

Research Article

Strengthening The Role Of The Village In The Preservation Of Customs During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This article aims to investigate the policy shift of local cultural management in Banyumas Regency during the Covid-19. The pandemic has brought a wide impact beyond the health issues including cultural activities that tend to be overlooked. The local culture of Banyumas was selected because local cultures other than Javanese somehow failed to be noticed by the experts since the New Order Era. This paper is library research that examines cultural policies. The result reveals that the Banyumas local culture has been managed by the local government of Banyumas through the culture and tourism office. In cultural activities, there are two patterns, namely cultural activities held by the Banyumas Regency government and cultural activities held by the village administration. During the pandemic, nonetheless, more activities are carried out by the village administration and local society. It shows that the social-cultural bond between the local people and the village administration is strong in the attempt of preserving their customs and traditions. The value of mutual assistance is a pivotal contribution to support the cultural activities amid the less favorable situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This outcome also confirms that a study of cultural policy cannot be separated from the necessity of understanding how the village administration as the lowest government unit plays a significant role in cultural preservation along with the local society.

Keywords: *policies; management; culture; Covid-19 pandemic; village administration*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the reform era, cultural management in Indonesia in the context of decentralization has become a crucial and compelling study. Decentralization is a distribution of power and authority based on territory, which deals with the extent to which power and authority are handed through state hierarchy along with the institution and the process within (Smith, 1985). When the New Order fell, there was a shift from the dominance of Javanese culture to the rise of regional issues. Similarly, in terms of the study focus, the shift occurs in which the experts show more interest in investigating local cultures. Culture is a system containing inherited symbolic concepts. It serves as a frame of reference and becomes material for the process of self and group identification (Abdullah, 2009). It is local because it is specific to certain community groups.

This is in accordance with Jones' study (2015) showing that the most pivotal issue in the reform era is the development of ethnic identity politics and initiatives for cultural policy in terms of decentralization policies. Ethnic identity is a collection of ideas about ethnic groups (Martin & Nakayama, 2007). Moreover, the cultural policy includes policies and strategies for cultural development (Endraswara, 2017). In line with Jones's study, Schlehe (2011) showed that when the reform took place in Indonesia, it was necessary to re-understand the policies for managing and developing ethnic-cultural diversity. The local government policies related to cultural preservation include the establishment of regional arts councils that hold performing arts and festivals, regional museums, cultural parks, and others.

In the context of decentralization policies, the commitment of local governments to treat local culture through policy is crucial. The local government is the party that funds cultural management and development. For this reason, cultural affairs cannot be separated from the state. The study from Silva et al. (2013) showed that the role of local government and local culture becomes two inseparable flows. The decentralization policy has opened wide opportunities for local governments to preserve local cultures. There is only a commitment from the local government to encourage the broadest range of the government and society to maintain their traditions and culture. So far, the efforts of the local government to treat local culture have shown positive initiation and targeted intangible and material culture.

Nevertheless, the Covid-19 pandemic has changed a number of policies at the local level. The widening pandemic effects on aspects of life have made the focus of the local government's attention and funding shift to the handling of Covid-19 patients, the campaigns of health protocol, the provision of medical devices, and even the coverage economic problems and other social issues. A study from Eddyono et al (2020) stated that the Covid-19 pandemic has created a different effect for each sector in society. A similar situation was also seen in Banyumas when the

Covid-19 pandemic began to spread and shifted the local government's focus to manage the development policies in the area.

All of these regulations were followed by efforts to deal with the Covid-19 by the Banyumas Regency government such as funding, setting up micro-lockdown mechanisms in villages, providing quarantine places and logistics for patients, procuring masks and hand washing equipment, setting shop and mall operating hours, and establishing cooperation with mass organizations. None of the policies issued by local governments pertains to cultural management. This shows that there are no local government regulations to support cultural management during the Covid-19 pandemic in Banyumas.

In regard to the conditions above, this paper aims to examine changes in the management of local cultural activities in Banyumas during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this case, it also investigates which parties then become the key support so that cultural activities persist as a part of the efforts to preserve Banyumas's customs and culture. The culture in this sense is the Banyumas culture. This peripheral culture is selected in the hope that the research on peripheral culture including Banyumas also becomes in the spotlight among the experts of Javanese culture.

Needless to say, during the New Order regime, Javanese culture had drawn experts' attention. This is in line with the strong influence of Javanese culture in the political practices and governance of the New Order. Several related studies involve Holt et al. (1972) who stated that there is a dominant cultural pattern originating from the dominant ethnic group, namely the Javanese ethnicity, coloring the attitudes, behavior, and political orientation of the elite in Indonesia. In another study by Pemberton (2003), he stated that the power of the New Order grew a lot of state domination. Pemberton reviewed it through his understanding of Javanese texts. Therefore, he explained various political events as a form of cultural display. Sarsito (2006) showed that Javanese culture was a source of legitimacy during the New Order era. The rulers manipulated the use of Javanese cultural values to shape people's character. Likewise, Irawanto and Ramsey (2011), Jones (2015) even emphasized that in Indonesia. The Javanese have come to be recognized over time as the most culturally and politically dominant culture. The dominance of the study of scientists on Javanese culture makes other cultures less of a concern.

Therefore, this paper pays attention to the peripheral culture, the Banyumas culture. It is also an effort to get the attention of experts on the study of periphery culture, as a unique study, and this shows its novelty. So far, the customs and traditions of Banyumas culture have received little attention from experts. The implementation of decentralization policy and cultural management by the state varies according to local and regional needs. The era of decentralization has

opened up wide space for local governments in Indonesia to develop local cultures. The efforts of local governments to develop local culture deserve the attention of experts because many of them present some issues of novelty. Moreover, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the cultural management by local governments raises new phenomena regarding opportunities for local governments to manage cultural activities. It can be seen in the management of cultural activities in Banyumas. The Covid-19 pandemic has inevitably changed the focus of the local governments' attention, including cultural management. The Covid-19 pandemic is also a great space to show who has a stronger role in the management of local culture. It is also the novelty that this study wants to show. In regard to this, it is intriguing to identify and examine the key parties to maintain efforts for cultural activities amid the ongoing pandemic and reveal strengthened phenomena during this situation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is cultural policy research using library research. The retrieval of data and information applies documentation studies as the main data source, supported by photographs or other archives. Research on cultural policy is crucial as a part of cultural development. Cultural policy research is also vital to reveal the cultural development strategies that have been and will be carried out (Endraswara, 2017). Accordingly, the researchers attempted to uncover the local cultural development policies carried out by the Banyumas Regency government and its changes during the Covid-19 pandemic. For this reason, the main library sources used in this study are local cultural policies in Banyumas, policies on handling the Covid-19 pandemic, information of the official local government website, and information from online mass media related to the cultural activity agenda during the Covid-19 pandemic in Banyumas. For the development of studies, tracing the results of related research in various regions either nationwide or worldwide was also carried out. The analysis was conducted by observing, understanding, and explaining data and information in-depth, and then formulating theoretical abstractions to produce statements regarding the results of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Changes of Banyumas Cultural Management during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Administratively, Banyumas is a regency located in Central Java Province. As for the cultural context, Banyumas culture is a variant of Javanese culture which is located in the western

part of Javanese culture. According to Koentjaraningrat (1984), Banyumas culture differs from Javanese culture in terms of its distinctive accent, ancient forms of social organization, life-cycle ceremonies, folklore, and local arts.

In the cultural map of Java, Banyumas is located in the border area of the distribution between Javanese and Sundanese culture. In this case, both Javanese and Sundanese cultures have had a unique influence on the development of Banyumas culture (Priyadi, 2002). In social life, Javanese society recognizes two main social strata: the lower layer filled by *kawula* (ordinary people), and the upper layer called *gusti* (the ruling class). The concept of *kawula gusti* shows the relationship between high and low groups, and a close interdependence between two different yet inseparable groups (Moertono, 1985). Meanwhile, there are three layers of social stratification of the Sundanese people: the *menak* (aristocratic group) who occupy the top layer, the *santana* who are in the middle layer, and the *somah* and *cacah* who are in the lowest layer (Lubis, 2000). The existence of the *menak* is inseparable from the influence of power when Sundanese culture underwent changes in historical development since Sunda was also controlled by the Mataram Kingdom in the past.

In contrast, Banyumas people do not have any social layers, but rather they are best known as egalitarian or ordinary people (Priyadi, 2002). In a cultural context, the *panginyongan* is the key support. "*Penginyongan*" comes from the word "*inyong*" (I) referring to the first person singular which denotes a form of informal, egalitarian, modest, and humorous social relations. The spirit of egalitarianism is proven by addressing another person by name. Rarely do they pay attention to the address terms that are closely related to social status. Banyumas can be said to be a symbol of Javanese and Sundanese fusion reflected in the language used by the local community which contains both Javanese and Sundanese elements.

Along with the decentralization policy, cultural management varies based on regional needs. The management of culture is held by the Banyumas Regency government, particularly the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office. In accordance with its name, cultural management is integrated simultaneously with youth, sports, and tourism management. Even cultural and tourism affairs are combined with youth affairs and sports. Apart from the issue of youth and sports, the integration of culture and tourism management at least indicates that the two fields are interrelated to become cultural tourism in Banyumas.

Changes in cultural management at decentralization policy in Banyumas Regency by the Youth, Sports, Culture and Tourism Office, are in line with Robinson's study (2018). He noticed the cultural management conducted by local governments as a form of municipalization of cul-

ture, where local governments are responsible for managing culture as well as funding. The shift in cultural management is also followed by the role of cultural management by local arts councils and the preservation of customs and culture. At the national level, the policy related to cultural heritage is the Law No. 11 of 2010 on Cultural Heritage. Currently, the culture-managing policy in Banyumas is the Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2015 on Cultural Heritage. The policy regulates the protection, development, and utilization of cultural heritage in Banyumas. Cultural heritage is a material cultural heritage in the form of objects, buildings, sites, and areas. Its existence needs to be preserved. In this context, Endraswara (2017) noticed the establishment of regional regulations to regulate cultural heritage as a form of cultural policy strategy in terms of the management and development of archeology and museums.

Instead of the issue of cultural heritage, the cultural policy strategy developed by the Banyumas Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office is done through a routine program of art activities, traditional ceremonies, and festivals. The program of the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office does not only serve as an effort to manage and preserve culture but also as an effort to develop tourism in Banyumas. The following are the details of the Office of Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Agenda in 2020 which is called the "Banyumas Tourism and Cultural Event Calendar":

Table 1. Banyumas Tourism and Cultural Event of the 2020 Calendar

No.	Activities	Time
1	Boyongan Saka Guru Sipanji	15-Feb-2020
2	The heirloom parade of Banyumas Anniversary	16-Feb-2020
3	Traditional art performances in Jenderal Soedirman Museum.	21-Mar-2020
4	Jaro Rojab in Cikakak village	22-Mar-2020
5	Tawur Agung Kasana in Klinting village	24-Mar-2020
6	Traditional art performances in Andang Pangrenan Park	25-Mar-2020
7	Purnamaan, Kungkum Banyubening in Banjar Penepen village	8-9 Apr 2020
8	Traditional art performances in Andang Pangrenan Park	10-Apr-2020
9	Unggah-unggahan Bonokeling in Pekuncen village	17-Apr-2020
10	Traditional art performances in Jenderal Soedirman Museum	18-Apr-2020
11	Tutupan Sadran Kali Tanjung in Tambaknegara village	23-Apr-2020
12	Traditional art performances in Jenderal Soedirman Museum	30-May-2020
13	Lengger Calung performances in Baturaden	31-May-2020

No	Activities	Time
14	Traditional art performances in Andang Pangrenan Park	06-Jun-2020
15	Traditional art performances in Jenderal Soedirman Museum	20-Jun-2020
16	Banyumas Wera	21-Jun-2020
17	Traditional art performances in Andang Pangrenan Park	04-Jul-2020
18	Traditional art performances in Jenderal Soedirman Museum	18-Jul-2020
19	The election of Kakang Mbekayu as Banyumas Tourism Ambassadors	22-Aug-2020
20	Festival of Kentongan	29-Aug-2020
21	Festival of Takbir and Bedhug in Sokaraja	29-Aug-2020
22	Festival of Baturaden	01-Sep-2020
23	Kendalisada Art Festival	14-Sep-2020
24	Festival of Rewandha Bojana in Cikakak village	18-Oct-2020
25	Penjamasan Jimat in Kalisalak and Kalibening village	30-Oct-2020
26	Year-End Event	31-Dec-2020

Source: <http://dinporabudpar.banyumaskab.go.id>

The cultural development programs by the Banyumas Regency government ran smoothly throughout 2020 before the Covid-19 spread in Banyumas. In February 2020, according to the planned schedule, *Boyongan Saka Guru Sipanji* was held in Figure 1. It is a tracing activity to commemorate the transfer of the government center from Banyumas city to Purwokerto city on January 7, 1937. The procession for moving the center of the government was carried out by involving artists and the community from 27 sub-districts in Banyumas. The procession of displacement was carried out by carrying a replica of *Pendapa Si Panji* in turn to the center of the government in Purwokerto. The trip was about 16 km long and was carried out alternately.

Furthermore, cultural activities in commemoration of the Anniversary of Banyumas were carried out with the Heirloom Parade (*Kirab Pusaka*) on 16 February 2020 as far as 2 kilometers in Figure 2. These activities were directly managed by the Banyumas Regency government. The parade started from the *Pendapa* Deputy Regent's yard to the *Pendapa Si Panji* with four Banyumas heirloom weapons. This was attended by the Regent and Deputy Regent of Banyumas and their staff, leaders and the local legislature, artists, students, and people. The parade was concluded with a traditional *Palereman* ceremony.



Figure 1. Boyongan Saka Guru Sipanji in Banyumas (Source: <https://www.gatra.com>)

Figure 2. Heirloom Parade in Banyumas (Source: <https://jatengprov.go.id>)

The art performances in museums and city parks planned by the Banyumas Regency government 8 (eight) times a year constitute a development policy in the public space to show local cultural identity namely Banyumas culture in Table 1. In line with this, Schlehe (2011) stated that cultural theme parks are part of the public space to carry out innovative visions related to globally oriented cultural identity within the framework of cultural diversity in Indonesia. The efforts of the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office of Banyumas to organize various festivals as intangible cultural heritage are certainly positive since Indonesia as a member of the Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO has yet to have an Intangible Cultural Heritage Act (Dachlan, 2015).

However, when Covid-19 began to hit Banyumas in March 2020, it significantly affected the local government policies and the colors of people's lives. In March, the *ebeg* traditional performing arts at the *Andhang Pangrenan Park* and the Museum Jenderal Soedirman should have been held. Both of these events were finally canceled due to the Covid-19 which started to spread (<https://suarabanyumas.com>). This situation is understandable because, at the beginning of its outbreak, the local government seemed to be less ready to anticipate the spread of Covid-19.

During April-September, a lot of cultural activities were called off in anticipation of Virus-19 transmission. The cancellation was applied to the events which involved relatively large-scale participants. The main concern was that the events would trigger a crowd that is prone to the spread of the Covid-19 virus. According Table 1, several cultural activities being canceled were Traditional Art Performance in Jenderal Soedirman Museum, Traditional Art Performance in Andang Pangrenan Park, Art Performance in Baturaden, the Election of *Kakang*

Mbekayu Banyumas Tourism Ambassadors, *Takbir* and *Bedhug* Festival in Sokaraja, Banyumas *Wera* Festival, *Tawur Kesanga*, *Kungkum Kali Cawang*, *Tutupan Sadran Kali*, and *Rewanda Bojana* Festival.

Several Persistent Cultural Activities amid the Pandemic: The Strengthened Village Administration Contribution

Regardless of the given situation, some other cultural activities continued to be held such as the *Jaro Rojab* tradition in Cikakak Village (Figure 3). *Jaro Rojab* tradition is the replacement of the fence around the Saka Tunggal Mosque in Cikakak Village. The tradition was held on March 22, 2020, attended by limited participants. This tradition was carried out by replacing fences approximately 300 meters long starting from the fence of Kyai Toleh's tomb as the founder of the Saka Tunggal Mosque to the fence of the Saka Tunggal Mosque. The event was led by three caretakers called *Dhuwur*, *Tengah*, and *Lebak*. They also performed silent meditation without talking to each other. Participants in this tradition were only from surrounding villages, such as Windunegara, Wlahar, and Jambu. In previous years, participants came from Cilacap, Tasikmalaya, and Bandung. The limited number of participants was set out in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Moreover, the tradition of no conversation during the activity also supported the health measure to minimize the spread of the virus.



Figure 3. Jaro Rojab tradition in Cikakak before and during the pandemic

Source: <https://suarabanyumas.com>



Figure 4. The preparation of *Unggah-unggahan* ritual before and during the pandemic
 Source: <https://news.detik.com>

In April 2020, the persistent activities were *Kungkum Banyu Wening* tradition in Banjarpanepen Village and Bonokeling *Unggah-unggahan* in Pekuncen Village (Figure 4). The Bonokeling ceremony in Pekuncen Village was held with a very limited number of participants and restricted to the native residents of the village. The head of the Bonokeling Traditional Community, Sumitro said that the ceremony was held by missing out on the tradition of long march by a number of residents outside Pekuncen Village who generally also took part in this event. Furthermore, members of Bonokeling descent are not allowed to attend the ceremony. The ritual is usually followed by more than 1,000 people, while in this year there were only 12 traditional elders consisting of caretakers and *bedogol* (<https://news.detik.com>, accessed 12 December 2020).

In the meantime, Kendalisada Art Festival was held virtually on September 26-27, 2020. This festival was carried out to commemorate the establishment of Kaliiori Village. It is said that the name Kendalisada comes from the Arabic term *shahada* signifying the Muslim faith. It is also believed that this festival is intended to signify Islam's entry and spread in the area which accommodates the traditional values. Kendalisada Art festival persists in this pandemic since it is fully supported by traditional dancers and the local administration by utilizing technology to hold it online. Before the pandemic, this festival was carried out in collaboration with the Banyumas government and Kaliiori village administration.

Other persisting traditional activities in the midst of a pandemic with health protocols and restrictions on visitors are *Jamasan Jimat* in Kalisalak and Kalibening Villages. Both took place in October 2020. At the ceremony, visitors were not allowed to enter the traditional ceremony

area but to witness the washing of the heirloom of the King of Mataram Amangkurat I. The *Jamasan Jimat* tradition had lasted for 343 years when Amangkurat I passed Banyumas to Tegal on his escape as the Mataram was attacked by Trunajaya from Madura. The washing of *Jamasan Pusaka* in Kalibening might have taken place with more participants. The procession itself is washing of about 300 heirlooms and restored at the Banyumas Heritage Museum (Priyadi, 2011).

In more detail, the strategies of the culture development policies are divided into two schemes. First, program activities are carried out at the district level and implemented by district governments, and second, program activities are carried out at the village level by each village government. Those which had been practiced for a long time at the village level were intentionally brought up to the district government and placed as one of the cultural agendas of the district level. In the context of the two schemes above, the management of cultural policies in Banyumas is in line with the study from Silva et al. (2013) that the role of the local government and local culture becomes two inseparable flows. The local government is the party that funds cultural management and development.

However, not all cultural management policies depend on the role of the district government. Apart from being managed by the district government, the management of cultural activities appears to be strong in policies at the rural level. One of the studies related to policy and governance at the village level is from Kuncoro (2013) who stated that in the era of reform in Indonesia, villages are a representation of the state, where the organization carried out by village heads and village communities has a strong influence and the relationship between villages and governance above it is also influenced by the leadership of the village head. In line with the stipulation of the Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, the village has the authority which is implemented in village governance, implemented in village development, fostered by village community, and empowered by village communities.

This authority is based on community initiatives, the rights of origin, and the customs of each village. In regard to this, the study of Sobari (2019) stated that the Law No.6 of 2014 on Villages is a form of modernization of village government management to develop its potential and to strengthen the local cultures. The village autonomy can also be a distinctive factor between the village and district management. He emphasized that discussion on rural politics is inseparable from the social and cultural context of village communities. This study is in line with Sobari's study. When the Covid-19 pandemic took place, it would not be appropriate to assume that the persistent cultural activities were carried out during the pandemic since they were indeed the authority of the village government. It is worth noticing that this is a cultural issue inherent within

the government and village communities. Hence, the cultural management in each village government is not something new after the Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages was stipulated. Long before this law was enacted, the village government and the community had made a tremendous contribution to preserving local customs and culture.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the village government has become the main actor in developing local culture, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is in line with Kangas et al. ' study (2017). He stated that the actor's role is to revitalize new roles for cultural actors including art, past legacy, sociocultural activities, and the potential to change the politics of cultural policy. The Covid-19 hampered the district government in implementing local cultural development programs. At the time, the village government came up as the key actor. It can be said then that the basis of local cultural development has so far been largely held by the village government. In the context of cultural management, the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be an area to redefine parties who have authentically preserved culture from the past and those who have recently played a "new" important role in it. The district government seems difficult to define, plan, and direct cultural management towards village government. In fact, it is the village government that has contributed from a long time ago in managing and developing local customs and culture.

In the meantime, cultural activities such as *Jaro Rojab*, *Unggah-unggahan Bonokeling*, and *Jamasan Jimat* proceed despite its uneasiness. Assuming that this tradition can be carried out by a few people is superficial. *Jaro Rojab* is a tradition of replacing ancestral graves and heritage mosques of Cikakak Village passing down over generations. The people of Cikakak Village are followers of *Aboge Islam* (Islam that still adopts local traditions). Similarly, the *unggah-unggahan Bonokeling* tradition in Cikakak Village has been practiced for a long time (Priyadi, 2011a). Likewise, *Jamasan Jimat* tradition in Kalisalak Village has been a very valuable part of community life since ancient times. In the *Jamasan Jimat* tradition, people carry out a ceremony to purify the heirlooms of the Mataram (Priyadi, 2011b). Actually, the three villages have been established as traditional villages in Banyumas (Marwah, 2015). However, the management of the village's customs has not developed massively to become an established tourism village. As a reference for studies that discuss tourism villages based on local culture, the study by Orbawati et al. (2020) can be read.

In the context of inherent customs and culture, despite the pandemic, it is easy to understand that the village government and the community still have their own interpretations and initiatives to carry on cultural activities. They find it difficult to separate this tradition from their inherent lives. In line with this situation, a study from Bebbington et al. (2004) confirms that cultur-

al forms have an influence on governance at the local level. Therefore, the policies taken are more oriented to the needs of the community in accordance with inherent customs rather than considering the government management at the top level (the district government).

Another interesting fact to describe how the community in the villages in Banyumas keeps on carrying out cultural activities amid the pandemic is the strong value of *gotong royong* (cooperation). The word *gotong royong* is a local term that means mutual assistance among people to complete work easier. This is in line with the study of Acciaioli (2001). He shows that *gotong royong* is a key element of culture in Indonesia. *Gotong royong* can be defined as a form of cooperation between individuals or groups of people to achieve mutual desire and happiness. *Gotong royong* is a moral value in society, especially in rural areas in Indonesia. Community activities involving cooperation can be seen in daily activities, such as cleaning the environment, building public facilities, helping community members who are having a celebration, and other occasions.

Even the study of Matulada (1986) stated that *gotong royong* and *musyawarah* (mutual consensus) in society are dominant in solving problems in the social and state life. In the context of democracy, both are democratic values that have been practiced in the political process at the village level for a long time. These traditions in all their variants have been lasting for centuries during the kingdom to the present, especially in rural areas. As a result, *gotong royong* is not only about getting work done but also about solving problems and strengthening community relations.

Reflecting on the traditions of rural communities in Indonesia, Accioli's study that shows mutual cooperation as a key element in Indonesian culture as well as the Matulada's study which confirms that mutual cooperation is also practiced for a long time in the political process in rural areas can be used as the best and most important explanation of the strength of the village community mutual assistance mechanism in this context. The cultural activities of *Jaro Rojab*, *Unggah-unggahan Bonokeling*, and *Jamasan Jimat* are conducted with the support of all communities and the village government. In this case, the ceremonial procession requires a lot of equipment, food offerings, clothing, and other ceremonial necessities. To do the *Jaro Rojab*, also requires financial support for the fence around the tomb and the heirloom mosque. Likewise, for the purposes of the *Unggah-unggahan Bonokeling* ceremony, a lot of ceremonial equipment is needed, such as bamboo containers, flowers, incense, food offerings, and so on. Similarly, some preparation is also provided to support the *Jamasan Jimat* ceremony. All the fulfillment of the traditional ceremonial needs cannot be separated from the support of all residents to work together in the form of providing tools, food, including good cooperation and division of tasks.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, it is certainly uneasy to meet the needs. Nevertheless, the ceremonial process can be still held according to the prevailing regulations. This condition is possible to run with the mutual support of the village community and the local village government. In spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, the ceremonial procession runs well with strict health protocols. All of these possibilities can happen because of the local values of mutual support from both local people and the village governments.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic has indeed hit various sectors of community life. Inevitably, Banyumas is also one of the areas experiencing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the sectors affected by the pandemic, the cultural sector seems to be overlooked. As library research, this study may be limited in terms of the exploration of data and information in more depth. However, from all the data and information collected, it is worth saying that the cultural management in Banyumas is one of the areas that also struggles due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This study found that the Covid-19 has hampered the district government in implementing local cultural development programs. At the same time, the village government has come up as the key actor. Therefore, the basis of local cultural development has so far been largely held by the village government.

In the context of cultural management, the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be an area to re-define parties who have authentically preserved culture from the past and those who have recently played a “new” important role in it. In this context, the village government and society appear to “take over” the contributions. The pandemic has shown the strengthening of the role of villages in preserving their customs and culture. Cultural activities originally belonged to local people. Thus, needless to say, when a pandemic occurs they will passionately maintain them. The district government indeed claims them as annual cultural development programs. Nevertheless, when the Covid-19 pandemic started and the district government had to call off many scheduled cultural activities, the village government and the community came up as the key actors to carry those activities out with their respective customs and traditions. The village government and the community share their interpretations and initiatives to carry on cultural activities. It is difficult to separate this tradition from their inherent lives. Culture is the inherent thing that lies in the heart of the community and village government. By the cultural value of cooperation, it is a vital and supportive element to preserve and to proceed the cultural activities amid the prolonged pandemic.

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