a man for the sake of education. This presents an opportunity to explore gender themes and social roles in the context of traditional performing arts. On the practical side, students can be directly involved in staging, hone their skills in role handling, collaborate with fellow students, and gain insight into the production process of performing arts. This experience not only enriches their understanding of the art world but also provides an in-depth perspective on how art can serve as a tool for understanding and embracing cultural diversity.

In addition, participation in *Sampik Engtay* can serve as a foundation for developing a broader appreciation of the arts and helping students understand how performing arts can act as a medium to convey cultural and historical messages. This experience will make a positive contribution to their development as aspiring art educators, enabling them to carry the local art heritage to the next generation.

Analysis of the Storyline in the *Drama Gong Sampik Engtay* by the Performing Arts Education Study Program.

In a narrative that is complex and full of dramatic nuances, observers are confronted with the unfolding love journey between Engtay and Sampik, which serves not only as a romantic story but also as a reflective space exploring the dynamics of identity and transcendence within the Waciu Negari society. Engtay's disguise as a man, initially intended as a strategy to gain access to education, has evolved into a metaphor that represents the complexity of gender roles and identity constructions within a specific cultural landscape.

When the truth about Engtay's identity is revealed to Sampik, the narrative unveils emotional struggles and internal conflicts that resonate across various social layers of society. Through careful character development, Engtay's journey can be interpreted as a form of existential struggle that aimed at gaining recognition and the right to grow amidst restrictive social norms. Engtay's courage in facing reality is a fundamental aspect that enriches the philosophical dimension of this story, offering a reflective space for observers to explore broader perspective on gender and identity within a social context.

The characterization in this narrative presents a complex world, marked by figures from diverse social backgrounds, such as scholars, merchants, and other intriguing characters like Macun, the Chinese community, and butterfly dancers. These characters enrich the narrative structure, serving both as dramatic elements and representations of the social order that frames the protagonist's journey.

The dramatic structure of the story, divided into three acts, presents a chronological journey that reflects a dialectical process of self-identification and social interaction. In the first half, observers witness the event of Engtay receiving an engagement ring from Macun, which can be interpreted as an allegory for conformity to the dominant social norm. Engtay's decision to accept Macun's proposal, despite her inner conflict, illustrates the complex dynamics between personal identity and the social pressures that govern it.

In the second half, the narrative deepens the psychological exploration of the main characters, particularly Sampik. The disappointment and misunderstanding that arise during the climactic moment underscores the concept of "misinterpretation" in interpersonal relationships. This highlights the inherent vulnerability in human relationships, which are often built on conflicting assumptions and understandings.



Figure 2. The peak of the 2nd round

(Source: Dewa Gede Satya Adi Maha Utamia, 2023)

The third act, which centers on the events surrounding Sampik's burial, serves as a symbol of transcendence and transformation. Macun's courtship procession to Engtay, culminating in Engtay's visit to Sampik's tomb, prompts critical reflection on the "temporality of love" and "sacrifice as a manifestation of true love." The appearance of the kamoksahan mantra, which opens Sampik's tomb, creates a magical moment that represents the relationship between the mundane and spiritual dimensions. The subsequent event, where the bodies of Sampik and Engtay disappear and metamorphose into a pair of yellow butterflies, offers a profound reflection on the concepts of "spirit transition" and "eternal unity." This narrative philosophically challenges the boundaries between life and death while deepening our understanding of love's nature—one that transcends the limits of temporality and material existence.

Analysis of the Educational Value of Sampik Engtay Stories in the Drama Gong Performance of ISI Denpasar Performing Arts Education Students.

The performance of the *Sampik Engtay drama gong* by the Performing Arts Education Study Program (PSP) at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Denpasar is one of the most popular performing arts works in Bali. This performance tells the love story between Sampik, a beautiful girl from Banjar village, and Engtay, a handsome young man from Tegal village. The *Sampik Engtay* drama gong performance contains didactic values that serve as lessons for the community, especially the younger generation. These didactic values can be categorized into four aspects: moral education, religious education, character education, and social and cultural education.

1). Moral Education

Moral education is essential for social control and the realization of ethical values in traditional philosophy, often linked to human development—the process transitioning from less-than-ideal conditions to better ones (Ramadan Fuji Astuti et al., 2022). In this context, the *Sampik Engtay* drama gong performance provides a deep exploration of integrity and honesty through a narrative rich with moral values. As the main character, Engtay embodies the importance of upholding moral principles despite facing complex and difficult dilemmas.

The performance encourage the audience to reflect on the courage required to express the truth, even when doing so may have significant personal consequences. The emotional conflict and inner turmoil Engtay experiences when her identity is revealed serve as a portrayal of patience, forgiveness, and inner resilience. The audience is invited to consider the impact of moral decisions in everyday life, especially when faced with injustice, and the importance of maintaining honesty in challenging situations.

2). Religious Education

From the perspective of religious education, *Sampik Engtay* explores spiritual themes such as sacrifice, transcendence, and the concept of life after death. The depiction of Sampik's funeral procession and her transformation into a yellow butterfly represents complex religious symbolism, encouraging reflection on the journey of the spirit and the meaning of existence beyond death. This narrative provides a space for the exploration of spiritual concepts like reincarnation and the afterlife, which are fundamental in various religious traditions.

The religious dimension in the love story between Engtay and Sampik is reflected in the exploration of true love, a love that transcends temporal and material boundaries. Sampik's sacrifice for Engtay not only reflects emotional attachment but also presents a transcendental understanding of love that moves beyond the physical realm toward a deeper appreciation of compassion and devotion. In this context, *Sampik Engtay* allows for the interpretation of spiritual values such as loyalty, sacrifice, and courage, and examines their relevance in social life and individual ethics.

Thus, *Sampik Engtay* serves not only as an artistic expression but also as a reflective medium that facilitates the analysis of religious and spiritual concepts from a broader perspective.

3). Character Education

Character education has a broader scope compared to moral education. It goes beyond the dichotomy of right and wrong, focusing instead on the formation of habits based on virtues that guide everyday life. The goal of character education is to instill awareness, understanding, and a commitment to applying ethical values across various aspects of life (Utamia & Indrawan, 2024). In this context, *Sampik Engtay* makes a significant contribution to character education by portraying the transformative journey of its characters, which reflects the internalization of moral and ethical values. Engtay, with his courage to defend his identity, and Sampik, with her steadfastness in the face of disappointment, serve as symbols of strong character resilience. The narrative highlights how principles like honesty, tolerance, and fortitude can be applied when navigating life's challenges, both internal and external.

Engtay's character, which remains firm in his principles and identity despite social and emotional pressure, represents the importance of moral constancy and consistency in upholding personal values. On the other hand, Sampik's character demonstrates that disappointment and suffering do not always lead to despair but can become spaces of reflection that strengthen the value of sacrifice and the transcendental meaning of love. Thus, *Sampik Engtay* illustrates that life is a dynamic process in the formation of strong character, where individuals are continually tested on their path to moral and emotional maturity.

4). Social and Cultural Education

Culture is a system of values, norms, and practices that develops within a community and is passed down from one generation to the next (Yulianti, 2022). It is shaped through the interaction of various elements, including belief systems, political structures, customs, language, clothing, architecture, and artistic expressions (Normina, 2017). A nation's culture can be understood as a collective way of life that develops, becomes widely accepted, and is continually preserved by its people. Culture encompasses not only the ways of thinking and acting considered right within a community, but also reflects the creative and innovative activities observable in everyday life.

In this context, the social and cultural aspects embedded in *Sampik Engtay* provide a deep understanding of the dynamics of the Waciu Negari community. This community represents a complex social order, where social norms, status hierarchies, and cultural interactions play a central role in the lives of its members. The drama introduces a variety of characters from diverse social backgrounds—such as government officials, merchants, the Chinese community, and butterfly dancers—each contributing to the portrayal of the social reality of the time.

One scene that exemplifies the tension between social norms and individual identity occurs when Engtay accepts an engagement ring from Macun. This event reflects the conformity to prevailing social expectations while also highlighting the inner dilemmas individuals face when trying to maintain their personal identity under cultural pressure. This moment opens an analytical space to explore the complex relationship between individuals and society, particularly how one navigates the balance between adhering to social norms and defending one's personal identity.

Through the interactions between characters, *Sampik Engtay* portrays social dynamics that demonstrate how cultural diversity within a community can be a source of strength, which should be appreciated and preserved. The drama invites the audience to reflect on the importance of inclusive attitudes and tolerance in social life, and how recognizing social and cultural differences can contribute to social harmony. Thus, *Sampik Engtay* functions not

only as entertainment but also as an educational medium that enriches understanding of morality, spirituality, character, and the social and cultural aspects of human life.

Impact and Implications on Performing Arts Education

This research makes a significant contribution to the development of student character and ethics, as well as the enhancement of learning materials in the Performing Arts Education Study Program. Through the performing the Sampik Engtay drama gong, students not only gain an understanding of performance techniques but also experience the internalization of moral and cultural values embedded in the drama's narrative. This performance serve as an effective educational medium that foster cultural appreciation among both students and the broader community. One of the key impacts of this performance is the promotion of moral and ethical values within performing arts education. Students are encouraged to understand and internalize the moral lessons conveyed in the story, such as honesty, loyalty, and sacrifice. This process offers theoretical insights and guides students in applying these values to their daily lives. As a result, participation in the Sampik Engtay performance plays a crucial role in shaping students' character, fostering integrity, and enhancing their ethical awareness.

In addition to its moral aspects, the performance of the Sampik Engtay drama gong also enriches students' understanding of local culture and traditional performing arts. Through the study and appreciation of these traditional arts, students gain a broader perspective on cultural diversity and the importance of preserving cultural heritage. This knowledge serves as foundation for fostering creativity and innovation in performing arts, ensuring that traditional arts remain relevant and continue to evolve in the modern era. The implications of this study include the enrichment of more contextual learning materials in performing arts courses. The Sampik Engtay story can be adapted into engaging and relevant teaching material for the development of art and culture. By incorporating this story into lessons, instructors can offer a deeper understanding of the technical aspects of the performance while also placing the drama within its cultural and historical context.

The involvement of students in the performance provides them with opportunities to develop critical thinking and analytical skills. They can analyze the characters, plot, and themes of the story and understand how these elements are integrated into the performance. This process helps students enhance their analytical and reflective abilities, which are valuable in various academic and professional fields. Additionally, the staging activities encourage students to take an active role in preserving and developing Balinese traditional performing arts. This experience also strengthens communication, leadership, and time management skills, preparing them for professional challenges not only in the performing arts but also in other fields that require similar competencies.

Students' interactions with artists and cultural communities during the performance process expand their horizons and professional networks within the world of arts and culture. Direct learning from experienced art practitioners offers valuable, applicable insights and serves as an inspiration for students to continue contributing to the development and preservation of traditional performing arts. Thus, the performance of the Sampik Engtay drama gong not only serves as a form of artistic expression but also functions as a holistic learning experience that integrates academic, cultural, and professional aspects.

CONCLUSION

The *Sampik Engtay* performance in the *drama gong* format, produced by ISI Denpasar students, is not only a form of artistic expression but also serves as a pedagogical tool that enriches moral, social, and cultural insights. Through character interactions, dramatic structure, and symbolism in dialogue and stage actions, this performance conveys essential values that are relevant to individual character development and cross-cultural understanding.

The moral dilemmas in *Sampik Engtay* are evident in Engtay's struggle, as she disguises her gender identity to gain access to education. This highlights the tension between restrictive social norms and an individual's desire for knowledge. On the other hand, Sampik faces an internal conflict between his deep love for Engtay and the societal pressures dictating marriage and social status. The revelation of Engtay's true identity and the social consequences she faces underscore values such as honesty, courage in confronting reality, and the significance of sacrifice. Character transformation is a key aspect of this performance. Engtay evolves from a woman constrained by patriarchal norms into an independent figure who dares to challenge the system in pursuit of her dreams. Sampik, initially overwhelmed by confusion and emotional turmoil, undergoes psychological growth that leads him to a deeper understanding of sacrifice and love in its purest form. The emotional journeys of these characters reflect the internalization of perseverance, empathy, and the consequences of every life choice.

From a socio-cultural perspective, *Sampik Engtay* reflects the assimilation of Chinese culture into Balinese performing arts through the *drama gong* medium. The integration of *gong kebyar* gamelan, the distinctive dialogue style of *drama gong*, and adaptations in costume and stage design highlight how cultural heritage can evolve while retaining its core identity. This performance also reinforces the value of *tatwam asi*, emphasizing unity and empathy as essential principle in fostering cultural tolerance within Bali's diverse society. Beyond reflecting cultural and moral values, the character journey in *Sampik Engtay*—particularly Engtay's—has a profound impact on students' personal and moral development. Through direct involvement in the performance, students internalize values such as courage, honesty, and steadfastness in upholding principles amid social pressures. Additionally, this experience strengthens critical thinking skills, teamwork, and creative innovation—key aspects of performing arts education and broader social life.

Thus, *Sampik Engtay* in the *drama gong* format is not merely a theatrical medium but also a reflective space that allows both audiences and performers to explore deeper meanings of life, identity, and virtuous values. By incorporating moral dilemmas, character transformations, and a synthesis of traditional and modern elements, this performance plays a significant role in students' character formation and cultural appreciation. Therefore, further exploration of innovation within *drama gong* should be approached with careful consideration to maintain a balance between traditional values and contemporary developments. This balance is essential to ensuring that the art form remains relevant and impactful in bot education and cultural preservation.

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