

## Educational Values in the "Sere Bissu" Performing Arts Ritual in Bone Regency: A Review of Its Meaning and Function

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### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received October 05, 2025  
Accepted November 25, 2025  
Published December 27, 2025

#### Keywords:

Educational Values;  
Moral;  
Religious;  
Sere Bissu;  
Social.

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### ABSTRACT

The Sere Bissu ritual performance in Bone Regency is a cultural heritage with significant meanings that have yet to be fully explored, particularly in relation to its role in forming character and community ethics through education. This study examines educational ideals in Bone Regency's Sere Bissu performance through three primary questions: (1) Analyzing performance structure; (2) Identifying educational values; and (3) Analyzing moral educational values' significance and function. This study is descriptive and qualitative. Data collection was carried out through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation during the implementation of the Sere Bissu ritual. This approach was chosen to understand the context and interpretation of values holistically. The research found that (1) Sere Bissu is a ritual performance with multiple stages, including Mappangolo Mappesabbi, Mappakaraja Alusu, Sere Alusu, Sere Mappabbitte, Sere Bibbi, Sere Mangko, Sere Maddampu Alameng, Sere Lemma', Mammemmang, Maggiri, and Mappatabe. (2) Educational values encompass religious, social, and moral aspects that foster faith, ethics, and cultural character. (3) These educational values emphasize religious devotion, societal harmony, and moral awareness as key foundations in Bugis culture. This study enhances knowledge of educational values by incorporating local wisdom. This study provides practical guidance for educational institutions and cultural activists to conserve and internalize Bugis' values, particularly in the Sere Bissu rite, as a foundation for national identity.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern advancements have resulted in alterations to belief systems, shaped by modernization and globalization (Pranowo, 2024; Sokolovskyi et al., 2021; Yeganeh, 2024). This paradigm shift has had a significant impact, particularly on the preservation of Indonesian culture, one example being the Sere Bissu ritual of the Bugis people in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi (Akhmar et al., 2023; Indra et al., 2024). The Sere Bissu ritual, once sacred, has undergone a transformation, both in terms of its presentation,

function, and meaning (Indarwati et al., 2019). This imbalance stems from a shift in spiritual meaning toward purely symbolic or aesthetic ones.

In a preliminary study by the author, the Bugis people in Bone Regency, especially the younger generation, are beginning to show a lack of awareness and interest in understanding the educational values and meanings inherent in this performance. The Serre Bissu ritual is a manifestation of the rich and unique Bugis culture in South Sulawesi, but its presence within the community is beginning to shift and threaten its original ritual form (Rahmat & Purnomo, 2025).

The Sere Bissu ritual performance art is one of the Bugis people's most unique and sacred forms of intangible cultural heritage, especially in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi (Akhmar et al., 2023; Rachmat, 2021). Bugis culture is rich in oral traditions and performing arts, which are closely intertwined with the belief system and social order of the community (Pangaderreng) (Asrul, 2023; Haruna et al., 2024). In this context, the Bissu group plays a central role as spiritual figures, guardians of tradition, and intermediaries between the human world (Lino) and the divine world (Boting Langi) (Mildayani et al., 2024). They are known as Bugis priests, possessing gender-specific characteristics, neither fully male nor female, which makes them sacred and revered.

Sere Bissu is a series of dance movements performed by the Bissu during important traditional ceremonies, such as the ritual cleansing of royal heirlooms (Mattompang Arajang) or the welcoming of the seasons (Akhmar et al., 2023; Triastuti, 2021; Utami, 2013). The core of this performance consists of various dance movements, including Sere Alusu, Sere Bibbi, Sere Mangko, Sere Lemma, and culminating in Sere Maggiri or Maggiri (thrusting a "keris" into the body without injury).

The significance of this ritual goes beyond mere artistic performance. It is a spiritual manifestation that demonstrates the harmony of nature, the union of humans with iron/nature, and the effort to defeat evil spirits (Akhmar et al., 2023; Iman, 2025). Through a special language called Torilangi, or the language of the heavens, the Bissu recites prayers, known as memmang, to establish a connection and balance in life (Indarwati et al., 2019).

Currently, the existence of Bissu and the Sere Bissu ritual faces various challenges, such as community decline: the number of Bissu continues to decline drastically, threatening the continuity of traditions (Mildayani et al., 2024). The Threat of Modernization and Delegitimization: Developments and changes in the political/religious system have led to the delegitimization and perception of Bissu and their rituals as heretical, despite their significant role during the kingdom era (Rahman, 2020). The Shift in Meaning: There are concerns that Sere Bissu performances, especially Maggiri, are considered debus attractions or mere entertainment rather than sacred rituals with profound philosophical and educational value (Rahayu, 2021).

Amid these challenges, focusing on the educational values embodied in Sere Bissu becomes crucial (Akhmar et al., 2023; Iman, 2025). This ritual not only teaches history but also incorporates character education relevant to contemporary life. Previous research has identified character values within Sere Bissu, such as values for God, self,

and others, which serve as moral guidelines for the Bone community (Indarwati et al., 2019; Rahmat & Purnomo, 2025; Triastuti, 2021; Utami, 2013).

Therefore, this study aims to delve deeper, detail, and comprehensively analyze the symbolic meaning of each ritual element (movement, props, costumes, accompaniment, and mantras) and the function of the Sere Bissu ritual, then contextualize it with educational values that can be passed on to the younger generation. This comprehension is essential for establishing a robust argumentative foundation for the preservation of the Sere Bissu tradition as a repository of local wisdom. It also aims to revive public awareness of the noble values embodied in the ritual, addressing the shift in meaning toward mere entertainment. It also aims to establish Sere Bissu as a source of authentic character education rooted in local culture.

The initial literature review indicates that numerous studies on Sere Bissu in Bone Regency have been conducted (Rahayu, 2021; Rahmat & Purnomo, 2025; Triastuti, 2021; Utami, 2013); however, most of these studies have focused primarily on ethnographic and historical descriptions. Research explains the history, organizational structure, and role of Bissu in traditional ceremonies like Mattompang Arajang. Morphology and Movement Notation: Research specifically recording and analyzing the variety of Sere Bissu movements using a notation system. General Character Education Values: Research identifying general character values (toward God, self, and others) reflected in the performance. Resistance and Reinterpretation: Research viewing Sere Bissu as a form of resistance to modernization or studying the reinterpretation of the performance.

Previous research has tended to be partial, focusing only on movement, performance structure, or identifying general character values (Akhmar et al., 2023; Amin, 2025; Triastuti, 2021). The central novelty of this research is conducting a holistic review that explicitly and deeply connects three main pillars: Symbolic Meaning (ritual elements), Function (the function of ritual in a socio-spiritual context), and Educational Values that emerge from their interconnection. This research will detail how the specific symbolic meanings of properties such as the keris (as iron/nature) and Lalosu (woven palm leaves) are translated into spiritual functions (balancing/connecting), and from these functions, very specific educational values are derived (e.g., the value of humility/union with nature in certain Sere varieties).

The research will explore the current functions of Sere Bissu more comprehensively, beyond just its past spiritual functions. Cultural Resilience Function: Analyze how Sere Bissu serves as a medium for reconciliation and advocacy for the Bissu community and marginalized gender groups in Bone. Edutainment Function: Examine how this ritual can ethically transition into an educational resource without losing its sacredness, a frequently debated topic in the context of cultural attractions.

Rather than simply listing general character values, this research will produce a detailed model of local character education values that are directly tied to the Bugis philosophy expressed in Sere Bissu. These values will be categorized based on Pangaderreng (Bugis customs and ethics), providing a more specific theoretical contribution to the field of local wisdom-based education. Thus, this study does not

simply replicate existing findings but offers a new analytical framework that strengthens the argument that Sere Bissu should be preserved as a source of moral and ethical learning and not simply a historical heritage or cultural attraction.

Building upon the issues, this study was conducted to examine the meaning and function of Sere Bissu today. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding and reveal the educational values embodied in Sere Bissu performing arts rituals today, where society and the younger generation predominantly understand or view Sere Bissu performing arts merely as a medium for traditional ceremonies, entertainment, and cultural festivals. It will also examine the meaning and function of these educational values embodied in Sere Bissu performing arts rituals. Systematic and documented research will contribute to cultural preservation efforts that consider the educational role of rituals while also providing recommendations for integrating local values in culturally sensitive character education programs.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the researcher seeks to study, understand, and interpret in depth a complex socio-cultural phenomenon, namely the educational values contained in the Sere Bissu performing arts ritual. Research Location: This research will be conducted in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, specifically in indigenous communities that still actively perform and preserve the Sere Bissu ritual, such as in the Pammana area or other villages with Puang Matoa (Bissu leaders) and active Bissu groups.



**Figure 1.** Qualitative Descriptive Approach

Data was obtained directly from the field through observation and in-depth interviews with key informants: Puang Matoa/Bissu Leader: The individual who best understands the history, philosophy, meaning, and procedures of the ritual. Senior Bissu:

The Bissu member who actively participates in the performance and understands the meaning of each movement (Sere) and mantra (Memming). Local Observer and Cultural Expert of Bone Regency: An individual who has academic or practical knowledge of the history and role of Bissu in Bugis civilization. Traditional Leader/Head of the Traditional Council: The individual responsible for organizing traditional ceremonies. Community Members/Audience Members: Individuals who regularly witness Sere Bissu rituals, to explore the ritual's social function. Supporting data comes from documents, literature, and archives.

To obtain valid and in-depth data (triangulation), three main techniques are used: Participatory Observation (Field Observation). Researchers will be directly involved in Sere Bissu ritual processions (such as Mattompang Arajang or other rituals) to observe in detail and directly the ritual sequence and procedures, dance movements (Sere), and the use of props (Keris, Lalosu, costumes), expressions, interactions, and the sacred atmosphere during the ritual. Observations will be strengthened by field notes and visual documentation (photos and videos).

Next, structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with all informants. The interviews focused on the philosophical and symbolic meaning of each stage, movement (Sere), prop, and mantra (Memming) in the ritual; the spiritual, social, and cultural functions of Sere Bissu in the past and present; and the moral, ethical, and educational values embodied and believed in by the informants.

Collecting and analyzing Lontara (texts related to Bissu history and rituals) to strengthen historical and philosophical data. Studying previous research and publications as a theoretical basis and for comparison.

Data analysis in this qualitative study uses an interactive model (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña), which is carried out continuously and interactively from data collection to report writing (Raskind et al., 2019; Ridder, 2014). Data validity (credibility) will be tested using source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques. This research method is designed to ensure that the educational values of Sere Bissu can be explored in depth, contextually, and validly, in line with the research objectives.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

##### 1. Overview of Sere Bissu Performing Arts

Sere Bissu performing arts are part of the spiritual cultural heritage of the Bugis people of Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. Local religious traditions and a pre-Islamic belief system known as *To Lotang*, or belief in ancestral spirits, closely link these performances. Bissu are holy people who are thought to keep the balance between the human and spiritual worlds.

In their performances, Sere Bissu combines elements of dance, music, and ritual. Their movements are gentle yet sacred, reflecting the balance between masculine and feminine strength inherent in a Bissu. They typically wear brightly colored traditional clothing, such as green, yellow, and red, complete with headdresses and heirloom

attributes such as kris or badik (traditional Bugis wind instruments) as symbols of spiritual power. The accompanying music uses traditional instruments such as drums, gongs, and puik-puik (a typical Bugis wind instrument), creating a magical atmosphere throughout the performance.



**Figure 2.** The Sere Bissu Tradition in Bone (Source: <https://rri.co.id/daerah/1435774/tarian-sere-bissu-maggiri-kembali-dipentaskan-pada-hari-jadi-bone>)

**Table 1.** Interview Results (Identity and Main Actors—The Bissu)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Quote/Key Information
(Bugis Cultural Expert, Bone History Expert)	What exactly is Sere Bissu and who performs it?	<i>"Sere Bissu" is a very sacred ritual, not just a dance. It is the pinnacle of our communication with Dewata Seuwae (God). The performer must be a Bissu, a transgender priest in the ancient Bugis tradition. They are considered to possess five gender dimensions—male, female, calabai, calalai, and Bissu themselves. This gives them access to the upper and lower worlds."</i>
(Senior Bissu Performer/Punggawa)	What is the role of the Bissu in this ritual?	<i>"We (Bissu) are intermediaries. The Sere Bissu ritual is our way of serving the King (farmers, the community). We must dance (menyere) with sincerity, using an ancient mantra language that not everyone understands. Our movements, our musical instruments (drums, gongs), all have meanings that help maintain the balance of nature."</i>

Sere Bissu art serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of conveying moral, spiritual, and social messages. This performance symbolizes the values of sincerity, purity, and balance in life. In the context of modern culture, the existence of Sere Bissu in Bone symbolizes the resilience of the Bugis people's culture and identity against changing times. The local government and cultural institutions are now striving to preserve this tradition through cultural festivals, art performances, and local education so that the younger generation can understand its meaning and philosophical values.

**Table 2.** Interview Results (Historical Context and Function)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Quote/Key Information
(Bugis Cultural Expert, Bone History Expert)	When and where is Sere Bissu usually held?	<i>"In the past, the Sere Bissu were always present at major events in the Bone Kingdom, such as the coronation of the King, the Mappano Wanua traditional ceremony (cleansing the land), or the rice field ritual (fertility). Essentially, this ritual was performed when the community or kingdom was facing a major crisis or was about to embark on something very important."</i>
(Cultural Researcher from Local University)	What is the primary function of this ritual in Bone society?	<i>"In a historical context, their function was to legitimize the King's power and social stability. When the Bissu appeared, they assured the people that the gods approved of their decisions or activities. Spiritually, it was the strongest means of warding off disaster."</i>

In Bugis tradition, Bissu are believed to be sacred beings who act as a link between humans and the spirit world and ancestors. They are considered to possess high spiritual abilities and play a role in maintaining the balance between the human and supernatural realms. Before performing in ceremonies, Bissu undergo a process of purification through prayer and fasting to become worthy of receiving spiritual power.

**Table 3.** Interview Results (Performance Aspects)

Resource Person	Focus Question	Quote/Key Information
(Senior Bissu Practitioner/Punggawa)	What is most distinctive about Sere Bissu as a performing art?	<i>"What's unique is our trance state, called Mabissu. Only in Mabissu can we perform extreme feats like stabbing ourselves with a "keris" without getting hurt (Ma'giri). This isn't magic; it's proof that ancestral spirits are present, and the power of the Tau Dewata (God-like humans) protects us. The dance (Sere) is also unique, very dynamic, and different from ordinary Bugis dance."</i>

Overall, this interview confirms that an "Overview of Sere Bissu Performing Arts" should contain three main points: Sere Bissu is a sacred ritual of intermediary by Bissu (key role), strongly tied to royal legitimacy and the function of warding off disaster (context), and involves a trance state (Ma'giri) that demonstrates its power (performance characteristics).

The movements, costumes, and instruments used, such as the lipa' sabbe (silk sarong), passapu (headband), and badik (sword), have symbolic meanings that depict purity, strength, and harmony in life (Masri, 2015). The primary meaning of Sere Bissu is not merely an artistic spectacle, but also a sacred ritual that affirms the spiritual, moral, and social values of Bugis culture. Through this performance, the community is taught values such as loyalty to tradition, respect for ancestors, courage, personal purity, and balance in life. Therefore, Sere Bissu reflects the close relationship between humans, nature, and spiritual forces believed in by the Bugis Bone community.

## 2. Form and Structure of Sere Bissu Performing Arts in Bone Regency

Based on direct observations of the Sere Bissu performance held at the Bone Riolo cultural festival, at Planet Cinema in Bone Regency, this performance showcases a blend of dance, music, and ritual elements. The dance movements in Sere Bissu are symbolic and meaningful. Gentle hand movements depict prayer and devotion, while steady footwork reflects spiritual strength and steadfastness. Each movement is performed in harmony with the strains of traditional Bugis music, consisting of drums, gongs, and puik-puik. The rhythm of the music begins at a slow tempo and gradually increases as the spiritual energy of the Bissu performing the ritual increases.

**Table 4.** Interview Results (Ritual Structure)

Resource Person	Focus Question	Quote/Key Information
(Cultural Expert and Traditional Observer)	In general, what are the main stages in performing the Sere Bissu ritual?	<i>"The structure of Sere Bissu is highly organized and sacred. There are three main stages. First, the Beginning/Preparation, such as Mattompang Ase (purification of ritual tools). Second, the Core Ritual or Sere, where the Bissu dance, chant Ancient Mantras (Sureq Galigo), and achieve a trance state. Third, the Conclusion, often marked by Ma'giri (a keris dance) as confirmation that the ritual was successful and the gods were present."</i>
(Bissu Leader/Ritual Leader)	Could you explain the Sere or Core Ritual stages in more detail?	<i>"In the Sere stage, the dance movements are not random. There are special patterns we perform, such as the Sere Manurung dance, which tells the story of the arrival of ancestors. The movements are repetitive, as if we are summoning and welcoming spirits. The more devout our Sere, the quicker we enter the Mabissu (trance) state, which is the culmination of the ritual."</i>

**Table 5.** Interview Results (Form and Makeup)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Quote/Key Information
(Cultural & Ethnographic Researcher)	What distinguishes Bissu costumes from other Bugis traditional attire, and why are their ritual props important?	<i>"Bissu wear the traditional clothing of the ancient kingdom, called Baju Bodo, in a specific color, often golden yellow, which symbolizes power or majesty. The most important are their ritual props: the Lellu (large fan) and, especially, the heirloom keris (Tosan Aji). This "keris" is not just a prop, but a spiritual personification and must be treated with great respect."</i>
(Bissu Retainer/Ritual Leader)	Is there any special makeup in Sere Bissu performances?	<i>"Our makeup is simple, yet clean and pure. The focus is on the use of special perfumes and ritual flowers. We must appear neutral—not too masculine, not too feminine—to reflect the power of our five genders. Our appearance must reflect our readiness to serve as vessels for the gods."</i>

**Table 6.** Interview Results (Music and Supporting Elements)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Quote/Key Information
(Culturalist and Indigenous Observer)	What musical instruments are used to accompany Sere Bissu?	<i>"The accompanying music is a very specific Bugis traditional music, often called Pattung or Gending Bissu. The main instruments are the drum (the rhythmic beats of which are crucial for achieving trance), the gong, and sometimes the flute or Pui-Pui. This music is not merely accompaniment, but an essential element that helps the Bissu enter the spiritual dimension."</i>
(Cultural and Ethnographic Researcher)	How do mantras and Sureq Galigo play a role in the structure of the performance?	<i>"The ritual always opens with the recitation of a mantra from Sureq Galigo (the Ancient Bugis Epic). This is the most important structural element because it provides the ritual with a cosmic narrative and spiritual legitimacy. This mantra is recited in the poetic Old Bugis language and is understood only by the Bissu and certain traditional experts."</i>

The results of this interview provide a clear picture of the form and structure of Sere Bissu, which follows a strict ritual hierarchy (Preparation, Core, and Closing). The performance is defined by sacred costumes, heirloom props (the keris), and rhythmic accompanying music, all designed to induce a trance-like state and facilitate communication with the spiritual world.

The Sere Bissu performance consists of several stages: the pre-performance stage, the initial stage, the main stage, and the final stage. The climax of the performance occurs when one of the Bissu enters the main stage, the Maggiri section, which is believed to represent union with ancestral spirits or protective deities. In this state, Bissu often performs astonishing feats such as stabbing themselves with a "keris" without being injured, a symbol of spiritual strength and purity of heart. At this moment, the atmosphere of the performance becomes very solemn, accompanied by the rapid beat of drums and the loud sounds of puik-puik.

The costumes worn in the performance are striking, with bright colors like green, red, and yellow, symbolizing the elements of life, courage, and the balance of nature. Each Bissu wears a crown or headdress called a tutupulu' (cover), along with a traditional Bugis silk sarong. The stage is typically an open circle, allowing the audience to witness the procession from all directions.

Overall, the Sere Bissu performance not only shows the beauty of movement and rhythm but also serves as an expression of the religious and cultural identity of the Bone people. This performance demonstrates the harmony between spirituality, art, and traditions passed down through generations. For the Bone people, Sere Bissu is not just a spectacle but also part of a sacred ritual that strengthens humanity's connection with the Creator and the universe.

The stages/structure of the Sere Bissu performance in Bone Regency include the pre-performance stage: Mappangolo Mappesabbi; the pre-performance stage: Mappasawe, Mappakara Alusu, Sere Alusu, Sere Mappabitte, Sere Bibbi, Sere Maddampu Alameng, Sere Lemma', Mammemmang, and Maggiri; and the final stage: Mappatabe.

### 3. Educational Values Contained in Sere Bissu Performing Arts in Bone Regency

Performing arts play a crucial role as an educational medium, not only entertaining but also instilling religious, social, and moral values. Religious educational values are reflected through the spiritual and religious meanings implicit in the symbols, movements, and songs in the performance, which often serve as a means of drawing closer to God and expressing gratitude for life. Social educational values are evident in the togetherness and cooperation among artists and the community participation involved in every stage of the performance, thereby strengthening a sense of solidarity and unity. Meanwhile, moral educational values are realized through messages of ethics, politeness, and responsibility conveyed aesthetically to the audience. Thus, performing arts function as a vehicle for character education, capable of shaping individuals with culture, morals, and noble personalities through artistic expression and the life values they contain.

**Table 7.** Interview Results (Faith and Spiritual Values)

Resource Person	Focus Question	Quote/Key Information
(Bissu Official/Ritual Leader)	What is the most important spiritual lesson from Sere Bissu?	<i>"The main values are obedience and faith (iman). Through ritual, we teach that humans must always surrender to Dewata Seuwae (God) and not be arrogant. The solemn ritual, especially during Ma'giri (the keris display), teaches that spiritual power is greater than physical strength; this is our ancient monotheistic education."</i>
(Cultural Expert and Custom Observer)	How does the ritual teach the importance of preserving ancestral traditions?	<i>"Sere Bissu" is a character school based on respect (Sipakatau). We teach that this ritual is a sacred heritage that must be preserved. This lesson teaches the younger generation not to forget the cultural roots and ethical values written in Sureq Galigo. There is a moral obligation to preserve Bugis' identity."</i>

**Table 8.** Interview Results (Ethical and Moral Values)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Quote/Key Information
(Cultural & Ethnographic Researcher)	Are there any social ethical values that can be learned from Bissu interactions with society?	<i>"Of course. There is the value of Siri' Na Pacce. Siri' (self-respect) is taught through the Bissu's courage in the face of danger (Ma'giri), which symbolizes the struggle to live with dignity. Pacce (compassion and empathy) is evident in the ritual's function as a prayer to ward off disaster for the common good. This teaches the community social solidarity and responsibility towards the community."</i>
(Bissu Retainer/Ritual Leader)	What values can be learned from the way Bissu dress and behave?	<i>"We teach the values of balance and tolerance. Bissu, as representatives of five genders, naturally teaches that differences are normal and should be accepted in society. We are a symbol that the universe is balanced because of diversity. This is an education about cultural pluralism."</i>

**Table 9.** Interview Results (Mutual Cooperation and Togetherness Values)

Resource Person	Focus Question	Quote/Key Information
(Culturalist and Indigenous Observer)	How does ritual preparation reflect the value of cooperation?	<i>"Sere Bissu preparations, such as Mattompang Ase (purification), always involve all levels of the community. They provide offerings, clean the area, and help. This is a true practice of Assamaturu (cooperation or consensus). This ritual teaches that collective success and safety can only be achieved through collaboration."</i>
(Cultural and Ethnographic Researcher)	In a modern context, are the values of Sere Bissu still relevant?	<i>"Very relevant. The values of ecological balance taught in the fertility ritual (Mappano Wanua) are important lessons for the modern generation. This ritual teaches us to respect nature and be grateful for the earth's bounty, which is an education in sustainable living."</i>

Interview results indicate that Sere Bissu serves as a rich informal educational medium. Its core values include:

- Spiritual Values: Obedience and Respect for the Gods and Ancestors.
- Social Ethical Values: Siri' Na Pacce (Dignity and Solidarity), Tolerance, and Acceptance of Diversity.
- Ecological Values: Respect for Nature and the Environment.

**4. The Meaning and Function of Educational Values Contained in Sere Bissu Performing Arts in Bone Regency**

The meaning and function of educational values contained in Sere Bissu performing arts are divided into three parts: the meaning and function of religious educational values contained in Sere Bissu performing arts, the meaning and function of social educational values contained in Sere Bissu performing arts, and the meaning and function of moral educational values contained in Sere Bissu performing arts.

**Table 10.** Interview Results (Meaning and Function of Spiritual Values)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Interview Results (Meaning & Function)
(Bissu Official/Ritual Leader)	What is the deeper meaning of the Sere Bissu ritual in the context of spiritual education?	<i>"The meaning is self-awareness (Pangngadereng). The ritual teaches that humans are small creatures who must always obey Dewata Seuwae (God Almighty). Its function is as a medium for mental transformation. It educates the community to have sincerity and eliminate arrogance, so that every action is based on Divine will and not worldly desires."</i>
(Cultural Expert and Custom Observer)	Practically, what is the educational function of the Ancient Mantra and Sureq Galigo?	<i>"The mantra and Sureq Galigo function as an oral curriculum. Its meaning is a guide to life and a cosmic code of ethics. It educates the younger generation to understand their origins and responsibilities in the world. Its function is to preserve collective memory so that society is not uprooted from the history and ethical values of its high-class ancestors."</i>

**Table 11.** Interview Results (Meaning and Function of Social and Ethical Values)

Resource Person	Focus Questions	Interview Results (Meaning & Function)
(Cultural & Ethnographic Researcher)	How does Siri' Na Pacce in Sere Bissu function to educate the community's character?	"The extreme meaning of Siri' (self-esteem) in the Ma'giri ritual is the courage to live with dignity and face adversity without giving up. Its function is to foster a warrior mentality (Jihad in the cultural context). Meanwhile, Pacce (empathy) signifies an emotional attachment to the suffering of others. Its function is to strengthen social bonds (Solidarity Function) and encourage cooperation." "Its meaning is unity in diversity (Unity in Diversity). The presence of Bissu teaches that all entities have a place and role in the cosmos. Their function in society is to serve as models of tolerance (Modeling Function), educating the community to accept differences in identity and gender roles, thereby creating harmony without discrimination."
(Bissu Retainer/Ritual Leader)	What is the educational significance of the role of transgender Bissu in relation to tolerance?	

**Table 12.** Interview Results (Meaning and Function of Ecological and Balance Values)

Resource Person	Focus Question	Interview Results (Meaning & Function)
(Culturalist and Indigenous Observer)	What is the educational significance of rituals related to fertility (e.g., for agriculture)?	"Its meaning is a sacred reciprocal relationship between humans and nature (Puang Matowa relationship). The ritual teaches that nature (Tana) is a life-giving mother and should be respected, not exploited. Its function is environmental education. It positions humans as guardians (Khalifah) of nature, not rulers, which is relevant to current sustainability issues."
(Cultural and Ethnographic Researcher)	In summary, what is the core function of Sere Bissu values for the continuity of Bone culture?	"Its core function is Value Regeneration. Amidst the tide of modernization, Sere Bissu serves as a moral bulwark that ensures the survival of Bugis-Bone identity. This ritual educates visually, kinesthetically, and spiritually; it is a comprehensive educational package that prepares individuals to become morally upright citizens deeply rooted in their culture."

The meaning and function of the educational values in Sere Bissu are transformational and pragmatic.

- Meaning: Centered on spiritual self-awareness and human dignity (Siri'), as well as the acceptance of diversity as a cosmic law.
- Function: Acting as an oral curriculum to preserve collective memory, a model of tolerance, the formation of a warrior mentality (Siri' Na Pacce), and a means of environmental education that ensures cultural and environmental sustainability.

*a. The Meaning and Function of Religious Educational Values Contained in Sere Bissu Performing Arts*

Sere Bissu performances function as artistic and cultural expressions and have profound spiritual significance as a medium for religious education for the community. Each stage of the performance embodies religious values that teach the relationship between humans and God, others, and nature. These religious values foster an awareness that life is inseparable from the intervention of divine powers and emphasize the importance of practicing spiritual teachings in daily life.

Overall, the religious educational values of the Sere Bissu performance serve to shape the faith, piety, and spiritual morals of the community. Through symbolic movement, music, prayer, and ritual, performance teaches a balance between the spiritual and social dimensions of life. Thus, Sere Bissu is not only a cultural heritage but also a means of religious education that strengthens human character so that people remain faithful, moral, and grateful to God Almighty.

*b. The meaning and function of the social educational values contained in the Sere Bissu performance art in Bone Regency*

The Sere Bissu performance is not merely a sacred ritual but also a means of social learning that instills the values of togetherness, cooperation, and collective responsibility. Each stage of the procession depicts a form of social interaction that reflects harmony, solidarity, and communal awareness. Through joint involvement in each stage, the Bissu and the community learn the importance of social relationships that respect and support one another.

Overall, the social educational values of the Sere Bissu performance serve to instill collective awareness, strengthen social relationships, and shape the character of a community imbued with a spirit of cooperation, tolerance, and respect for togetherness. Through symbolic movements and ritual stages, Sere Bissu teaches that harmonious social life can only be achieved through cooperation, respect for differences, and shared responsibility for maintaining cultural balance and community life.

*c. The Meaning and Function of Moral Educational Values Contained in Sere Bissu Performing Arts in Bone Regency*

The moral educational values of the Sere Bissu performance reflect ethical and behavioral guidelines that shape human character, fostering beneficial behavior, responsibility, and integrity. Each stage of the Sere Bissu ritual contains a moral message that teaches how humans should relate to God, others, and their environment. Through movement, prayer, and spiritual symbolism, this performance serves as a means of character education that instills moral awareness in everyday life. Overall, the moral educational values of the Sere Bissu performance serve to shape individuals with high morals, honesty, courtesy, and the courage to uphold the truth. This performance serves as a means of ethical education, instilling the principle that every action must be based on moral considerations, self-awareness, and social responsibility. Thus, Sere

Bissu not only has aesthetic value but also serves as a medium for moral learning, fostering individuals with noble characters and noble characters.

## **Discussion**

### **Form and Structure of Sere Bissu Performing Arts in Bone Regency**

Sere Bissu is a cultural heritage of the Bugis people of Bone that remains preserved to this day. This performance has a systematic and symbolic ritual structure, beginning with the stages of Mappangolo Mappesabbi, Mappasawe, and Mappakaraja Alusu, and ending with Mappatabe, the finale. Each stage not only serves a ritual function but also holds interconnected symbolic meanings, forming a unified cultural meaning for the Bugis people of Bone. In this context, Sere Bissu is understood not simply as a performing art but as a system of symbols that represents the Bugis people's outlook on life and thought structure regarding the relationship between humans, nature, and spiritual forces.

This form and structure of the relationship between humans, nature, and humans align with Lévi-Strauss's structuralism theory, which states that every culture possesses a thought structure that shapes symbolic meaning in its social practices (de Castro, 2025; Doja, 2020; Santucci et al., 2020). According to Lévi-Strauss, cultural structures operate through binary oppositions such as sacred–profane, male–female, worldly–spiritual, order–chaos, and life–death (Duche-Perez & Gutierrez, 2024). This structure can be found in Sere Bissu, which depicts a transition from the stage of purification (Mappangolo Mappesabbi) to the spiritual peak (Maggiri) and, finally, the stage of harmony (Mappatabe). This sequence reflects the process of achieving balance between the external and internal worlds, between humans and ancestral spirits, and between spiritual forces and social life.

Within the framework of structuralism, Sere Bissu functions as a symbolic system that represents the fundamental relationships in the lives of the Bugis Bone community (Akhmar et al., 2023). The Bissu themselves, possessing androgynous characteristics that combine male and female elements, symbolize the balance between these two opposing poles. Thus, the Bissu act as mediators between the human and spiritual worlds, as well as guardians of social order and harmony. The rituals and symbols used, such as the badik (sword) in the Maggiri stage and attributes like the lipa' sabbe (sword) and passapu (sword) in Bissu attire, create a structural representation that connects humans to the cosmic order.

The structure of Sere Bissu also exhibits four important elements as described by Lévi-Strauss. First, the ritual form is a symbolic structure, where elements of gender, spirituality, and power combine to create symbolic balance in Bugis culture. Second, the structure of binary oppositions, such as male–female, spiritual–worldly, and order–chaos, which form the basis for constructing meaning and social order. Third, the mythology and symbolism of the ritual emphasize that each stage in Sere Bissu constitutes a sacred narrative connecting humans to cosmic forces. Fourth, the social and cognitive function, where these rituals serve not only as religious activities but also as a way for people to understand the world, themselves, and their place in the cosmos.

Thus, Sere Bissu can be understood as a manifestation of a profound symbolic structure, embodying universal patterns as described by Lévi-Strauss. This performance is not merely an art form but also a system of signs reflecting the social, spiritual, and mythological structures of the Bugis Bone community (Amin, 2025). It serves to strengthen collective identity, maintain cosmic balance, and emphasize the relationship between humans, ancestors, and divine powers that underpin Bugis cultural life (Akhmar et al., 2023, Amin, 2025).

### **Educational Values Contained in Sere Bissu Performing Arts**

Research shows that Sere Bissu contains various educational values relevant to the lives of the Bugis Bone community, particularly religious, social, and moral values. Each stage of this performance serves not only a ritual and aesthetic function but is also imbued with educational messages that shape the community's character, spirituality, and social awareness. From an educational perspective, this aligns with the thinking of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, who viewed education as a process of guiding all a child's natural strengths to achieve the highest level of safety and happiness, both as individuals and as members of society (Taufikin & Ma'shumah, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2023; Widiyanto & Purnomo, 2023). The values of Sere Bissu serve as a means of cultural transmission and character formation, in line with the educational ideals of cultivating people of faith, morality, and culture.

The religious educational values of Sere Bissu instill a deep spiritual awareness through meaningful rituals. Stages such as Mappangolo, Mappesabbi, and Mappasawe demonstrate efforts to purify oneself, devote oneself to the Dewata Sewae, and acknowledge the presence of divine power in human life. These values foster an attitude of sincerity, trust (relief), and gratitude, which align with the concepts of "olah rasa" (feelings) and "olah batin" (inner self-expression) according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara. In an educational context, the religious values instilled through Sere Bissu strengthen the spiritual and moral character of students, teaching them to live life with a sense of faith and obedience to God. These rituals also foster respect for sacred things and reinforce the importance of balance between spiritual and worldly life.

The social educational values of Sere Bissu are evident in the involvement of the Bissu, who work together harmoniously in every stage of the performance. They demonstrate coordination, orderliness, and mutual respect, reflecting the values of cooperation and social solidarity. This value emphasizes that the success of the ritual does not depend on individuals but rather on collective cooperation and group discipline.

The social education value in Sere Bissu aligns with the concept or principle of Ing Madya Mangun Karsa by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, which teaches that within society, an educator or leader must foster a spirit of togetherness and shared responsibility. Furthermore, the presence of the Bissu as a symbol of balance between masculine and feminine elements also embodies the values of tolerance and respect for social diversity. Through this ritual, the community is taught the importance of living in harmony, respecting differences, and maintaining social balance for the sake of order and harmony.

Various symbolic gestures and actions imbued with ethical meaning reflect the moral education value in Sere Bissu. For example, in Sere Bibbi, the Bissu members pinch themselves as a symbol of introspection before judging others, which teaches the importance of self-reflection and moral honesty. Meanwhile, in Sere Mappabitte, the need for careful thought before acting is emphasized, reflecting the values of wisdom and personal responsibility. The moral values taught in Sere Bissu align with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept of character education, namely education that not only transfers knowledge but also shapes character, courtesy, and noble personality. Through moral values instilled symbolically and aesthetically, society learns to live with integrity, behave politely, and respect social and spiritual norms.

Overall, the educational values within the Sere Bissu ritual enrich the Bugis Bone cultural heritage and serve as a vehicle for character education, instilling religious, social, and moral values in community life. This ritual serves as an effective non-formal learning medium for developing individuals with faith, noble character, and the ability to live in harmony with their social and spiritual environment. Thus, Sere Bissu is not merely a sacred cultural expression but also a concrete manifestation of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational philosophy, which guides people toward inner and outer harmony.

### **The Meaning and Function of Educational Values in the Sere Bissu Performing Arts**

The meaning and function of educational values within the Sere Bissu ritual can be explained through the perspective of Emile Durkheim's functionalist theory, which emphasizes that every cultural element has a social function in maintaining order, solidarity, and balance in society (Noh et al., 2025; Orsini, 2024; Tandi, 2019; Wandt et al., 2021). In the context of Bugis Bone society, Sere Bissu functions not only as a sacred cultural heritage but also as a social instrument that strengthens spiritual, moral, and social bonds among community members. According to Durkheim, religious rituals or collective traditions play a crucial role in affirming shared values that form collective conscience, namely the moral and spiritual awareness that forms the basis of social cohesion within a society (Hidayatulloh & Saumantri, 2024; Orsini, 2024; Rimé & Páez, 2023).

The Sere Bissu ritual reflects the crucial role of culture in building social and spiritual integration. Through ritual stages such as Mappangolo Mappesabbi, Maggiri, and Mappatabe, the Bugis people reaffirm the value system that governs relationships between humans, between humans and nature, and between humans and divine powers. Each stage has a specific function: Mappangolo Mappesabbi serves to strengthen group solidarity through collective purification activities; Maggiri emphasizes the Bissu's values of sacrifice, courage, and social responsibility as protectors of society; while Mappatabe serves as a closing symbol embodying value of politeness, respect, and gratitude to God and others. Thus, each part of the Sere Bissu has a social function that plays a role in maintaining balance and harmony in the Bugis Bone community.

Within Durkheim's framework, rituals such as Sere Bissu serve to strengthen social solidarity and maintain social balance through collective participation. When people gather to participate in or witness Sere Bissu, they experience a profound sense of togetherness—a form of "collective effervescence"—that renews their social and spiritual spirit. This process helps people reaffirm moral values, discipline, sacrifice, and respect for the spiritual order and ancestral traditions passed down through generations. Furthermore, Sere Bissu also serves as a religious function, serving as a medium of connection between humans and the divine. Through prayers, poetry, and sacred symbolic actions, the Bugis people affirm their belief in the existence of a sacred power that maintains the balance of the world.

Thus, the Sere Bissu ritual in Bugis Bone society can be understood as a social and spiritual system that serves to strengthen community solidarity, maintain social and cultural balance, and connect humans with the sacred. In Durkheim's view, these functions demonstrate that Sere Bissu is not merely an aesthetic performance but also a manifestation of the moral and spiritual structure of Bugis Bone society. Through Sere Bissu, the community strengthens its collective identity as a community that upholds the religious, social, and moral values inherited from their ancestors so that cultural continuity and social balance can be maintained.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The form and structure of the Sere Bissu performing arts in Bone Regency have stages, namely Mappangolo Mappesabbi, Mappakaraja Alusu, Sere Alusu, Sere Mappabutte, Sere Bibbi, Sere Mangko, Sere Maddampu Alameng, Sere Lemma', Mammemmang, Maggiri, and Mappatabe. The educational values contained in the Sere Bissu performing arts ritual in Bone Regency contain religious, social, and moral educational values that guide humans towards the formation of a faithful, ethical, and cultured character. This performance is an educational medium that instills the values of politeness, cooperation, responsibility, and respect for ancestral traditions. The educational values of the Sere Bissu performing arts ritual reflect the unity between spiritual, social, and moral aspects that guide the life of the Bugis people in Bone Regency. Religious educational values teach piety, sincerity, and awareness of God's power as the main foundation for action. The values of social education foster a spirit of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and an awareness of the importance of togetherness and collective responsibility in community life. Meanwhile, the values of moral education guide individuals to behave honestly, politely, and courageously and uphold the truth with integrity.

The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference in the development of local culture-based learning, particularly in character education and the arts. Teachers and academics can use Sere Bissu as a contextual learning medium that instills religious, social, and moral values in students in accordance with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational philosophy. It is hoped that this research will serve as a starting point for further studies examining other aspects of Sere Bissu, such as its gender dimension, spirituality, or symbolism within a contemporary cultural context. Further research

could also examine the transformation of Sere Bissu values within the lives of the Bugis people.

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