

Analysis of Sharia and Aqidah Values in the Ngejalang Tradition as a Source of Learning in Islamic Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

This research is driven by the urgent need to explore Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning resources rooted in local wisdom, specifically focusing on the integrative acculturation within the Ngejalang tradition of the Lampung Saibatin community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur. Amidst modernization, this tradition persists as a vital cultural identity containing significant educational content, yet it faces the risk of shifting meanings if not formally reconstructed as scientific learning material. Consequently, this study aims to analyze the fundamental values of faith, sharia, and morals within the Ngejalang tradition to position it as a contextual PAI resource. Employing a descriptive qualitative method with an ethnopedagogical approach, primary data was gathered through participant observation and in-depth interviews, utilizing interactive analysis to examine Ngejalang as 'urf sahiih' (sound custom). The findings reveal that Ngejalang represents a unique manifestation of acculturation that transforms pilgrimage rituals into instruments for strengthening the pillars of Islam. Faith is internalized through the concept of tauhid via tadzkiatul maut (remembrance of death), while sharia values are implemented through the principle of al-'aadatau muhakkamah, where Islamic law serves as an active filter for ritual processes. Furthermore, moral values are reflected in a "character laboratory" that fosters ta'dzim (respect), generosity, and social cohesion. Ultimately, this study confirms that the Ngejalang tradition holds strong relevance as an ethnopedagogical PAI source, successfully integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains to internalize divine values and religious character while maintaining the absolute purity of monotheism.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a pluralistic and multicultural nation, where ethnic and cultural diversity constitutes a unique national identity (Thahir, 2023). In a socio-religious context, the arrival of Islam in the archipelago did not eradicate deeply rooted local cultures but

rather sparked dynamic interactions that gave rise to cultural acculturation (Afandi, 2023). One concrete manifestation of this harmony is the Ngejalang tradition among the Lampung Saibatin community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur (Mutia, 2023). Ideally, this tradition is positioned as 'urf sahiih (correct custom), a cultural practice aligned with Islamic sharia principles and serving as a medium for cultural da'wah (Islamic outreach) to maintain social cohesion within the Muslim community.

However, in reality, there is a significant gap between these idealistic values and the challenges of the era of disruption. The tide of modernization and digitalization brings the threat of value deconstruction, which tends to discredit local practices as outdated or merely physical ceremonies (Fauzan, 2025; Ningrum & Abdullah, 2025). This phenomenon is complicated by the stigma from some communities who misinterpret the term "Ngejalang" with negative connotations (Nopia et al., 2022). Without a profound reinterpretation, this tradition risks losing its spiritual spirit and moral education, its primary foundation, especially in the eyes of the younger generation.

This gap demands a robust theological and pedagogical analysis to validate the tradition's position within a religious framework. This research is supported by the theory of cultural acculturation, which views the integration of religious teachings and local traditions as a process that does not eliminate the identity of each element (Azzahra et al., 2025; Toha et al., 2024). Furthermore, the structural functionalism perspective reinforces the analysis that the Ngejalang tradition functions as a social structure that maintains community solidarity and integration (Khulwah et al., 2024; Nopia et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2020). Through this lens, Ngejalang is not simply an annual routine, but rather a defense mechanism for local Islamic identity (Hardi, 2018; Khulwah et al., 2024).

In the academic realm, previous studies have indeed highlighted the Ngejalang tradition in the context of cultural tourism or aesthetic transformations, such as batik motifs (Hakim, 2022; Khoiruddin, 2023; Kurniawan, 2023). However, there is a gap in the literature (gap analysis) that specifically examines the internalization of Islamic values—including aspects of faith, sharia, and morals—in the Ngejalang tradition. To date, these essential aspects have not been widely studied as instruments for sustainable informal Islamic education, even though these values are at the heart of the practice of pilgrimage and communal prayer within this tradition.

The uniqueness of this research lies in the reconstruction of the meaning of Ngejalang through theological filtering, demonstrating that this local practice serves as a medium for the community to implement the theory of tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul). Unlike previous descriptive-anthropological research, this study integrates methodological analysis using the Islamic jurisprudence principle of al-'aadatu muhakkamah (custom can be made law). This approach aims to validate the position of local traditions as valid learning resources within the framework of absolute sharia.

Furthermore, this research projects the Ngejalang tradition as a learning resource in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). The relevance of this tradition lies in its ability to simplify the concepts of eschatology and respect for ancestors into concrete practices that are easily understood by students. This innovation offers a new framework for

developing a curriculum based on local wisdom (ethnopedagogy), allowing for the teaching of Islamic faith and sharia through a contextual approach that is closely related to the daily lives of the community.

Building upon this urgency, this research was conducted to deeply analyze the Islamic faith and faith values contained in the Ngejalang tradition. By documenting and analyzing these values, this research aims not only to preserve cultural heritage but also to formulate a local wisdom-based education that is relevant to the challenges of the times. It is hoped that the results of this study will enrich the treasury of Islamic cultural studies and serve as a reference for strengthening the religious character of society amidst the currents of globalization.

2. METHOD

This research employed a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach. This approach was chosen to in-depth explore the socio-religious phenomena within the Ngejalang tradition within the Lampung Saibatin community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur. Specifically, this research employed an ethnopedagogical framework, examining local cultural practices as sources of values and learning within the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI).

The research was conducted in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur, Pesisir Tengah District, Pesisir Barat Regency. This location was chosen because the local community still maintains the authenticity of the Ngejalang tradition amidst the tide of modernization. Field research was conducted over several months to capture the momentum of the tradition's implementation directly.

The selection of subjects and informants in this study was conducted in a planned manner using a purposive sampling technique to ensure the credibility and depth of the data obtained. Key informants represented a range of authorities and perspectives, including traditional leaders (Sai Batin) as holders of traditional authority, religious leaders (Ulama/Ustaz) to validate sharia values and beliefs, and education practitioners or PAI teachers to analyze the potential for integrating tradition as a formal learning resource. Furthermore, the strategic involvement of local communities and the younger generation was conducted to map perceptions and the extent to which these values are internalized within current social dynamics.

Data collection techniques in this study were conducted integratively through three main methods to ensure the validity and depth of information. This began with participant observation, in which the researcher directly participated in the Ngejalang traditional procession to objectively observe behaviors, symbols, and ritual sequences that represent religious and sharia values. This step was reinforced by in-depth interviews with key informants to explore the philosophical meaning and implicit values behind each stage of the tradition. This was supported by documentation studies through the collection of relevant literature, village archives, and visual recordings of activities as the basis for comprehensive historical and normative analysis.

This study positions the researcher as the primary instrument (human instrument), playing a central role as data collector, observer, and analyst throughout all stages of

qualitative research. To support data validity and accuracy, this primary instrument is complemented by a set of supporting instruments, including interview guidelines to explore informants' perspectives, field notes to document sociocultural dynamics contextually, and the use of a digital recorder to ensure the accuracy of primary data transcription in the field.

Data analysis in this study was conducted systematically, referring to the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. This includes data collection, data condensation to focus on the substance of faith and sharia values, data presentation in descriptive narrative form, and drawing conclusions validated through the theory of cultural acculturation and the Islamic jurisprudence principle of *al-'aadatu muhakkamah*. In order to ensure the objectivity and validity of the findings, the researcher applied source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques by comparing information from various informants and comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that an accurate analysis was produced regarding the position of the Ngejalang tradition as a source of learning in Islamic Religious Education.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Profile and Eschatology of the Ngejalang Tradition

Research results indicate that the Ngejalang tradition among the Lampung Saibatin community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur is an annual ritual performed after the Eid al-Fitr celebrations. Etymologically, Ngejalang comes from the word "menjelang" (to visit), which is operationally realized through collective grave pilgrimages and joint prayers at the graves of family members and traditional figures (*puyang*). This procession begins with a customary meeting to determine the time of the ceremony, followed by a cooperative cleaning of the burial area, and concludes with a prayer ritual led by local religious leaders. Field findings indicate that this tradition is not simply a form of respect for ancestors, but rather a reminder of the concept of eschatology—death and the afterlife—that strengthens the community's spiritual awareness.



Figure 1. Ngejalang Tradition

The Ngejalang tradition in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur is not simply a seasonal ceremony, but rather a legacy of the Lampung Saibatin community's civilization that has been passed down through generations. Based on observations, this tradition is collectively performed on the 2nd of Shawwal as a momentum for post-Ramadan social integration. Procedurally, activities begin early in the morning with community gatherings at strategic points in the village. Community groups, led by traditional and religious leaders, proceed to the ancestral cemetery complex. There, they collectively clean the graves, followed by the recitation of verses from the Quran and the recitation of tahlil (Islamic recitation).

The culmination of this tradition is a grand gathering at the mosque or traditional hall. Here, religious leaders deliver spiritual narratives about the importance of maintaining faith and interpersonal relationships. A prominent material element is the use of pahakh, a traditional Lampung tray containing a complete meal. Researchers note that each pahakh is meticulously prepared by each family as a symbol of readiness to share blessings. This communal meal concludes the sacred experience, where barriers of social status dissolve on a single tray.

Analysis of Faith Values in the Ngejalang Tradition

The internalization of faith values in the Ngejalang tradition is evident in the shift in meaning from mere animistic rituals to monotheistic practices based on Islamic law. The dominant elements of faith are the strengthening of belief in Allah SWT's power over life and death, as well as an understanding of the concept of prayer as a means of asking the Creator for the safety of those who are buried. This phenomenon demonstrates a cultural filtration process in which local symbols are maintained, but the substance of the beliefs is entirely based on Islamic teachings. The community understands that pilgrimages in Ngejalang are a means of *tadzkiratul maut* (remembering death), which directly strengthens faith in the afterlife.

Analysis of Sharia Values and the Principle of Al-'Aadatu Muhakkamah

From a sharia perspective, the Ngejalang tradition meets the criteria of 'urf sahih (authentic) because its practices do not conflict with absolute sharia principles. Analysis using the Islamic jurisprudence principle of al-'aadatu muhakkamah (consistent and consistent) shows that this tradition has been proven over generations as an instrument for maintaining social morality. The practice of giving alms during communal prayer rituals reflects the implementation of sharia values in aspects of muamalah (social interactions) and social concern. Findings indicate that there is no element of polytheism (*shirk*) in this procession, but rather a form of respect (*ta'dzim*) packaged within the framework of prayer, in accordance with the traditions of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah.

Ngejalang as a Learning Resource for Islamic Religious Education (PAI)

The potential of the Ngejalang tradition as a learning resource for PAI is identified in its ability to serve as a contextual value laboratory for students. This tradition integrates three main pillars of Islamic education: (1) Faith, through understanding the

concept of the afterlife; (2) Sharia, through proper procedures for pilgrimage and prayer; and (3) Morals, through instilling respect for parents and strengthening relationships among members of the community. Observations indicate that involving the younger generation in the Ngejalang procession serves as an effective informal education for transmitting religious and social character values. Therefore, this tradition can be developed into ethnopedagogy-based learning materials that connect religious theories with the local cultural realities of students in the region.

Furthermore, data obtained from in-depth interviews with traditional leaders (Saibatin) and religious leaders revealed three pillars of Islamic values that are consistently upheld:

Session 1: Aqidah Values (Beliefs)

Researcher: How do people view the relationship between the Ngejalang tradition and belief in Allah SWT, especially regarding pilgrimages to graves?

Traditional Leader: Ngejalang is our way of 'approaching' or visiting our parents and ancestors who have gone before us. But what must be emphasized is that we don't come to ask for help from the graves. We come to realize that we, too, will follow them. This is a reminder not to be arrogant about this transitory world.

Religious Leader: That's right. In our faith, we ensure that we maintain our monotheism. All prayers, tahlil (recitation of the Koran), and dhikr (remembrance of God) are directed solely to Allah SWT, to be rewarded by those who remain in the grave. There is no practice of spirit worship. In fact, through Ngejalang, the community's faith is strengthened because they are reminded of the Day of Judgment and the obligation to pray for fellow Muslims.

Session 2: Sharia Values (Islamic Law)

Researcher: There are concerns regarding the practice of heresy or deviation from sharia in local traditions. How do you monitor the series of rituals in Ngejalang so that they remain in accordance with the guidelines?

Religious Leader: We are very strict about this. Starting from the procedures for performing ablution before going to the grave, reading the holy verses of the Koran, to how to pray, everything follows fiqh. We strictly prohibit excessive wailing (niyahah) at graves. If there are residents who appear to be starting to do things outside the sunnah, religious leaders will immediately reprimand them politely. Sharia is our main fence.

Traditional Leader: Our traditions here are subject to sharak. We have a saying, 'Adat is based on syarak, syarak is based on Kitabullah'. So, if there are customary procedures that deviate from the Koran and Hadith, then those customs must adapt, not the other way around.

Session 3: Moral Values (Social Ethics)

Researcher: Besides the ritual aspect, what social values stand out most about the Ngejalang celebration for the community?

Traditional Leader: Ngejalang is a moral laboratory, especially for young people. Here, they learn to respect their elders and traditional leaders. We also practice giving food alms. Each household brings a package of rice to be shared after prayers. It's a form of generosity and sincerity.

Religious Leader: What's most noticeable is the atmosphere of mutual forgiveness and tabayyun (reconciliation). If there have been disagreements between neighbors this year, during the Ngejalang event, all barriers melt away. We sit in a circle, eat together, and forgive each other en masse. This kind of noble character is what keeps social cohesion strong in this Pekon.

Interviews confirmed that the community consciously uses this tradition as a medium for learning about faith. The meaning of pilgrimage has transformed from a mere physical visit to a theological reflection on the transience of the world. The success of religious leaders in maintaining the purity of community intentions demonstrates the integrative-theocentric nature of this cultural acculturation. Local traditions serve as a "vessel" for the value of monotheism, which emphasizes that death is a gateway to accountability before Allah SWT.

Interviews revealed the principle of al-'aadamu muhakkamah (religious principle) alive in the collective consciousness. Sharia law serves as the primary filter for customary practices. Community adherence to the jurisprudence of pilgrimage (such as the prohibition on wailing) demonstrates that this tradition has been formalized in Islamic law. Custom no longer stands alone but has become an extension of Islamic law in shaping community religious behavior in the public sphere.

Sociologically, Ngejalang functions as a mechanism for conflict resolution and character building. The practice of food almsgiving and mass apologies are concrete forms of social ethics (akhlak). This addresses the challenges of modernization, which tends toward individualism. Ngejalang has become an "informal school" for the younger generation to learn the values of respect (takzim), generosity, and strengthening Islamic brotherhood through hands-on practice, not just classroom theory.

Comprehensively, the interpretation of these interviews confirms that the Ngejalang tradition in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur serves as a contextual learning resource for Islamic Religious Education through the integration of three main educational domains: the cognitive domain, which encompasses mastery of the laws of pilgrimage and dhikr; the affective domain, which fosters eschatological awareness and sincere almsgiving; and the psychomotor domain, which is reflected in the practice of mutual cooperation and systematic ritual procedures. This successful harmonization of theological values and cultural practices makes Ngejalang highly relevant for adoption as a strategic ethnopedagogy-based learning model for strengthening the community's religious identity while maintaining the sustainability of local wisdom amidst the challenges of the times.

Discussion

Theocentric Integration in Local Cultural Acculturation

Research findings on the Ngejalang tradition indicate a profound pattern of integrative-theocentric acculturation within the Saibatin Lampung community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur. Contrary to the classical view, which often pits custom against sharia, the local community has refined its culture, transforming this tradition into an instrument for strengthening monotheism. The practice of collective grave pilgrimages and the use of cultural symbols such as pahakh no longer carry an animist mission but have instead transformed into a medium for *tadzkirotul maut*, or a reminder of death. This aligns with [Ngaliman et al. \(2025\)](#) and [Putriany et al. \(2025\)](#)'s argument that the Nusantara cleric network has successfully indigenized Islam without sacrificing the substance of the faith.

In this context, local wisdom serves as a vehicle for Islamic eschatological values, where awareness of the transience of this world actually strengthens the community's orientation toward the afterlife. This integration of local wisdom and religious values reflects the prophetic Islamic paradigm ([Sanjani et al., 2024](#); [Suhernawati et al., 2024](#)). Through this synchronization, the Ngejalang tradition proves that cultural elements can be an effective means to internalize religious teachings while strengthening the socio-religious identity of the community without causing conflicting values between ancestral traditions and the principles of monotheism.

Validation of Sharia through the Principle of Al-'Aadatu Muhakkamah

Normatively, the Ngejalang tradition is a concrete implementation of the Islamic jurisprudence principle of *al-'aadatu muhakkamah*, which positions custom as the basis for law as long as it does not conflict with sharia. In this tradition, sharia acts as an active filter, reflected in the philosophy "*Adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi Kitabullah.*" In line with [Putra et al. \(2025\)](#), a tradition is acceptable under Islamic law if it meets the criteria of '*urf sahih*,' that is, cultural practices that do not conflict with definitive sharia evidence.

The validity of sharia in this tradition is demonstrated through strict supervision by religious leaders regarding the practice of pilgrimage, such as the strictly enforced prohibition of wailing (*niyahah*). The community's adherence to these restrictions indicates that Islamic law has been internalized within their cultural identity. This phenomenon also confirms the *Receptio a Contrario* theory, which emphasizes that customary law only applies and is recognized if it is in harmony with and does not conflict with the provisions of Islamic law ([Sulistyarini et al., 2018](#); [Wardi et al., 2023](#)).

Character Laboratory and Social Conflict Resolution

From a sociological perspective, the Ngejalang tradition serves a strategic function as a character-building mechanism and conflict resolution amidst the challenges of individualistic modernity. This tradition triggers intense social interaction through customary deliberations and the practice of mass apologies (*tabayyun*), which strengthen ties between residents. The manifestation of *akhlakul karimah* values is

evident in the tradition of eating together using pahakh regardless of social status, effectively breaking down hierarchical barriers within society.

This phenomenon aligns with Talcott Parsons' structural functionalism concept of social integration, where tradition serves as a glue that maintains community solidarity (Fanshurna & Isnadi, 2025; Ormerod, 2020). Consistent with this, Pohan et al.'s (2025) research confirms that collective rituals based on local wisdom are highly effective in reducing social tensions and strengthening the cohesion of Muslim communities. Thus, Ngejalang is not simply an annual ritual but a sociological instrument that ensures the stability and harmony of the social order.

Ethnopedagogy: Transforming Tradition into a Contextual Curriculum

The relevance of the Ngejalang tradition as a learning resource for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lies in its ability to simultaneously integrate the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. As a contextual values laboratory, Ngejalang offers an ethnopedagogy-based learning model that connects religious theory with empirical realities in society. This aligns with the concept of Ta'dib (religious morality) proposed by Nafisah and Riadi (2025), which emphasizes that Islamic education must instill the values of adab (good manners) and spiritual discipline in students through real-life experiences.

Involving the younger generation in the Ngejalang tradition provides an effective informal educational platform for transmitting the values of respect (ta'dzim) and social responsibility. This strategy aligns with Wahyudi and Handayana's (2026) argument that PAI learning that is responsive to local culture is more easily accepted and internalized by students due to its strong sociocultural roots. By utilizing this tradition as an instructional medium, religious education is no longer merely theoretical but rather transforms into a living, relevant learning experience that aligns with students' cultural identities.

The contribution of this research lies in strengthening the locus of ethnopedagogy in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum through the transformation of the Ngejalang tradition as an integrative learning resource. Theoretically, this research enriches the treasure trove of Islamic and cultural acculturation by proving that local wisdom can function as an instrument for strengthening monotheism and a medium for tadzkiratul maut (religious remembrance) relevant to the paradigm of prophetic Islam. Practically, these findings provide guidance for educators to contextualize the values of akhlakul karimah (good morals) and social responsibility into more vibrant and socioculturally rooted learning. Thus, this research not only preserves local traditions but also offers innovative strategies for internalizing religious values more effectively and responsively to students' cultural identities.

4. CONCLUSION

The Ngejalang tradition of the Lampung Saibatin community in Pekon Gunung Kemala Timur represents an integrative acculturation of Islamic values and local wisdom, transforming pilgrimage rituals into instruments for strengthening the pillars

of faith, sharia, and morals. Theologically, this tradition facilitates the internalization of the concept of monotheism through the practice of *tadzkiratul maut* (religious observance of death), while normatively fulfilling the criteria of authentic *urf* (righteousness) based on the principle of *al-'aadatu muhakkamah* (religious practice), which places sharia as an active filter in every process. As a character laboratory, Ngejalang fosters strong values of *ta'dzim* (religious tolerance), generosity, and social cohesion. Its potential integration of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains makes this tradition a highly relevant source of learning in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) based on ethnopedagogy, which is highly relevant for developing character education in the modern era.

As a suggestion, educators and educational institutions should integrate the values of the Ngejalang tradition as enrichment material in the Islamic Religious Education curriculum to create relevance between religious theory and the local cultural reality of students, while traditional and religious leaders are expected to continue to strengthen theological supervision and the involvement of the younger generation to ensure the sustainability of the transfer of values that are in line with sharia. On the other hand, local governments need to provide strategic support in preserving this tradition as an educational religious tourism asset without reducing its sacredness, while for further researchers, it is recommended to conduct experimental studies on the effectiveness of using Ngejalang tradition-based learning modules in improving students' faith and moral competencies in formal education environments and Islamic boarding schools.

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