

## A STUDY OF JAVANESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE TOWARDS ‘BUWUH or NGAMPLOP’ as SOCIOCULTURAL STUDY

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**Abstract:** *Culture is a complex union of beliefs, etiquette, law, local custom that comes from an individual as citizen. Buwuh or Ngamplop is a traditional activity to donate someone’s money in kinds of social celebration such as wedding, visiting to hospital, circumcision, etc. ceremony. The aim of this research was to know the history of ‘buwuh or ngamplop’ tradition; the opinion of Javanese people of ‘buwuh or ngamplop’; and their willing to maintenance this tradition. The data were collected from interview results, then, it would be analyzed and described in form of words in details. The result of this research is most of participants agreed that ‘buwuh or ngamplop’ is a valuable culture that must be preserved by Javanese people because it is a cultural heritage from ancestors. ‘Buwuh or ngamplop’ teaches Javanese generation to maintenance the tradition of mutual cooperation, helping others and tolerance because they belong to sociocultural product-cognitive development. This research helps the students to know the process of shaping traditional cultures, politeness, and how the language involves in shaping a culture.*

**Keywords:** *javanese, culture, buwuh, ngamplop,, manner.*

### INTRODUCTION

Culture is an overall pattern of thinking, feeling, and action of a social group that distinguishes it from others (Hofstede, 1999). Culture, in simply, the result of creating, processing, and willing to explore a unique situation comes from group of

people. Culture has a strong power to influence many things in daily activity, such as economy, education, religion, and social activity itself.

Due to the definition above, culture doesn’t only talk about song, dance, food, etc, but it also talks about macro topics of human’s life, such as

economic, education, religion, law, etc. Thus, culture also defines the pattern issues of a country, indeed people thinking and behaviour. The more much cultures, the more complex pattern, e.g. Indonesia.

Indonesia is a multicultural country. There are many kinds of culture in Indonesia because it has many provinces, islands, and ethnic group. Then, each ethnic group has their own rules to arrange their people in all elements of life, and it is called as 'culture'. Indonesia is a country that has many kinds of ethnic and culture, which each ethnic is different and unique (Shafiya & Mochammad, 2021, p. 69). The most popular culture of ethnic group is Javanese.

Javaneese people has many kinds of culture, one of them is '*Buwuh or Ngamplop*'. *Buwuh or Ngamplop* is a traditional activity to donate someone's money in kinds of social celebration such as wedding, visiting to hospital, circumcision, etc. ceremony. 'Donate in Javanese culture named as '*buwuh or ngamplop*', is an activity to donate in any kind of forms such as goods or service to the owner of event' (Shafiyah & Mochammad, 2021, p.70). In the context of

Javanese culture, this mindset is reflected in values such as respect for hierarchy, togetherness, and a strong concern for social harmony.

The Javanese tradition of '*Buwuh or Ngamplop*' is one of the sociocultural products of Javanese traditional culture. Sociocultural explains the process of individual mental functioning which relates to cultural, institutional, and historical context. The focus of sociocultural perspectives is on the roles that participation in social interactions and culturally organized activities play in influencing psychological development (Scott, 2013). The Javanese tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' belongs to sociocultural study because it combines cultural, institutional and historical context.

Mannan et al (2025) stated that their study aim to

identify the mental accounting practices involved in the *buwuhan* tradition during Javanese weddings and to analyse the symbolic meaning of financial management related to *buwuhan*. They adopted a qualitative approach using an ethnographic method, with data collected through direct observation, interviews, and analysis of relevant documents.

In line with Mannan, Bella et al (2024) determined the cultural practices and traditions of *buwuh* in the community in Banjarejo Village, Kediri Regency, and to determine the cultural practices and traditions of *buwuh* in the perspective of accounts receivable and grant accounting. They collected their data using interview, documentation, and observation methods. The nature of this study is descriptive qualitative to describe the culture and tradition of *buwuh* as accounts receivable in wedding customs.

Additionally, Sulistyowati et al (2024), stated that they are curious to the transformation of *Buwuhan*

tradition through an accounting perspective by exploring its value and economic impact. They analyzed the financial implications, assess value creation, and investigate the application of modern accounting practices to enhance economic activities related to *Buwuhan*. The study will also propose strategies for sustaining and expanding the tradition, aiming to balance cultural preservation with economic growth.

In this research, the researchers aimed to know the history of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition; the opinion of Javanese people of '*buwuh or ngamplop*'; and their willing to maintenance this tradition. The data were collected from interview results, then, it would be analyzed and described in form of words in details.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Related Theory**

#### **The Theories of Sociocultural**

Sociocultural theory is a perspective theory connects to social interaction with cognitive development, particularly in the context of language acquisition.

Sociocultural theory emphasizes the significant influence of social interaction and cultural context on human cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). It posits that learning and development occur through interaction with more knowledgeable others within a specific cultural context, leading to the internalization of knowledge and skills. Essentially, this theory highlights the role of social and cultural factors in shaping individual thinking, feeling, and behavior.

Sociocultural theory is all about the societal and cultural influences that affect how we develop, think, feel, and behave. This approach seeks to understand how these societal factors interact with individual ones to influence how people learn, develop, and grow (Cherry, 2024).

Sociocultural theory is a combination between social interaction and cultural context. Social interaction is defined as a state where behaviour of one individual is deliberately reorganized and affected by the behaviour of another and vice versa (Hegtveldt and Turner, 1989). Whereas culture refers to a complex union of beliefs, etiquette, law, local

custom that comes from an individual as citizen (Taylor in Horton and Chester, 1996).

According to Hofstede (1999) culture can be understood through dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism. Thus, sociocultural refers to a man's behaviour who is effected to the others that reflects to beliefs, etiquette, law, local custom in a society.

### **The Javanese Culture**

Javanese is the largest island in Indonesia, home to 60 percent of the post-colonial nation's population. Javanese is spoken by people in Central Java, East Java, and Jogjakarta with more than 80 million speakers and 47 dialects (Laksono, 2011; Lewis et al., 2013 in Zhustiyantoro 2024). As one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia, Javanese culture has become an integral part of national identity and plays an important role in shaping widely held social values. Javanese culture has a significant role in the lives of Indonesian people (Koentjaraningrat, 2007).

Javanese culture is a rich and complex tapestry of traditions, customs, and beliefs passed down

trough generation. It's characterized by a strong emphasis on manners and politeness, with particular attention to language styles and social hierarchy. Javanese culture has own values harmony and respect, influencing behavior and interactions among people.

Javanese culture comes from various traditions, beliefs and ways of life. Javanese culture has traditions, customs, and ancient things that have been in Indonesia for so long (Ichsan, at all, 2022). Javanese tradition cannot be separated away from Javanese life style and belongs to local wisdom (Umar, 2020). In simply, Javanese culture is a culture comes from ancient times has noble values of Javanese people have.

Noble values of Javanese culture is presented in all elements of Javanese people life such as language, behavior, social activity, leadership, etc. Javanese culture has its own characteristic, prioritizes harmony and harmony when handling conflicts, is easy to compromise and dynamic, and has a wise attitude (Eliezar, 2016; Fauzan et al, 2021). The character values of Javanese culture offers an opportunity to shape the attitude of

students the attitude of student leaders and realize the character values of the Pancasila learner profile (Idana & Insani, 2024). The value of Javanese culture is shown from the kinds of their activities, one of them is *buwuh or ngamplop*.

### **Buwuh or Ngamplop Tradition**

'*Buwuh or Ngamplop*' is one of the Javanese people traditions to help others towards things or money. *Buwuhan* is the activity to provide assistance in the form of goods or services to event owners (Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021). 'Buwuh or ngamplop' tradition is the union of norms in a society and becomes social responsibility such as helping others, mutual cooperation, which is named in Javanese culture, '*sambat-sinambat dan sumbang-menyumbang*'.

The term 'Sumbang-menyumbang, sambat-sinambat' in Javanese means the way to asking help due to the pattern and politeness by visiting the neighbor to express the will to asking help. Meanwhile, the term of 'sumbang-menyumbang' refers to an action to give thing voluntary

(Khoiriyah&Suparman, 2023). According to Supardan, (2024), tradition is a pattern of behavior or belief that has become part of a culture that has been known for a long time so that it becomes a custom and belief that is passed down from generation to generation.

One of the traditions in Javanese society is donating (*buwuh or buwuhan*). Usually, people who gives '*buwuh or ngamplop*' have siblings with the event owner, the neighbors and the invited people. In KBBI, the big Indonesian dictionary, *buwuh* refers to a giving moment to give some money or materials from the guest to the host as a donation for a party or ceremony. Meanwhile, Geertz (2013) agreed that *buwuh* is a type of typical monetary donation from guests who come to a wedding celebration to the host because they have received food and service from the host. There is a group of people who shares roles to prepare a banquet for guests (Geertz and Hildread, 1983:70).

Additionally, Bukhori (2016) stated that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is a term in Javanese language that refers to an activity to donate main food such as rice, sugar, instant noodle, meal,

money, gift to the owner of event." Due to the explanations above of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is the activity involves society to help somebody who has a special event as the realization of the value of Javanese culture, helping and caring others.

In the realization of '*buwuh or ngamplop*', there is an implicit value of Javanese culture presented, helping and caring others. 'Implicitly, *buwuh or ngamplop* is the way to help and care the others, but it also consists of exchange process indeed (Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021).

'*Buwuh or ngamplop*' belongs to the culture's manner of Javanese people because of consisting of local wisdom values of Javanese, cooperation and tolerance. The culture of manners consists of local wisdom values of Javanese culture concerning various aspects of life, such as leadership values, tolerance, nationalism, justice, honesty, perfection, and so on (Ichsan et al, 2022).

Khairiyah and Sukarman (2023) stated that '*buwuh*' represents three social values, they are *Ta'awun* (helping others), *Ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *Tasamuh*

(tolerance). According to Masithoh et al., (2018) and Sardjuningsih, (2012), the tradition of buwuhan has changed its orientation, which was originally related to social cohesion, social almsgiving, is now more commercialized by taking into account profit and loss in the organization of marriage. In line with them, Abidin & Rahman (2013), Buwuhan is not a voluntary donation, but the person concerned must pay back the donation he received. This change in traditional orientation disrupts social harmony

#### **METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

The researchers used qualitative research as the approach in this research and case study as a type of the research. The researchers used qualitative to analyze the gained data because it describes in details all phenomena during observation and interviews. Qualitative data collection is more than simply deciding or whether you will observe or interview people (Creswell, 2012 *In Khasanah*, 2019).

The researchers developed an in depth-analysis of the cases that were bounded time and activity, ad

researchers collected the detail information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period (Yin, 2011).

The researchers used observation, questionnaire and interview to collect data. The researchers collected the varieties from questionnaire and will be completed by observation. For the observation and interview, the researchers focused on data and the phenomena happened during observation and interview. The questionnaires consists of 6 questions that explored of participants' understanding of this research topic.

The researchers analyzed the collected data from questionnaire first. They identified and classify the participants' answer in questionnaire in the table form of situation. Thus, they verified and validate the questionnaire's answers using interview results and observation sheet. Both of interview and observation were to strengthen the questionnaire results. Since the researchers could see the expressions of the participants during answering the questions and note the phenomena happen during interview.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sociocultural studies examine the interplay between social structures and cultural practices within a particular society. As mentioned in review of related theories, sociocultural studies the connection between social life and culture. The setting of this research is in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia.

### The History of *Buwuh or Ngamplop*

The term '*Buwuh or ngamplop*' refers to donation or gift to someone who is holding a celebration or important event, such as a wedding or death ((Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021). *Buwuhan* is usually in the form of goods or money, and is intended to help ease the burden of the owner of the celebration and strengthen ties (Bukhori, 2016).

'*Buwuhan or ngamplop*' is popular in Javanese people. Most of Javanese people, male and female know the term '*buwuh or ngamplop*'. It is shown from the participants' answer of Question 1 and 4 about participants' understanding of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' and their

opinion. The presented answers are below:

***M1: Give money***

***M2: Give a gift in any forms such as money or prize to the owner of event***

***M3: A culture to give a happiness to people who has a sadness or happy event.***

According to question number one, there are some male participants agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is an activity to donate much money to somebody who has an event, or having a sadness moment. Their answers is similar to female answers to question number one.

***F3: give money as a prize***

***F4: a culture to give money as a price to the event in a society such as wedding, visiting to the hospital. It doesn't to judge to social culture around.***

***F6: Some money that insert to the envelope to give to the people who has an event.***

Most of female participants have similar opinion about '*buwuh or ngamplop*'. They agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is one of the traditional culture of Javanese people because it connects to Javanese value, helping others.

'Helping others' is one of the Javanese culture that high moral values. '*Buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition

consists of helping activity that belongs to manner culture, because it educates the generation to help the others. The culture of manners consists of local wisdom values of Javanese culture concerning various aspects of life, such as leadership values, tolerance, nationalism, justice, honesty, perfection, and so on (Ichsan et al, 2022).

The rest of participant, both male and female, agreed that *'buwoh or ngamplop'* is the activity to come someone's event to fulfill their invitation. But, there is a contradiction from a female's answer of question number one. She agreed that *'buwuh or ngamplop'* is a good culture but she also state that it can be a burden for people. Her agreed statement was shown below:

**F5: it is an old activity in Javanese people, giving much money to the owner of event such as wedding, visiting colleagues who hospitalized, etc. This activity is a normal to be done, either it is done consciously or as the returning way.**

According to the answer of female participant above, it shows that she doesn't mind with the tradition of

*'buwuh or ngamplop'* because she believes this tradition has a deep meaning for social relationship in a society. She also believes if this tradition set people's mind about saving money indirectly.

It is in line with Paramadita et al (2024), *buwuhan* also has the potential to be a debt and the owner will donate in the future so that it becomes a means of saving. Because in the tradition of *Buwuhan*, it will create a sense of wanting to repay what people have given to the owner of the event. So, there are debts that must be returned according to the amount and form that were previously handed over.

Talking about donation, actually, *'buwuh or ngamplop'* tradition has a relationship between culture and accounting. Culture shapes habits, behaviors, ethics, and morals. Culture can influence a unique lens through which the application of scientific knowledges, one of them is understood accounting. (Manan et al, 2025).

Mental accounting is a cognitive process in which individuals record, summarize, analyze, and report financial

transactions or events to track cash flow and control spending. In mental accounting, the components involved include framing effects, specific accounts, self-control, decision-making, self-reports, and the hedonic treadmill. Humans consider spending as an experience to be evaluated (Thaler, 1999).

In simply, *'buwuh or ngamplop'* tradition is Javanese people way to educate their generation to count their money gotten by writing the nominal of money. Then, when the donator has a special event, they should return his money due to the nominal given. Therefore, their note of accounting balance sheet is fulfilled and its balance is normal. *'Buwuh or ngamplop'* can be the way to save money (Affandy, 2011).

*'Buwuh or ngamplop'* tradition does not only discuss about preserve Javanese culture, values, accounting, but it also discusses about sociocultural. As Vgotsky, 1978 mentioned in review of literature, sociocultural emphasized that the significant influence of social

interaction and cultural context on human cognitive development. In *'buwuh or ngamplop'* tradition, Javanese people educates their generation to combine social interaction and cultural context on human cognitive development.

Social interaction is shown from the way of Javanese people when involving a communication in an event. For example, Riska comes to her friend's wedding event. She gets an invitation and she comes. Riska will say hi to the receptionist of the wedding event and giving her gifts for her friend toward the receptionist. In this phenomenon, Riska involves a simple conversation with the receptionist. Her addressing to the receptionist and getting a small conversation is the form of social interaction.

Cultural context here, the time when Riska donates to the brides. Donates here refers to *'buwuh or ngamplop'*. In Javanese tradion, especially Surabaya, donation is named as buwuhan, it is an activity to help the host of event in many forms, goods or services (Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021).

Human cognitive development refers to learning and development occur through interaction with more knowledgeable others within a specific cultural context, leading to the internalization of knowledge and skills (Vgotsky, 1978). Essentially, this theory highlights the role of social and cultural factors in shaping individual thinking, feeling, and behavior

### **The Desire to Preserve Culture**

'*Buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition has been existed since long ago. Javanese people doing 'buwuh or ngamplop' tradition actually they only continue people habit before. They also believe if this tradition has been existed since their ancestors but in different style today. Most of participants, either male or female, believe that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition is existed in their neighborhood. Their answers are stated below:

**M3: Yes, there is a tradition of 'buwuh or ngamplop' around me. This tradition usually happens in marriage moment or visiting to the priest.**

**M5: Yes, that tradition can unify our social relationship, helping the host in payment, showing or thanks' expression of the moment.**

**F1: The old tradition and becomes a habit**

**F10: The society surround me follows this tradition. They always do this tradition in many kinds event such as wedding, circumcision, visiting people, etc.**

According to the participant's opinion in interview session, both male and female participants agreed 'buwuh or ngamplop' tradition has many function in social life, such as helping others to decrease the burden of payment. They also agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition enables to strengthen social relationship. The tradition of 'buwuh or ngamplop' can relieve the host's burden in organizing an event (Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021).

Most of participants do not mind to preserve '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition as their traditional culture. Most of participant receive this tradition as one of the Javanese cultural heritage.

**M1: I agree if 'buwuh or ngamplop' tradition need to be preserved to strengthen social relationship, creating togetherness feeling, and teaching sharing value. This tradition also preserves local culture which has high value to next generation.**

**M5: This tradition must be preserved because it belongs to ancestral heritage to strengthen siblings or neighbor relationship.**

**M7: Because it is a hereditary culture, so it must be done by us**

All male participants above agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' should be preserved because of cultural heritage. They want to keep the value of culture created by their ancestors since long time ago. They also stated that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' refers to manner culture, whereas it disappears today. Most of people begin to leave their traditional culture to follow the new and modern culture.

In line with male participants' answer, female participants also agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition should be preserved.

**F2: It must be preserved because it can strengthen the social relationship.****F3: preserved because it can help the host in releasing the burden but we should know the rules.****F4: it must be preserved as our caring to others. Sharing is caring.**

Most of female participants agreed that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition has a good purpose, such as helping others and fostering ties.

The response of participants both male and female show that most of Javanese people want to maintenance their culture as their way to honor to the ancestor and bequeath

their traditional heritage to the next generation. Additionally, the tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' has three kinds of social value in a society such as help others, tolerance, and kinship. Khairiyyah and Sukarman (2023) stated that '*buwuh*' represents three social values, they are *Ta'awun* (helping others), *Ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *Tasamuh* (tolerance).

This research got positive and negative response from the participants. The researchers also found a contrast opinion of this tradition. Actually, there were only three female participants who express their object to this tradition.

**F5: 'buwuh or ngamplop can be a problem of someone's giving to others'.****F13: It is better to delete this culture in order not to burden the poor people****F16: I wish this tradition can be delete.**

Those three female participants above agreed that the tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' can burden people when they do not have much money to donate or buy good to give to the host. Affandy (2018) stated the similar opinion to support those female participants' opinion above,

‘At the time of the wedding celebration, there will be an officer who receives guests with an attendance book in front of him and records the guests who attend along with the amount of donations given by each guest.

Those answers above show that the tradition of ‘*buwuh or ngamplop*’ here some people object to this tradition because they feel it can add Their contradictive opinion was in line with Rachmawati & Muchammad, 2021, stated that *buwuh or ngamplop* tradition consists of exchange process indeed. Regarding to exchange process by Rachmawati and Muchammad, ‘*buwuh or ngamplop*’ refers to returning the donation that gotten by the host. In line with Rachmawati and Muchammad, Paradita et al (2024) stated that *buwuh or ngamplop* is a form of donation that is interpreted as a debt and must be returned by the recipient.

The contradictive opinions above in line with refusal opinion of society about ‘*buwuhan or ngamplop*’ can be stated as respecting the culture but they do not want to preserve it because of their financial situation. *Buwuh* is considered a dependent or

debt so it must be returned (Sulistyowati et al, 2024).

Those contradictive opinions about ‘*buwuh or ngamplop*’ tradition are in line with Masithoh et al (2018) and Sardjuningsih (2012), which stated that today the tradition of *buwuhan* has changed its orientation. Actually, it was originally related to social cohesion, social almsgiving, is now more commercialized by taking into account profit and loss in the organization of marriage. In addition, Abidin & Rahman (2013), *buwuhan* is not a voluntary donation, but the person concerned must pay back the donation he received. This change in traditional orientation disrupts social harmony.

‘*Buwuh or ngamplop*’ is one of traditional cultures of Javanese people contains a value of life, helping, sharing and caring. ‘*Buwuh or ngamplop*’ belongs to cultural heritage because it talks about value and belief. Most of Javanese culture educates moral values in its all cultural heritage.

‘*Buwuh or ngamplop*’ does not only cover about culture, but it also talks scientific-knowledge, accounting. In accounting, ‘*buwuh or ngamplop*’ has similar situation to

'deposit', but it does in different way and term. This tradition actually belongs to socialcultural product because it emphasizes culture and context.

The tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' can develop human cognitive because there is an interaction between people and specific culture. In this tradition, most of Javanese people use their local native language to ask the question to their colleagues. For instance, '*sampeyan buwuh piro?*' (How many do you donate to this event?). This context is the influence of social role and cultural factors in shaping individual thinking, feeling and behavior(Vgotsky, 1978). This tradition also involves particular language used to express the question.

Vgotsky's opinion is proven by some researchers who used in this research. Paradita et al (2024) found that their participants stated that '*buwuh or ngamplop*' tradition is a grant, but the tradition that is carried out here indirectly considers this buwuh tradition as a debt because if I do not return the assistance given I feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. In simply, the tradition

of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' has been changed goal and form into accounting. In past decades, '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is the way to express people their care to the host of event, to ease handle the event. But now, the tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' is the transactional accounting and it becomes Javanese social culture today.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusions

The tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' refers to sociocultural, the combination of social context and culture. Javanese people has many kinds of cultures, one of them is manner culture. The tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*' belongs to manner culture. It means there are many roles to be obligated by Javanese people and generation, politeness.

Javanese culture always consists of politeness in all activities, one of them is the tradition of '*buwuh or ngamplop*'. This tradition teaches the generation to help the others without returning wishing. Mutual cooperation, tolerance are the value cultural that want to be taught by

Javanese people through the tradition of 'buwuh or ngamplop'. This research helps the students to know the process of shaping traditional cultures, politeness, and how the language involves in shaping a culture.

### Suggestion

'Buwuh or ngamplop' should be preserved by people, especially Javanese people to continue the ancestors' cultural heritage that created since long time ago. This tradition should be adjust to the condition of the environment around, in order to avoid burden feeling to help others through sharing goods and donating money to the owner of event.

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