



# Ethnoreligious Marketing through the Betawi *Palang Pintu* Culture in Disseminating Islam

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## Abstract:

This study aims to find out about the *palang pintu* in the Betawi tradition that uses various attractions such as *silat* attractions, pantun exchanges and *dustur shalawat* as components in the Betawi *palang pintu* tradition. The *palang pintu* tradition, which is a Betawi ethnic tradition, is still carried out by the Betawi people who live in the Jabodetabek area, especially the *Padepokan* Bekasi *SangHiyang* Putih and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan. The object of this study is the Betawi community strategy implemented by both *Padepokan* in promoting the values of da'wah in the *palang pintu* tradition. The data collection technique in this study uses a qualitative descriptive research method, to reveal the promotional strategies carried out by the Betawi community on the values of da'wah. Research data collection includes observation, documentation and direct interviews at the *Padepokan* and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit, data collection from informants who are the founders of the *Padepokan* and Betawi cultural figures who have long carried out the *Palang Pintu* tradition. The results of the research show that in the *Palang Pintu* tradition, promotional strategies are implemented through traditional and religious approaches, such as the promotional strategy carried out, namely reading the Koran and practicing *silat* to students and teenagers, while the Betawi Cultural Village Management Unit holds the Betawi Cultural Festival, the *Palang Pintu* Setu Babakan art studio where the *Palang Pintu* Art Studio is a traditional *Palang Pintu* art institution as a medium for preserving ancestral traditions.

**Key Words:** *Palang Pintu, Promotion Strategy, Value of Da'wah, Cultural Heritage*

## Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tentang palang pintu dalam tradisi Betawi yang menggunakan berbagai atraksi seperti atraksi silat, tukar pantun dan dustur shalawat sebagai komponen dalam tradisi palang pintu Betawi. Tradisi palang pintu yang merupakan tradisi etnis Betawi hingga saat ini masih dilakukan oleh masyarakat Betawi yang bermukim di wilayah Jabodetabek, khususnya *Padepokan* Bekasi *SangHiyang* Putih dan Unit Pengelola Kawasan Perkampungan Budaya Betawi Setu Babakan. Objek penelitian ini adalah strategi masyarakat Betawi yang dilaksanakan oleh kedua *Padepokan* tersebut dalam menggalakkan nilai-nilai dakwah dalam tradisi palang pintu. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif, untuk mengungkap strategi promosi yang dilakukan oleh masyarakat Betawi terhadap nilai-nilai dakwah. Pengumpulan data penelitian meliputi observasi, dokumentasi dan wawancara langsung di *Padepokan* dan Unit Pengelola Kawasan Perkampungan Budaya Betawi, pengumpulan data dari informan yang

merupakan pendiri Padepokan dan tokoh budaya Betawi yang telah lama menjalankan tradisi Palang Pintu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam tradisi Palang Pintu strategi promosi yang dilakukan melalui pendekatan adat dan keagamaan seperti strategi promosi yang dilakukan yaitu pembacaan Al-Qur'an dan latihan silat kepada para pelajar dan remaja, adapun Unit Pengelola Perkampungan Budaya Betawi mengadakan Festival Budaya Betawi, sanggar seni Palang Pintu Setu Babakan yang mana Sanggar Seni Palang Pintu merupakan lembaga kesenian tradisional Palang Pintu sebagai media pelestarian tradisi leluhur.

**Kata Kunci:** *Palang Pintu, Strategi Promosi, Nilai Dakwah, Warisan Budaya*

## INTRODUCTION

The Palang Pintu tradition is an important part of Betawi culture that has been passed down from generation to generation by the ancestors of the Betawi people (Handayani & Permana, 2024; Reza et al., 2024; Attas et al., 2023). Basically, Palang Pintu contains a symbolic meaning to open barriers, where the groom is faced with challenges from the female side through a martial arts duel between male representatives and female warriors. Over time, this tradition has shifted in meaning. In the past, Palang Pintu was an integral part of wedding customs that contained deep religious and cultural values (Fatmawati et al., 2024; Siregar, 2022; Apriyani, 2024). However, now this tradition is more often used as entertainment in various events, resulting in the loss of the philosophical and religious essence contained in it (Sari et al., 2024). Despite these changes, Palang Pintu remains a cultural symbol that is inherent in the identity of the Betawi people, although it is often only seen as a mere cultural ritual (Muthalib et al., 2024; Ayuningtyas & Pamungkas, 2024). Therefore, efforts are needed to restore the original meaning and introduce the values contained in this tradition to the current generation, both in the context of culture and religion.

Religious and cultural values for the Betawi people are two things that cannot be separated from each other. Over time, Betawi culture has changed, even integrating with religious values, especially Islam (Hasbiallah et al., 2024; Anim et al., 2024; Hakim et al., 2024). Religion plays an important role in shaping people's mindsets and actions, including in preserving traditions such as Palang Pintu. Kim and Baniamin (2022) stated that Betawi culture has experienced a reinvention of tradition in response to diversity and social dynamics. In the context of Palang Pintu, religious values are getting stronger, especially through the messages of preaching conveyed by artists through the media of martial arts, pantun, and humor in this tradition (Waliyyayasi, 2021). As time goes by, efforts to preserve the Palang Pintu tradition by adding religious elements are increasingly considered important so that these values are not lost or eroded by modernization.

Sihombing (2023) states that Palang Pintu is a combination of several cultural elements, such as *silat*, *pantun*, and the Betawi dialect which are rich in social and historical values. The shift in culture and the values contained therein must of course be repackaged so that they continue to exist along with the

development of the times and become intermediaries for the spread of religion (Mansur et al., 2022; Ramliza et al., 2024; Ataman et al., 2024). Farisi et al. (2023) also highlighted the phenomenon of cultural re-invention in the Palang Pintu tradition, which now functions more as an entertainment commodity, although it basically contains religious values. Several other studies have also recognized the cultural shift that is increasingly fading the original meaning of the tradition (Oring, 2021; Qin & Leung, 2021; Martella & Enia, 2021; Saharani et al., 2024). Meanwhile, research by Attas et al. (2023) discusses the influence of slang and foreign languages that enter the Palang Pintu practice. This study assesses the importance of understanding and redeveloping this tradition so that it remains relevant amidst the progress of the times without reducing the meaning and values contained therein.

Several existing studies discuss more aspects of culture separately without linking them to the religious dimensions contained in the tradition. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by discussing how the Betawi community, through the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan, promotes and preserves the values of da'wah through the Palang Pintu tradition, both in the form of ritual activities and entertainment. This is what makes this study novel, namely seeing Palang Pintu as a means of da'wah that combines culture and religion in the lives of the Betawi people.

This study aims to examine and analyze the promotional strategies carried out by the Betawi community in promoting da'wah values through the Palang Pintu tradition. Specifically, this study will compare the methods applied by the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan. By delving deeper into how these communities adapt and preserve the Palang Pintu tradition while still including elements of da'wah, and how this tradition can be a medium to introduce Islamic values in modern Betawi society. It is hoped that this research can contribute to understanding the importance of preserving cultural traditions while integrating existing religious values.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a comparative study design (Thomann et al., 2022). The qualitative approach was chosen to understand the phenomenon in depth and holistically related to the strategy of promoting da'wah values in the Palang Pintu tradition. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, process, and dynamics that occur in both research locations without prioritizing numbers or statistics. A comparative study was used to compare the practices and promotional strategies implemented by two Betawi communities, namely the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan. By comparing these two locations, researchers can identify differences and similarities in the

implementation of the promotion of da'wah values through Palang Pintu, as well as its impact on the preservation of culture and religion in modern Betawi society.

The data collection technique in this study involved several methods, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted at two research locations, namely the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan, to directly understand the practice of implementing the Palang Pintu tradition and the promotional strategies implemented by each party. In-depth interviews were conducted with administrators and practitioners from both communities, including Palang Pintu artists, to gain further information on the purpose, process, and impact of implementing the tradition. In addition, documentation in the form of video recordings, photographs, and written archives were also collected to support a more comprehensive analysis of the tradition and its preservation efforts in the context of da'wah.

Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed using interactive data analysis techniques developed by Miles and Huberman (2014) and Saldana (2016). The analysis process begins with data collection, then data reduction is carried out to select relevant information and focus on the main themes that emerge. Furthermore, the reduced data is analyzed in depth through categorization and mapping to identify existing patterns. The next step is data presentation that allows researchers to organize the findings systematically and easily understood. Finally, conclusions are drawn by comparing the results of the analysis from both locations to understand the differences and similarities in the implementation of da'wah value promotion strategies and their impact on the preservation of the Palang Pintu tradition in Betawi society (Mattke et al., 2021).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Tradition Management as a Da'wah Role

*Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren has long taught religious education to students in *Padepokan*, one of which is the recitation of the Qur'an. According to the statement explained by the head of the *padepokan*, *Babe Goum*, the recitation of the Qur'an at the *padepokan* has been carried out for a long time and is intended for students. This is very important because by reciting the Qur'an, students get rewards and delve into Islamic culture. The philosophy conveyed by the Professor of *Padepokan*, Mr. Namid Bin Miad, is "*Percuma lu cakep, banyak harta, pinter ilmu kalau kagak pinter ngaji*" reflecting how important reciting is in the life of the Betawi people, who highly prioritize three main values: Prayer, *Silat*, and *Shalawat*. The recitation of the Qur'an in this *padepokan* is part of the Islamic tradition that has been closely attached to the Betawi community. In the current situation, many children fall into negative behavior, so it is important for them to get to know the culture, especially Islam, even

though their time to learn it is getting narrower. The recitation is not only limited to reading the Qur'an, but also includes discussion and sharing of Islam that also spreads da'wah values.

In addition to recitation, *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih also carries out *pencak silat* training as part of a very distinctive Betawi culture. Betawi Pencak Silat, or known as '*maen pukul*', was originally not only a martial art, but rather a self-protection for the Betawi people in the past. At first, the Betawi people did not call it *silat*, because they considered it more as an activity to protect themselves. Beksi, one of the Betawi martial arts schools, was influenced by acculturation with the martial art of Chinese Kungfu. The close relationship between the Betawi and Chinese communities in the past made Betawi *silat*, especially Beksi, have a great influence on Chinese culture. In an interview, the head of the *padepokan* revealed that this exercise was given to students to form physical and spiritual character and strength. Silat training is carried out according to age groups, such as children, teenagers, and adults, with different portions. Betawi *silat*, especially *Maen Pukulan*, also contains Islamic da'wah values, where *silat* is used as a medium to spread Islamic teachings, as reflected in the legend of *Si Pitung*, which teaches religious values and goodness. In addition, the values of discipline, hard work, and cultural identity of the Betawi people are also contained in this martial art.

*Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih also provided a briefing on Betawi culture to students. This briefing was carried out to introduce Betawi culture which is rich in Islamic values and education. The culture taught in *padepokan*, such as *pencak silat*, Betawi *pantun*, *ondel-ondel*, and Betawi musical instruments, aims to shape students to become cultural experts from an early age. Betawi poetry, as a form of culture taught, has a moral meaning and religious teachings contained in each of its poems. This poem is often practiced in various Betawi traditional events, especially in weddings, where the champions of the poem reciprocate each other by using creativity in composing words. These rhymes not only contain elements of *humor*, but also have a deep moral message and religious values. In the interview, the professor explained that Betawi poetry has sacred values that must be understood well, because poetry is not just entertainment, but also a means to convey life and religious messages.

*Assalamualaikum bang!*  
*Pepaye mateng dari keramat*  
*Keramet ade di kampong lime*  
*Aye dan rombongan datang dengan hormat*  
*Untuk abang si tuan rumeh*  
*Kude lumping dari Tangerang*  
*Kedipin mate cari menantu*  
*Pasang telinge lo terang-terang*  
*Adepin dulu jago gue satu-satu*

*Bintang seawan-awan  
Aye itungin beribu Satu  
Berape banyak abang punya jagoan  
Aye bakal adepin satu per satu  
Source: Doc, 2024*

Application for permission from the groom-to-be to enter the residence of the bride-to-be,

*Rumeh gedong rumeh belande  
Pagernye kawat tapi kekunci  
Saye gak mau tau ini rombongan asalnye darimane  
Yang jelas kalo liwat kampung sini kudu permisi  
Makan sekuteng di pasar jumat  
Beli dodol di kramat jati  
Saye ama rombongan dateng dengan segale hormat  
Mohon ditrime dengan seneng ati  
Makan buah kenari jangan ditelen ame biji-bijinye  
Elu dateng kmari Saye pengen tau ape hajatnye  
Pegi kondangan berame-rame  
Ngelewat in sawah sebrang in kali  
Kalo kagak hormat tapi rase reme  
Kagak bakal saye ame rombongan dateng kmari  
Source: Doc, 2024*

Palang Pintu is one of the typical Betawi traditions preserved at *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih. This tradition not only focuses on silat and pantun attractions, but also contains very important cultural and religious values. Since ancient times, the door bar has been an important part of various Betawi traditional ceremonies, such as weddings. In the interview, the head of the *padepokan* stated that although each *padepokan* or *sanggar* may have different rhymes, basically, the tradition of the door bar still has the same core, which is to combine *silat* attractions and rhymes that are loaded with moral messages and Islamic values. This tradition is a symbol of the physical and spiritual strength that the groom-to-be must have as a condition for marrying a Betawi woman.

The Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit of Setu *Babakan* has several strategies to promote da'wah values through culturally rich activities. Every event or performance that is held is always well managed so that the activity is not only interesting but also contains da'wah values. One of the iconic performances in Setu Babakan is *palang pintu*, which is now not only staged in the Betawi Cultural Village environment, but also in various big events. The success of this performance was driven by the enthusiasm of the community which encouraged the management to give appreciation to the art studios that helped preserve this tradition. In the *palang pintu* tradition, there is a combination

of cultural and religious values, and this proves that Betawi traditions are inseparable from Islamic values. Through the festival held in Setu Babakan, each performance has a specific schedule, both in big events and monthly art performances. Among these performances are *Gambang Kromong*, *Ondel-ondel*, *Palang Pintu*, and *Keroncong Music*.

In addition, there are several art studios that play a role in preserving and developing Betawi culture, such as the Kembang Kelapa Art Studio. This studio was established with the aim of preserving Betawi culture among the younger generation. The Kembang Kelapa Studio is committed to showing that local Betawi culture has an appeal that is equal to foreign culture. The founder of this studio, Aditya Surya, emphasized that preserving local culture is not only the responsibility of parents, but also the younger generation. Thus, young people are expected to feel proud of their Betawi culture and make it something that should be appreciated and continued. As a symbol, the Kembang Kelapa Studio logo depicts an *ondel-ondel* with a coconut flower on top, which symbolizes usefulness like a coconut tree. In addition, there is also the Kembang Jaya Kusuma Studio, which was established with the same goal, namely to preserve Betawi culture and make it relevant in the midst of modern developments. Amin Rahmat Hidayat, the founder of this studio, emphasized that Betawi culture must be maintained so that it is not lost and recognized by outsiders.



**Figure 1. Logo of Coconut Flower Art Sanggar**



**Figure 2. Logo of Sanggar Kembang Jaya Kusuma**

The *palang pintu* tradition itself has a history that is very close to Betawi culture, especially in Setu Babakan. *Palang pintu* is carried out as part of the wedding procession, with the aim of opening a barrier called *jawara* so that the prospective groom can marry the prospective bride. In this tradition, the man must fulfill two important requirements, namely being able to do *silat* and *ngaji*. These requirements are symbols of life in this world and the afterlife, where *silat* skills symbolize courage and the ability to protect the family, while *ngaji* depicts religious obedience. This tradition has existed since before 1945, with stories passed down from generation to generation that emphasize the importance of these two skills for a man who wants to marry a woman. In the past, this tradition

was carried out very seriously, with *silat* competitions and religious studies carried out earnestly.

Pantun is also an important part of Betawi tradition, especially in wedding ceremonies. In Setu Babakan, pantun is used as a medium of communication between the prospective groom and bride in the process of opening the door. The pantuns used function as a request for permission to enter and as meaningful expressions of the heart. These pantuns are a means of conveying messages, maintaining the smooth running of the event, and creating a harmonious atmosphere between the two parties.

According to research conducted by several cultural experts, the concept of managing tradition as a means of preaching in Betawi society, as carried out by the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan, can be seen as a form of integration of culture and religion that is very effective in maintaining and spreading Islamic values. The role of culture in Islamic preaching reveals that local culture has great potential to spread religious messages more effectively and touch the hearts of the community (Weng, 2024; Whyte, 2022; Hidayat et al., 2024). The management of traditions such as *palang pintu* and *pencak silat* is not only a means of preserving culture, but also as a medium for conveying moral values and Islamic teachings.

Research by Aرسال et al., (2023) on the preservation of Betawi culture highlights the importance of the role of the younger generation in maintaining the continuity of local culture. Betawi culture which is full of Islamic values, such as in pantun and *palang pintu*, is expected to continue to live amidst the strong currents of globalization. This study shows that cultural preservation through art studios, such as *Sanggar Kembang Kelapa* and *Sanggar Kembang Jaya Kusuma*, has a positive impact in shaping the character of the younger generation who not only understand the importance of local culture but also the religious values contained in these traditions.

### **Promotion Strategy of Da'wah Values through Culture**

Various promotional strategies are implemented in developing and introducing the values of da'wah through culture to ensure that the messages conveyed can be well received by the community. In the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan, there are strong efforts to utilize culture as a means of da'wah, with various approaches involving Betawi traditional arts, such as *palang pintu*, *pencak silat*, *pantun*, and *ondel-ondel*. In this context, the strategy for promoting da'wah values can be divided into four main approaches: advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. Each of these approaches is used to integrate religious values into the daily lives of the community, by utilizing local culture that has become part of their tradition. The use of the right method allows the management of tradition to introduce da'wah



messages effectively without having to change the form or essence of the culture itself.

Advertising strategies are carried out through social media and promotional activities at local cultural events in the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih. The program includes regular promotion of *pencak silat* activities and *palang pintu* events held at the hermitage. In terms of sales promotion, especially at the Setu Babakan Betawi Cultural Village Management Unit, various Betawi cultural goods and paraphernalia are sold during cultural events or festivals, including *pencak silat* equipment and mini *ondel-ondel*. These activities not only serve as a way to market goods, but also as a means to educate the public about the da'wah values contained in the tradition. For public relations, the management of this cultural area seeks to involve the local community in every event and festival, creating a closer relationship with the community, and developing their understanding of how Betawi culture is closely related to Islamic teachings. Direct marketing, on the other hand, is used by holding training sessions and performances that invite the public directly to participate and experience for themselves how Betawi culture can teach da'wah values.

Thus, both in *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and in the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan, the strategies for promoting the da'wah values implemented are very effective in achieving their goals. Advertising carried out through social media and public events allows the public to more easily access information about the cultural activities held, as well as about the da'wah values that are to be conveyed. Sales promotions related to Betawi culture not only provide economic opportunities for the local community, but also serve as an effective way to introduce and educate the public about the importance of preserving local culture that is full of religious teachings. On the other hand, public relations built through cultural events strengthen the bond between managers and the community, making culture a more touching means of da'wah. Direct marketing that invites community participation further strengthens the relationship between tradition and da'wah, allowing visitors and participants to directly experience the values taught through the cultural activities they participate in.

The approaches implemented in *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan have succeeded in integrating culture as a medium for preaching. Advertising and sales promotions serve not only to introduce Betawi culture to a wider audience, but also as an effective tool for introducing the Islamic values contained in the tradition. Good public relations create a sense of ownership and pride in local culture, so that the community is more open to receiving preaching messages. Direct marketing, which involves the community in the learning process and direct participation, strengthens the appeal of Betawi culture as a means of instilling religious and moral values. Overall, the combination of these strategies shows how local culture functions not only as entertainment, but also

as a very effective means of moral and religious education for the Betawi community.

Based on the findings of previous studies, the integration of culture as a medium for da'wah promotion in *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih Pondok Aren and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan can be seen as a successful model. Research by Zannah (2023) emphasizes the effectiveness of using cultural events as platforms for conveying religious messages, particularly in communities with rich traditional heritage like the Betawi. Several studies highlight how traditional practices, such as *palang pintu*, *pencak silat*, and *ondel-ondel*, not only preserve cultural identity but also serve as a medium for teaching moral and religious values (Attas et al., 2023; Farisi et al., 2023; Fatmawati et al., 2024). The combination of advertising, sales promotions, public relations, and direct marketing strategies utilized in these areas aligns with the recommendations found in these studies, which suggest that cultural preservation and religious promotion can coexist harmoniously. Through such strategies, culture is transformed from mere entertainment into a powerful tool for da'wah, fostering community engagement and deepening the understanding of Islamic teachings in everyday life.

## CONCLUSION

Research conducted at the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih and the Betawi Cultural Village Area Management Unit Setu Babakan concluded that the Betawi community's strategy in promoting da'wah values through the *palang pintu* tradition has been effective. This is evidenced by the routine activities carried out three times a year, namely in the months of Ramadan, Muharram, and the Prophet Muhammad's Birthday. Indicators of success include the implementation of *palang pintu* activities in the *Padepokan* and Betawi Cultural Village as a medium for da'wah, the support of community leaders, and the *palang pintu* festival held on Islamic holidays. The promotional strategy carried out at the *Padepokan* Beksi SangHiyang Putih and Setu Babakan was able to attract tourists to come and provide economic benefits to the surrounding community. The *palang pintu* tradition, which is full of da'wah values, including recitation of the Qur'an, *dustur* prayers, and religious pantun, aims to increase understanding and practice of the Qur'an, foster a sense of love for the Prophet Muhammad, and increase appreciation for Betawi culture. The efforts of the Kembang Kelapa Art Studio and the Kembang Jayakusuma Art Studio in organizing this event are commendable, with performances scheduled three times a year, effectively showcasing the integration of cultural and religious teachings.

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