



E-ISSN 2338-6770

Submitted date : June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Revised date : July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Accepted date : December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Correspondence Address:

Arts Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Sekaran B2 Building 1st Floor, Semarang 50229.

Email: suharto@mail.unnes.ac.id

## Exploring the Tripartite Performance in the Musical Enculturation: An Ethnographic Study of Banyumasan Sinden

Suharto<sup>1</sup>, Sugiyanto<sup>2</sup>, Clare Suet Ching Chan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Arts Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

**Abstract:** This study examines the musical enculturation of Banyumasan *sinden* across three performance genres: *wayang kulit*, *lengger calung*, and *ebeg*. Using Merriam's tripartite model – musical concept, behavior, and sound – as the analytical framework, this research explores how different learning trajectories and social contexts shape the formation of musical identity. Using an ethnographic approach, this study analyzes field data gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation of *sinden* practices in rural and semi-urban areas of Banyumas. Findings reveal that *wayang sindens* develop their skills through vertical cultural transmission within artist families, reinforcing ethical and aesthetic ideals. In contrast, *lengger sindens* engage in horizontal, community-based learning characterized by participatory interaction and vocal expressiveness. Meanwhile, *ebeg sindens* follow a situational, adaptive learning model shaped by informal performance settings and pragmatic vocal function. The study concludes that each *sinden* tradition reflects a distinct pattern of enculturation rooted in its socio-performative context and offers insight into the preservation of local musical knowledge through lived community practice. The findings provide implications for integrating community-based pedagogy into traditional music education curricula in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Banyumasan *sinden*, musical enculturation, tripartite analysis, situated learning, community-based pedagogy



© 2023 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

## 1. Introduction

Traditional Banyumasan performing arts, including *wayang kulit*, *lengger*, and *ebeg*, serve as vibrant expressions of local culture. In these performances, *sindens*, or female vocalists, are pivotal as both vocal performers and conservators of musical aesthetics. Socio-economic changes and the evolution of performance media have impacted the role and status of *sindens* in society. Currently, *sindens* are required to convey values of sacredness and classical etiquette while simultaneously addressing the demands for entertainment, popularity, and economic viability. In contemporary settings, especially within the younger demographic, *sindens* have taken on the role of appealing entertainers, notably in digital formats like solo-organ performances (referred to locally as *orleng*), as evidenced in *lengger* and *ebeg* shows (Adam, 2024; 'Julia et al., 2022; Novitasari et al., 2019; Salcedo et al, 2019). This change reflects a transformation in public expectations concerning the role of *sindens* while posing challenges in conveying traditional aesthetic values.

Moreover, the Banyumasan *sindenan* style encounters identity challenges stemming from the impact of external styles, particularly those from Surakarta (Solo) and Yogyakarta, which are frequently regarded as softer, more refined, and more elegant. This situation has resulted in a crisis of confidence among young *sindens*, highlighting the pressing necessity to comprehend the processes of enculturation and the mechanisms for conveying local values in *sindenan* vocal training. At the same time, the regeneration of new *sindens* faces considerable challenges, evident in the limited involvement of younger generations in both formal and informal *sinden* education. The *sinden* extracurricular program at Banyumas Vocational School 3 was discontinued due to insufficient interest (Kompas, 2018). The challenges are notably important given that foundational musical sensitivity usually develops in early childhood through social communication and informal musical interactions within the family setting (Nguyen et al., 2023; Özeke, 2017; Tuttle & Lundström, 2018). The absence of early exposure to traditional vocal practices in children jeopardizes the continuity of the stylistic and ethical values linked to Banyumasan *sindenan*. In light of these challenges, local government initiatives like the Banyumas *Sinden* Workshop, organized in 2024 by the Banyumas Wayang Museum, signify a noteworthy and constructive advancement (Sukmono, 2024).

In this context, the study seeks to investigate the musical enculturation process of Banyumasan *sinden* by analyzing three primary performance forms: *wayang kulit*, *lengger*, and *ebeg*. This study aims to examine the influence of family background, community involvement, and stage experience on the development of vocal character, *cengkok* (melodic ornamentation) style, and performance ethics among

different types of *sinden*.

To date, no systematic study has yet explored how Banyumasan *sindens* acquire knowledge across performance genres, specifically wayang kulit, lengger, and ebeg, using an integrative ethnomusicological approach. Previous studies have predominantly focused on descriptive accounts and have not examined musical enculturation in familial, communal, and performative contexts. This study addresses the existing gap by combining ethnopedagogical perspectives, enculturation theory, the concept of communities of practice, and Merriam's tripartite framework to elucidate the formation of *sinden*'s musical identities through social and performative interactions. This approach enhances the ethnomusicological comprehension of Banyumasan traditions and introduces a model for community-based music learning, a topic that has been infrequently examined in local performing arts research.

## 2. Literature Review

Previous research on *sinden* has predominantly focused on the Surakarta and Yogyakarta styles, as discussed by Sutton (1986) and Walton (1996, 2021), who highlighted musical pluralism and gender issues within Javanese performing arts. Walton expanded this research by investigating the social lives and economic conditions of street *sindens* in Java, focusing on the transformation of gender roles within public performance spaces. Despite its significance, Banyumasan *sinden* has not garnered considerable academic focus, especially concerning its pedagogical dimensions and the processes involved in musical enculturation.

On the other hand, although a few studies have addressed Banyumasan *sindens*, their scope remains thematically limited. Research on Banyumasan *sindens* has been primarily descriptive and biographical in nature, as seen in Budiarti's studies (2016; 2019), which explore the creativity and contributions of Suryati as a prominent female *sinden* in the region. Meanwhile, Meloni (2021b) provides a descriptive account of vocal style pluralism within Banyumasan *sinden*, yet does not delve into how these styles are transmitted through generative and social learning processes. The digital transformation of wayang performances, as examined by Putra et al. (2025) and Sunardi et al. (2025), impacts both the structure and aesthetics of these performances while creating new opportunities for artists, including *sinden*, in cultural transmission. By adapting to digital media, *sinden* not only preserve their role but also facilitate the expression of traditional values to new generations in a more interactive and cross-platform environment.

Meloni (2021a) conducted another study that examines a *sinden* from the same year, asserting that local styles like Sinden Banyumas should not be regarded as

inferior to the classical styles of the palace in Surakarta and Yogyakarta. She supports this viewpoint using the theoretical framework of ethnomusicology, which promotes an appreciation for the diversity of cultural practices. While both studies pertain to musical enculturation, they have yet to address the various forms of local cultural transmission present in the Banyumas region.

Most *sindens* develop musical skills through direct engagement within their communities rather than through formal educational institutions. The findings highlight the significance of community-based enculturated approaches in comprehending how traditional musical knowledge is transmitted. Cultural enculturation involves the transmission of values, norms, and cultural practices across generations through social interaction, occurring both consciously and unconsciously (Campbell, 2011; Ilari, 2011; Koentjaraningrat, 2009; Kapoyos et al., 2022; Rusčin, P. 2023). In the performing arts, this process unfolds through hands-on practice, observation, imitation, and active participation within artistic communities.

Merriam (1964) viewed music not merely as sound but as a cultural expression that must be understood through its musical concepts and behaviors. Within this framework, the ethnomusicological approach offers a more holistic reading of the musical enculturation process. Therefore, a focused study on Banyumasan *sindens* is crucial, as it will reveal how local practices shape a *sinden*'s musical competencies and performance ethics. This process reflects how local culture is transmitted and internalized within the framework of traditional performing arts.

This study uses a descriptive approach that highlights the vocal qualities, social roles, and challenges encountered by *sinden* within the framework of a patriarchal society. This study contributes to the documentation and personal interpretation of the *sinden*'s role; however, it does not explicitly utilize an ethnomusicological theoretical framework or distinguish between the performance contexts that influence vocal styles (such as *wayang*, *lengger*, or *ebeg*).

Currently, there is no comparative study that has explicitly outlined the *sinden*'s enculturation process based on performance type (*wayang kulit*, *lengger*, and *ebeg*) in Banyumas, nor analyzed the influence of family background, social environment, and field practice experience in shaping vocal and performative character.

Another theoretical foundation of this study is the concept of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which frames learning as a social activity occurring within a community of practice. In this context, *sindens* may learn through verbal or formal information transfer and through direct involvement in musical activities within artistic communities. This concept emphasizes that learning does not occur separately from its social context but through active engagement in a community of practice. In

the context of Banyumasan *sindens*, learning takes place through active participation in performances, rehearsals, and social interactions, where novice *sindens* absorb vocal knowledge, *cengkok* style, and performance ethics through observation and participation.

### 3. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative ethnographic approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the *sinden* musical learning process within its authentic sociocultural context. Through the researcher's direct involvement in the Banyumasan art community, the ethnographic method enables a holistic and contextual exploration of the values, behaviors, and musical practices of *sindens* across the three folk performance traditions ((Spradley, 1979; Atkinson, 2007).

The research was conducted in Banyumas Regency, focusing on *sindens* actively engaging in *wayang kulit*, *lengger*, and *ebeg* performances. Data collection techniques included performance observation, in-depth interviews with *sindens* and other artists, and audio-visual documentation. Data was obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and audio-visual documentation, then presented in the form of descriptions, quotes from sources, and examples of relevant vocal notation.

The data were analyzed thematically based on social, musical, and cultural categories. Participant observation took place during live performances, group rehearsals, and related sociocultural events. In-depth interviews were conducted with *sindens*, vocal coaches, *dalangs* (shadow-puppeteers), *gamelan* players, and local cultural figures. Documentation included performance videos, archives of family members intentionally chosen for their active participation, and audio recordings of *tembang* (traditional songs) and *sindenan*.

Informants were selected purposively based on their active involvement in artistic practices and their representation of the three performance types. To meet the research criteria and effectively address its objectives, three categories of *sindens* were chosen as primary informants and sources of documentation: *wayang kulit sindens*, *lengger sindens*, and *ebeg sindens*. The number of *sindens* selected from each performance group was determined based on the informational needs of the study: two *wayang sindens* (Sukrowati and Daisah), two *lengger sindens* (Daimah and Narsih), and two *ebeg sindens* (Darsiyem and Sukirah). To enrich and corroborate the research findings, additional insights were obtained from relevant experts, including Soegito Gito Sewojo (a Banyumas cultural scholar) and Darno Kartawi and Muriah Budiarti (both experts on the *sinden* tradition). Data credibility was strengthened through source and time triangulation. This technique supported a solid basis for

selecting informants based on their cultural engagement and local expertise (Patton, 2014).

The data analysis followed an integrated framework combining Merriam's tripartite model, enculturation theory, and situated learning. Merriam's model guided the identification of musical concepts, behaviors, and sound, while enculturation and situated learning provided lenses for understanding how these elements are shaped through social interaction and participation. This approach allowed the analysis to transcend mere description and instead interpret the cultural meanings inherent in the practices of Banyumasan *sindens*.

Through this approach, the researcher not only documented musical data but also contextualized the cultural meanings and social dynamics surrounding the learning processes of Banyumasan *sindens*. Figure 1 visually illustrates the application of this approach.

**Figure 1. Analytical Framework of the Musical Enculturation Process of Banyumasan Sindens Based on Merriam's Tripartite Approach (1964)**

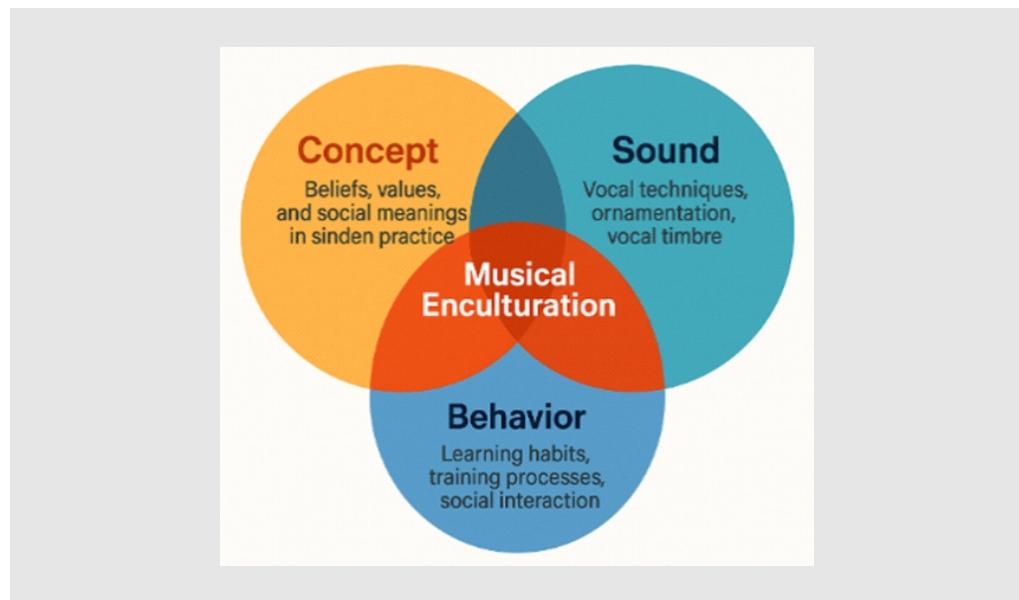


Figure 1 illustrates the interaction among the three primary dimensions in the development of the musical identity of Banyumasan *sinden*. The three dimensions comprise an enculturation process that occurs vertically, horizontally, and situationally, reliant on the performance setting, specifically *wayang kulit*, *lengger*, and *ebeg*.

#### 4. Results

This section discusses the field findings pertaining to the musical enculturation process of Banyumasan *sinden*, focusing on three distinct forms of folk performances:

*wayang kulit, lengger calung, and ebeg*. The results are presented in three subsections, each reflecting a distinct performance context. Every subsection presents essential data, highlights emerging trends, and addresses the nuances or complexities within the field.

#### 4.1 Wayang Sinden

The *Sinden* in Banyumasan wayang (shadow-puppet show) possesses a smooth and expressive voice, demonstrating precise vocal control and a solid comprehension of *gending* (traditional Javanese songs). Numerous wayang *sindens* originate from families of local artists or *dalang* (shadow puppeteers), where their learning journey started in childhood through immersive engagement at home, frequently utilizing their own *gamelan* instruments. The primary technique employed is *kupingan*, which involves mimicking the *cengkok* of an experienced *sinden* or *dalang* during rehearsals or performances through auditory observation. This process is both oral and contextual, though it takes place within a more structured setting.

An illustrative example is Mrs. Sukrowati, a *wayang sinden* hailing from Papringan Village in Banyumas, who has been immersed in this art form since her childhood, growing up in a family of *dalang*. Her training was influenced by her parents and reinforced by the family's regular practice of watching *wayang* performances and playing *gamelan* at home. She consistently modulates her vocal volume to harmonize with the other *gamelan* instruments.

*“Saya belajar sinden sejak kecil dengan mendengarkan sinden wayang saat di panggung dan menirukan saat latihan di rumah dengan keluarga bersama di rumah,”*

*“I began learning to sing as a sinden from an early age by listening to wayang sindens during performances and imitating them during rehearsals at home together with my family.” (Interview with Ibu Sukrowati, Papringan, 2024).*

Mastering the *sinden* vocal technique of the Banyumasan style involves a crucial aspect of stage artistry: the ability to perform *senggakan* and *parikan*. In *wayang* performances, *senggakan* – short, spontaneous vocal interjections or exclamations – typically emerge between dialogues or *tembang* during specific scenes. For instance, in *limbukan*, the humorous interludes performed by the characters *Limbuk* and *Cangik*, these interjections mirror everyday life amidst the main narrative. Similarly, *goro-goro*, which features a humorous and spontaneous chaotic scene led by a clown-servant figure, also promotes this dynamic interaction. In the context of traditional performance, *parikan* denotes brief rhyming verses that are articulated in constant harmony with the *gamelan*. This practice necessitates a deep understanding of

Banyumasan vocabulary and *cengkok*.

Budiarti asserts that "Banyumasan *sindens* must master *senggakan* and *parikan*, ensuring that their delivery is not monotonous and that the performance remains varied." Examples of *senggakan* and *parikan* notations are provided to illustrate the variations typically found in the Banyumasan style (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

Figure 2. Notation and lyric of *senggakan*

BL:	. 1 . 6 . 3 . 2 . 5 . 3 . 2 . (1)
SD:	i i 2 3 . <u>532</u> i Dho-wa lo-lo lo-ing
BL:	. 2 . 1 . 5 . 3 . 5 . 6 . 1 . (6)
SD:	i i 2 3 . <u>i2i</u> 6 Dho-wa lo-lo lo/-ing

Figure 3. Notation and lyrics of *parikan*

Bal:	. i . 2	. i . 2	. 6 . 5	. 3 . (5)
Sd:	. . i 2	. <u>36</u> i 2	. . 6 5	<u>562</u> 3 (5)
	Waru	waru dhoyong	dhoyong neng pinggir gili	
Bal:	. i . 2	. i . 6	. 3 . 5	. 3 . (2)
Sd:	. . i 2	. i . 6	. . 3 5	<u>.53</u> 3 (2)
	Lunga	ngendhong	ora	bali bali
Bal:	. 6 . 6	. 2 . i	. 3 . 2	. i . (6)
Sd:	6 6 6 6	<u>612</u> i i	<u>.13</u> 3 22	<u>22</u> i i (6)
	Waru dhoyong	neng pinggir gili lungan ngendhong	ra bali bali	

The learning approach of *wayang sindens* highlights the importance of discipline in stage ethics and the mastery of classical vocal techniques, including *wiled*, *luk*, *gregel*, and *seleh*. Observations of various Banyumasan puppet performances reveal notable differences in the vocal styles utilized by the *sindens*. Some performances adhere closely to the Banyumasan *gagrak* (style), which is marked by its intense and rhythmic vocalization, whereas others integrate techniques and

subtleties from the more refined Solo or Yogyakarta styles. In practice, *sindens* accustomed to the nuanced courtly style are generally designated to perform in official or sacred scenes, whereas those embodying the Banyumasan style more frequently engage in the entertainment or folk segments of the performance.

**Figure 4. Sinden with her notes to make a variety of vocal techniques**  
(Source: Suharto documents, 2024)



Furthermore, the ability to master a wide array of songs featuring diverse *cengkok* necessitates robust memorization skills. Some *sindens* address these memorization challenges by utilizing written notes positioned near their seating areas during performances (Figure 4). This approach is regarded as beneficial for preserving the fluidity of *sinden* singing, while reducing the recurrence of verses and *cengkok*, which can make the vocal performance monotonous.

#### 4.2. Lenger-Calung Sinden

*Lenger-calung sindens* typically originate from artistic families and start their singing journeys at a young age, engaging in both *sanggar* (arts studio) activities and public celebration events. They often acquire their skills directly on stage through apprenticeships with more experienced performers. Their vocal character is typically characterized

by a loud and expressive quality, demonstrating flexibility through the use of high registers and dynamic volume to effectively engage the audience's attention.

According to an interview conducted with Mrs. Narsihati in April 2024, it is essential for a *lengger sinden* to foster a vibrant atmosphere during performances. She articulated that possessing a powerful voice and the capability to dance while singing are crucial for captivating the audience. Many *sindens* also perform as *lengger* dancers (ronggeng), requiring them to sing and dance at the same time. Daimah, aged 41, is another *lengger* dancer who is currently enjoying significant popularity. She is a versatile performer who has honed a variety of skills, such as *senggakan*, *ndagel* (comic improvisation), *parikan*, and *wangsalan* (riddle-like poetic verses). Her well-known repertoire features Banyumasan songs, including *Ricik-ricik*, *Senggot*, *Eling-eling*, and *Bendrong Kulon*.

The process of enculturation predominantly occurs in public settings, including performance venues, community events, and direct engagement with the audience, rather than within the confines of the family environment. Learning takes place through oral communication, where individuals engage in observation, imitation, and active participation. *Senggakan* and *parikan* serve as the primary characteristics that define various segments of the show, including the *badutan* (clown character), *lenggeran*, and *saweran* (audience song requests). In certain contemporary performance formats, there exist specialized *sindens* who sing exclusively while the dancers concentrate on their movements. The *senggakan* is performed in unison by the *sindens*, *nayaga* (gamelan players), and dancers, resulting in a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere characteristic of Banyumasan performances.

The distinction in roles between double *sindens*, who engage in both singing and dancing, and special *sindens*, who focus solely on singing, significantly influences vocal style and the emphasis of the performance. The differences in the number and text of the *gending* frequently lead to *sinden* relying on notes throughout the performance. In several observed performances, the entertainment segment frequently serves as the most liberated space for expression for the *sindens*. Their vocal and movement styles adapt to the audience's reactions, with both rhythm and energy intensifying as the atmosphere

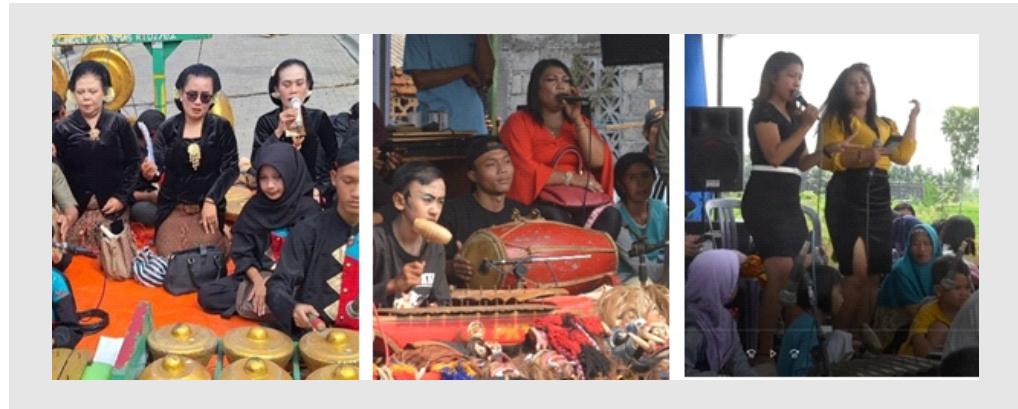
of the show evolves.

#### 4.3 *Ebeg Sinden*

*Ebeg sindens* occupy a more flexible role within the performance framework when compared to the two *sinden* styles previously examined. It is essential for them to possess robust vocal stamina and physical endurance, enabling them to sing continuously with little rest in lively and noisy settings. Their learning process is often characterized by self-directed efforts, motivated by economic needs, and frequently takes place in the absence of an artistic family heritage. “Nyinden ning ebeg niku, sing penting kuat napase lan bisa ngatur tempo penarine.” (“In ebeg performances, what matters most for a *sinden* is strong breath control and the ability to adjust to the dancers' tempo.”) (Interview with Mbak Wati, Banyumas, 2024). The role of the family in the enculturation process of *ebeg sindens* is distinct from that of *wayang* or *lengger sindens*. Generally, *ebeg sindens* do not originate from artistic backgrounds; however, there is still a form of family support present. This support may manifest in various ways, such as granting permission, facilitating access to local performance groups, or allowing female family members to engage in public performances. In this context, the family serves primarily as a social facilitator rather than a direct transmitter of musical values.

The primary features of *ebeg sinden* include (1) a lack of adherence to formal vocal conventions, (2) a versatile repertoire that encompasses Banyumasan songs, popular music, and even *dangdut*, and (3) an emphasis on vocal clarity and strength over physical appearance. For *ebeg sindens*, the notion of music extends beyond mere aesthetic expression or sacred symbolism. Music serves as a means of entertainment and acts as a catalyst for invigorating the environment. It is recognized as an element of an open, adaptable, and informal "folk performance". In this context, the *sinden*'s voice functions as a means of social navigation for both the audience and dancers during *mendem* (trance state), rather than simply serving as a medium for vocal artistry. Costuming demonstrates a remarkable adaptability to the occasion and can be tailored to align with the preferences of the event organizers. An *ebeg* performance, for instance, may be interwoven with *lengger* dances or complemented by *dangdut* music (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Variations in Ebeg Sinden Performances**  
(Source: Suharto documents, 2024)



The musical behavior of *ebeg sindens* emerges primarily through experiential learning in informal performance settings, rather than through formal or familial instruction. Their behavior is marked by responsive vocalizations that adapt to the movements of dancers and the beats of drummers, ensuring a consistent rhythm and intensity during the performance. Typically, they acquire knowledge by supporting experienced performers or interacting with digital recordings. This process fosters an awareness of the *laras Banyumasan* tuning and familiar folk *tembang* through consistent repetition and careful observation.

Similar to the *lengger sinden*, this form of *sinden* utilizes situated learning, a concept that suggests learning takes place through active engagement within a community of practice, rather than through formal education. Within the framework of *ebeg*, *sindens* engage in a learning process while positioned at the side of the stage, absorbing knowledge through listening and ultimately taking part in the performance. In the Banyumas *ebeg* (*kuda lumping*) folk performance, the *sinden* plays a distinct role that differs from the palace style, where the focus is on aesthetic expression and vocal refinement. Instead, the *sinden* is integral to maintaining the rhythm of the performance, working in harmony with the drums and the dancers' movements. This role involves regulating the vocal flow that energizes the dancers, particularly during trance scenes, and delivering simple, repetitive, and functional vocal rhythmic patterns, such as those found in the *senggakan* section or supporting songs.

In certain *ebeg* performances, the *sinden*'s artistry aligns with a trance scene. Informants indicate that certain members of the

community perceive *mendem* as an integral aspect of tradition, considering it a normal element within the realm of performing arts. Conversely, some individuals link it to mystical elements that are viewed as opposing certain religious values. Field notes reveal that the *sindens* participating in these performances persist in fulfilling their vocal roles, both throughout the dance and during the trance scenes.

**Table 3. Synthesis of Findings on the Musical Enculturation of *Sinden* Based on the Tripartite Approach**

Tripartite Aspect	Wayang Kulit <i>Sinden</i>	Lengger-Calung <i>Sinden</i>	Ebeg <i>Sinden</i>
Musical Behavior	The process of learning through listening and teaching within the context of an artist's familial environment involves structured exercises rooted in oral traditions.	Participatory learning within arts groups and communities involves active interaction, as seen in the engagement between the drummer and dancer. Lyrical improvisation frequently occurs in these settings.	Being engaged within the <i>ebeg</i> community involves adapting tempo and vocal patterns to align with the dancers' conditions; skills are developed through both observation and active participation.
Musical Concept	The significance of sacredness, cultural devotion, and ethical considerations in performance is essential. This knowledge is passed down through generations within the artist's family and the <i>dalang</i> community.	The repertoire emphasizes entertainment, visual appeal, and audience interaction, showcasing a flexible selection that encompasses both traditional and popular songs.	The role of trance accompaniment is highlighted, seamlessly integrating with the dynamics of dance and the overall flow of performance, rich in symbols and local values.
Sound	The vocals are smooth and stable, harmonizing beautifully with the rebab and gamelan. There is a clear mastery of the standard Banyumasan style, enriched by influences from Solo and Yogyakarta.	The vocals exhibit greater expressiveness and diversity, with dominant elements such as <i>senggakan</i> and <i>parikan</i> serving as key components of entertainment and interaction.	The vocals exhibit a rhythmic and energetic quality, effectively contributing to a trance-like atmosphere. The use of short, repetitive verses aligns harmoniously with the swift tempo of the <i>gamelan</i> music.

The analysis of the data in Table 3 indicates that the three domains of learning integrate in a harmonious way to influence musical behavior, aesthetic concepts, and distinctive sounds among the three types of *sindens*.

## 5. Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the musical enculturation process of Banyumasan *sinden* takes place within three primary social domains: family, art community, and stage experience. These domains are interconnected and play a significant role in shaping musical behavior, concepts, and sound output. The three domains illustrate the ongoing relationship between traditional values and social practices, in accordance with Merriam's (1964) tripartite model, which includes concepts, behavior, and sound. This aligns with the situated learning approach put forward by Lave and Wenger (1991), highlighting the notion of learning as an active participation within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

### 5.1 The Learning Process in the Family

The musical enculturation of Banyumasan *sinden* starts in the family, which acts as the main environment for imparting values, ethics, and vocal abilities. Learning occurs through the processes of observation, imitation, and active engagement, rather than solely through formal instruction. Merriam's (1964) tripartite framework illustrates how vocal practice within the family context combines musical behavior, an understanding of values, and the resulting sound expressions. This integration fosters a vocal character that is characterized by softness, measured tones, and emotional depth. This principle aligns with the situated learning theory put forth by Lave and Wenger (1991), which identifies the family as a fundamental community of practice. In this setting, novice *sindens* acquire knowledge by engaging in everyday activities, a point also highlighted by McPherson (2009). Consequently, the learning process fosters not only technical skills but also cultivates an ethical understanding of the social and spiritual roles of *sinden* within the Banyumasan cultural context.

The findings highlight the significance of family in the enculturation process of Banyumasan *sindens*, especially regarding the behavioral aspect that is central to Merriam's tripartite framework. The family acts as a crucial environment for musical education, fostering skills through regular listening, practice, and engagement within an artistic framework. The findings presented here are consistent with the work of Meloni (2021b), who emphasized the informal learning processes of Banyumasan *sinden*. Additionally, they resonate with the perspectives of Hidayat, Fauji, & Zayyan (2024), who recognized the family as an integral component of a community network dedicated to cultural preservation. In addition, Budiarti & Siswati (2019) support these

findings by presenting the cases of *sindens* named Suryati and Sukrowati, who illustrate how the artist's family serves as the foundational influence in developing musical sensitivity and identity.

### 5.2 The Role of the Arts Community

The process of musical enculturation among Banyumasan *sinden* is illustrated through three community-based contexts: *wayang kulit*, *lengger calung*, and *ebeg*. Each of these contexts showcases unique patterns of behavior, concepts, and sounds. In the leather puppet (*wayang kulit*), the process of learning is facilitated through *kupingan*, or learning by ear, alongside family-based mentoring. This approach nurtures discipline and instills values of ethical performance. In *lengger calung*, the engagement and collaboration among musicians and dancers cultivate a space for improvisation, humor, and adaptability. This is consistent with the findings of Raharjo and Arsih (2019), who discuss conditioning and internalization in informal enculturation, as well as Budiarti and Siswati (2019), who emphasize the creativity that arises from collective guidance and practice. The practices exemplify situated learning as described by Lave & Wenger (1991) and embody the egalitarian and spontaneous essence of the Banyumas community, where music serves as both a social practice and a form of moral education.

In the context of Merriam's tripartite framework, which encompasses concept, behavior, and sound, the results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that the community functions as a venue where Banyumasan social values, as concepts, are manifested through collaborative musical behaviors, resulting in sounds that are characteristic of the local identity. This pattern is consistent with the findings of Mapana (2011), who argues that the process of learning music is deeply rooted in personal experiences and active participation within the community, rather than solely through formal educational settings. Powell (2022) indicates that community music interventions foster well-being and social cohesion, as evidenced by the enthusiasm and unity found in *sinden* performances. In their study, Samper et al. (2024) highlight the role of musicking in fostering the sustainability of cultural identity. Musicking encompasses more than the mere act of "playing music" in a technical sense; it includes all activities related to music, such as listening, singing, dancing, and collaboratively creating meaning (Small, 1998). Therefore, the community serves not only as a platform for learning but also as an integral basis for preserving the musical, moral, and sound values of Banyumasan traditions.

### 5.3 Stage Experience

The stage in Banyumasan performances functions not merely as a site for entertainment, but also as a dynamic environment for the process of musical enculturation. By engaging directly with the audience, the musicians, and the dramatic contexts, the *sindens* take in social and aesthetic values, thereby converting their musical abilities into a form of cultural understanding. As noted by Hayward and Kartawi (2023), Banyumas Calung performances exhibit a light, flexible, and humorous nature, featuring abrupt tempo shifts and spontaneous elements such as *senggakan*, *parikan*, and *wangsalan*, all of which contribute to a shared sense of joy among the audience. Within this context, the vocal behavior of the *sindens* embodies the moral values of *rame* (joy), *lugas* (firmness and straightforwardness), and *tepa selira* (empathy and mutual respect). Mulyana et al. (2012) interpret *rame* as the aesthetics of collective energy, whereas Suharto et al. (2016) highlight the vibrant atmosphere of a stage, which signifies the success of a performance. This success is not only a primary objective but also intertwined with an essential ethical dimension.

This particular form of enculturation is clearly observable in *wayang kulit*, *lengger calung*, and *ebeg*. Within the *limbukan* or *goro-goro* segments, the *sindens* participate actively in dialogue and improvisation alongside the comedians and musicians, utilizing humorous *parikan* to sustain a vibrant atmosphere. Walton (2021) examines the negotiation between ritual and entertainment as a significant transformation in the roles of Javanese women. While this shift may be seen by some as a diminishment of the sacred, it also reflects a process of cultural adaptation and resilience. Field observations reveal that the *sindens* frequently utilize *parikan* notes or song lyrics as improvisational guides (Suharto, 2018), highlighting the stage as a venue for learning, adaptation, and the affirmation of Banyumasan musical identity. This portrayal illustrates the combination of musical behavior, aesthetic ideas, and sound qualities found in the traditions of Banyumasan *sinden*.

## 6. Conclusion

This study shows that the enculturation of Banyumasan *sinden* arises from an interconnected process that unfolds across various performance contexts. Instead of solely originating from formal instruction, learning progresses through active participation, embodied practice, and continuous social engagement. Musical behavior, conceptual comprehension, and vocal timbre are persistently influenced by daily interactions, resulting in an incremental, experiential mode of learning that is profoundly embedded in communal life. Musical meaning, therefore, is not mechanically conveyed but develops through continuous engagement in community

practices rooted in local values, ethics, and shared aesthetic principles.

By presenting a comprehensive model of enculturation, the research elucidates the processes through which musical knowledge is acquired via familial influence, community participation, and performance experience. It expands discussions surrounding traditional vocal arts by underscoring the importance of cultural identity, social and relational contexts, and embodied practice as fundamental elements of artistic proficiency. Theoretical implications encompass demonstrating how sound is persistently influenced by behavior and conceptual frameworks, unveiling a dynamic cycle in which values, aesthetics, and collective creativity mutually reinforce one another to uphold Banyumasan vocal traditions.

The scope is limited to a single region and three specific performance domains, and therefore, the findings may not encompass the complete diversity of Banyumasan vocal traditions. Results are derived from specific field observations and a selected cohort of participants, providing a necessarily limited perspective on the wider spectrum of artistic activity. Broadening the scope of contexts and participants, along with implementing comparative methodologies, would enhance the understanding of how traditional vocal arts are evolving in response to modern socio-cultural influences.

## **7. Recommendations**

The enculturation patterns discovered within Banyumasan society offer a robust foundation for the enhancement of community-based arts education. Integrating learning methodologies that emphasize firsthand experience, collaborative engagement, and localized values, such as *asah-asih-asuh* (refining, nurturing, and guiding), is crucial in both formal and non-formal arts education contexts. Municipal authorities, educational establishments, and cultural organizations are encouraged to develop intergenerational seminars, context-specific vocal training curriculum, and digital archiving projects designed to promote the regeneration of young *sinden*.

Further research initiatives should expand upon this approach to include diverse cultural settings, which can improve the understanding of the tripartite-situated learning model within the context of Indonesian traditional music education. Comparative regional analyses, encompassing the *sinden* traditions of Surakarta, Banyuwangi, and Cirebon, have the potential to reveal variations in enculturation processes and underscore the importance of performance in shaping local musical identity. These efforts guarantee the preservation and evolution of the Banyumasan *sinden* tradition while maintaining its contextual relevance as a contemporary form of cultural expression.

## Acknowledgments

The researchers express their gratitude to the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) at Universitas Negeri Semarang for providing the funding of this research. The research activities of the Banyumasan *sinden* receive support from the International Society for Music Education (ISME), which has allocated funding for advocacy initiatives as part of the activities endorsed by the 2022-2024 Parsons Music Award (ISME, 2023).

## REFERENCES

Adam, N. (2024). *Sejarah sinden: Fungsi, ciri khas, cara menyanyi*. Detik.Com. <https://www.detik.com/jateng/budaya/d-7407424/sejarah-sinden-fungsi-ciri-khas-cara-menyanyi>

Atkinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (2019). *Ethnography: Principles in practice (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Routledge.

Budiarti, M. (2006). *Suryati dalam dunia kepesindhenan gaya banyumas*. (Master Thesis, Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia Surakarta).

Budiarti, M., & Siswati. (2019a). Kreativitas Suryati dalam menyajikan cengkok cindhenan Banyumasan. *Keteg: Jurnal Pengetahuan, Pemikiran dan Kajian tentang "Bunyi,"* 19(2), 85–99. <https://doi.org/10.33153/keteg.v19i2.3076>

Campbell, P. S. (2011). Musical enculturation: Sociocultural influences and meanings of children's experiences in and through music. In *A Cultural Psychology of Music Education* (M. S. Barr, pp. 61–81). Oxford University Press. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2011-04025-004>

Chengyao, D., & Abdullah, M. H. (2024). Resonating culture: Ethnomusicological theories unveiling Zhuhu music in Yangxin Tea-picking Opera of China. *Grenek Music Journal*, 13(1), 49. <https://doi.org/10.24114/grenek.v13i1.57070>

Hayward, S., & Kartawi, D. (2023). Calung Banyumasan: Borderland identity through the lens of musical technique. *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 12(2), 61–75. <https://doi.org/10.37134//MJM.vol12.2.4.2023>

Hidayat, A., Fauji, S., & Zayyan, M. A. (2024). Social inclusion in Jamasan Pusaka as a strategy to preserve cultural heritage: A study in Kalibening, Dawuhan, Banyumas. *International Journal of Social Science and Religion*, 5(2), 251–267. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53639/ijssr.v5i2.245>

Ilari, B. (2011). Between interactions and commodities: Musical parenting of infants and toddlers in Brazil. *Music Education Research*, 13(1), 51–67.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2011.553277>

ISME. (2023). The 2022–24 Parsons Music Advocacy Award recipients. International Society for Music Education. <https://www.isme.org/our-work/grants-awards/2022-24-parsons-music-advocacy-award-recipients>

Julia, J., Supriyadi, T., & Iswara, P. D. (2022). Development of the religious character of the Nation through Learning Religious Songs: Teachers ' Perception and Challenges. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*. 22(1), 103–118. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v22i1.35031>

Özeke, S. (2017). An example of early childhood music education model and its effects on child development: Music Together® program: Bir erken çocukluk müzik eğitim modeli ve çocuk gelişimine etkileri: Music Together® programı örneği. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 14(2), 1035–1044.

Kapoyos, R. J., Suharto, S., & Syakir, S. (2022). *Bia music: Traditional music heritage and preserving tradition across generations*. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, 22(2), 298–310. <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v22i2.37619>

Koentjaraningrat. (2009). *Pengantar ilmu antropologi*. Rineka Cipta.

Kompas. (2018, January 21). *Jalan panjang sang sinden*. <https://www.kompas.id/baca/kehidupan/2018/01/21/jalan-panjang-sang-sinden>

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511815355>

Mapana, K. E. (2011). The musical enculturation and education of Wagogo children. *British Journal of Music Education*, 28(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051711000234>

McPherson, G. E. (2009). The role of parents in children's musical development. *Psychology of Music*, 37(1), 91–110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735607086049>

Meloni, I. (2021a). Foreign sinden in practice :New teaching strategies and the impact of practice-led research on Javanese female singing. *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 10(1), 25–53. <https://doi.org/10.37134/mjm.vol10.1.3.2021>

Meloni, I. (2021b). Sindhenan Banyumasan: An example of variation and pluralism of the Javanese female singing tradition. *Journal of Urban Society's Arts*, 8(1), 15–27. <https://doi.org/10.24821/jousa.v8i1.5446>

Merriam, A. P. (1964). *The anthropology of music*. Northwestern University Press.

Mulyana, A. R., Haryono, T., Simatupang, L. (2012). Dimention of rame: Phenomena, form, and characteristics. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*.

12(1), 52-63.

Novitasari, R., Ninsix, R., Adiansha, A., Susanti, T., Hanapi, H., & Indriyani, N. (2019). The existence of waranggana in tayub ritual. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 8(10), 1998–2003.

Panda, I. (2025). *Classical music: Merriam's tripartite model of music research paper*. Thesis Commons. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31237/osf.io/yr735\\_v1](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31237/osf.io/yr735_v1)

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Powell, B. (2022). Community music interventions, popular music education and eudaimonia. *International Journal of Community Music*, 15(1), 45–62. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcm\\_00031\\_1](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcm_00031_1)

Putra, K. N., Prasetya, H. B., Chistianto, W. N., & Handayani, L. L. A. (2025). Audience participation in virtual wayang performances of post-pandemic Covid-19 in Indonesia. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 52(3), 1-13. <https://dsr.ju.edu.jo/djournals/index.php/Hum/article/view/5213>

Raharjo, E., & Arsih, U. (2019). *Gambang Semarang music as a cultural identity of Semarang's community*. In Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Arts and Culture (ICONARC 2018) (Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 353, 473–477). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/iconarc-18.2019.82>

Rusčin, P. (2023). *Letákové pôstne piesne a ich melódie v cirkevnej a ústnej tradícii*. *Musicalogica Slovaca*, 14 (1), 55–92. <https://doi.org/10.31577/musicoslov.2023.1.4>

Salcedo, H. R., & Barrera, A. C. (2019). Sobre los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje en el legado de los cantos de trabajo del llano, patrimonio cultural inmaterial de la Orinoquia. *Cultura, Lenguaje y Representación*, 21(21), 133–156. <https://doi.org/10.6035/CLR.2019.21.8>

Samper, A., Abad Arenas, E., & Rodríguez-Sánchez, A. (2024). Community music and territorial experiences in Colombia: Communitas, buen vivir and sustainability. *International Journal of Community Music*, 17(2), 115–133. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcm\\_00110\\_1](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcm_00110_1)

Small, C. (1998). *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening*. Wesleyan University Press.

Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Suharto. (2018). *Makna simbolis dan pelestarian musik calung Banyumasan di*

*Kabupaten Banyumas* [Disertasi, Universitas Negeri Semarang]. Universitas Negeri Semarang.

Suharto, S., Sumaryanto, T., Ganap, V., & Santosa, S. (2016). Banyumasan songs as Banyumas people's character reflection. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, 16(1), 49-58. <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v16i1.6460>

Sukmono, N. P. (2024, May 9). *Workshop sinden siapkan 31 sinden muda untuk tampil pada pagelaran Hari Wayang Nasional di Banyumas*. *Suara Merdeka*. <https://banyumas.suaramerdeka.com/gaya-hidup/0913760971/workshop-sinden-siapkan-31-sinden-muda-untuk-tampil-pada-pagelaran-hari-wayang-nasional-di-banyumas>

Sutton, A. R. (1986). The crystallization of a marginal tradition: Music in Banyumas, West Central Java. In *Yearbook for Traditional Music* (pp. 115–132).

Sunardi, S., Saka, P. A., Sulastuti, K. I., Mulyana, A. R., Ansari, I., Novianto, W., Kiswanto, & Putro, R. L. U. (2025). Aesthetic transformation of Javanese wayang performances in the digital era. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, 25(1), 211–226. <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v25i1.11320>

Tuttle, S. G., & Lundström, H. (2018). Transmission of song-making in Interior Athabascan tradition, Alaska. In M. K. W. Gołubiewski (Ed.), *Tradition, performance, and identity in Alaska Native and Sámi music* (pp. 89–109). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91599-9>

Walton, S. P. (1996). *Heavenly nymphs and earthly delights: Javanese female singers, their music and their lives* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan]. <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/130154>

Walton, S. P. (2021). Female street singers of Java: Musical style and life circumstances. *Ethnomusicology*, 65 (1), 138–169. <https://doi.org/10.5406/ethnomusicology.65.1.0138>