

Ngemong Raos: Aesthetic Leadership Role of Panjak Juru Kendhang in Javanese Gamelan

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Abstract

The leadership of the Javanese gamelan is handled by a *panjak juru kendhang* (*kendhang* player). Although this player is the leader of this ensemble, his function is distinct from that of a conductor in a Western symphony orchestra. Psychological studies on leadership in music have examined the function of conductors in Western symphony orchestras. However, leadership in gamelan ensembles have yet to be explored. This study aims to examine leadership in Javanese gamelan ensembles. This study involved nine informants consisting of three main informants who are *panjak juru kendhang*, three informants who are *pengrawit* (gamelan players), and three expert informants who were academicians and gamelan experts. Qualitative methodology, i.e., the phenomenological method, was applied and interpreted through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Our findings on gamelan leadership is elaborated within four cycles of aesthetic leadership called *ngemong raos* (soul nurturing) which include sensitivity of *niteni* (observing), decision-making, *gotong royong* (egalitarian tasks), and the building a *raos*.

Keywords: gamelan, leadership, *ngemong raos*, *panjak juru kendhang*

Introduction

In gamelan, *mad sinamadan* and *rasa pangrasa* refer to observing and listening to one another, keeping the tempo, not crossing one another, and playing respective parts to achieve harmony as a musical ensemble. For this reason, leadership is needed to accomplish unity in playing the gamelan. This function is carried out by a *panjak juru kendhang* (*kendhang* player), who is also referred to as *pamurba irama* (rhythm lead) of *ricikan* (gamelan instruments) and has the authority to regulate the *buka* (opening) to *suwuk* (closing) of a piece. This is similar to the Western symphony orchestra, where the leadership is helmed by a conductor. The conductor is also responsible for the sound produced by the orchestra. However, leadership in a gamelan ensemble is also different. The conductor of a Western symphony orchestra does not play an instrument but uses gestures and musical cues while the *panjak juru kendhang* uses his *kendhang* to lead the ensemble.

The importance of the *panjak juru kendhang* was determined through a series of individual interviews, observations, and group interviews with various *karawitan* (the art of playing the gamelan) groups from professional *karawitans*, schools/colleges, and hamlet/village musical groups from October 2019 to January 2020. While a gamelan can stand alone as *uyon-uyon* (a gamelan performance solely with music), it is often used to accompany other art forms such as *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets), dance, and traditional ceremonies (Supanggah, 2007). As such, the role of the *panjak juru kendhang* was studied from various perspectives,

including that of the *panjak juru kendhang* himself, other gamelan artists, academics, classical Javanese dancers, and puppeteers. Although many gamelan styles can be studied, this research focuses solely on the classical Javanese gamelan.

Based on preliminary results, the *panjak juru kendhang* plays an important role in leading a gamelan performance, both during the practice process and the live performances. A *panjak juru kendhang* usually has other abilities in playing *ricikan* (gamelan instruments) thus is able to connect with other players of a gamelan ensemble. The *panjak juru kendhang* serves the *gendhing* (repertoire) and presents classical Javanese puppets and dances. One of the functions of *panjak juru kendhang* is to deliver *raos/rasa* to other *pengrawit* and spectators. Benamou (2010) states that *rasa* (in gamelan music) is translated as “sensation” or “inner meaning” (p. 40). It is often defined as the ability to express, feel, or possess inner meaning (intuition). Many Western theories cannot explain the meaning of *rasa*. The closest meaning is “feeling” (Benamou, 2010). However, *raos* in the Javanese context has the closest meaning to “soul” (Sugiarto, 2015).

Aesthetic Leadership in a Musical Context

Historically, leadership in music has existed since ancient Greece (Carnicer, Garrido, & Requena, 2015). Then, leaders of musical performances known as *cheironomy* used hand gestures to indicate the type of melody that was to be played. In Rome the music leaders used to the sole of a shoe containing a metal strip called *scabellum* to beat time. In the 16th and 17th centuries, choirmasters were vocal coaches for church music in Europe. During the Baroque era, musical leadership was taken over by harpsichord players. Today, a conductor leads musical performances.

The classical theory of leadership in psychology is one that is closely related to power, authority, regulation, control, and supervision (Yukl, 2010). This theory can be applied to the form of leadership of Western orchestral conductors. Scientific studies of aesthetic leadership in music were developed in the 19th and 20th centuries (Atik, 1994; Beau, 2016; Boerner & von Streit, 2007; Ginsborg et al., 2006; Khodyakov, 2014; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Matthews & Kitsantas, 2013; Morrison et al., 2009; Petricic, 2011; Shaw, 2004). Most focused on the music of the Western symphony orchestra. Discussions pertaining to leadership behaviour in music can be categorised according to interactions between the conductor and a musician, the conductor’s leadership style, the conductor’s role, and the way musicians perceive instructions from the conductor. Yaakov Atik (1994) argued that the transformational relationship between conductors and players occurred when the conductor used less hierarchical relations and adopted a more open approach. In turn, a conductor with a transformational leadership style was supported by the positive mood of the orchestra players, positively impacting orchestral performances (Boerner & von Streit, 2007). The success of an orchestral performance was also supported by the practice strategy designed by the conductor. Expressive conductors who stimulate hand movements have a significant collective effect on the efficacy of players (Matthews & Kitsantas, 2013; Morrison et al., 2009). However, when a conductor is an outsider (i.e., a guest conductor), he must first take the initiative to foster trust from players so that he can harness his full authority as a conductor (Khodyakov, 2014). In the Western classical orchestra, the conductor is at the top of the hierarchy and serves as a mentor and coach. His or her main function is listening to ensure that the sound produced by the orchestra is harmonious, the sound settings are balanced, and all instruments can be heard clearly (Shaw, 2004). In another study, a conductor who is directive and charismatic or able to provide a clear musical vision would possess a positive outlook and performance quality (Petricic, 2011). Several psychological studies have also explained how orchestral players perceive a conductor’s hand movements to the production of a harmonious sound (Ginsborg et al., 2006; Luck & Nte, 2008). In orchestras without a conductor or where no vertical hierarchy exists, the leadership role is determined through musical scores. In this case, the melodic lead would determine the leader of a group (Beau, 2016). Usually, this role is taken on by the first violinist, who provides gestures in the form of body language and expressive facial expressions as cues to other players. An empirical research has shown that the role of leadership in relationships between leaders and those who lead have three dimensions: relational listening, aesthetic judgment, and kinaesthetic empathy (Koivunen & Wennes, 2011).

Scientific sources have also discussed leadership in gamelan ensembles and indicated that the role can be taken on by a *kendhang* or rebab player (Brinner, 1995; Kunst, 1949; Palgunadi, 2002; Pickvance, 2005; Sumarsam, 2018; Supanggah, 2007; Yudoyono, 1984). A *rebab* is a *pamurba lagu* (direction of the melody)

and is often known to *pamurba yatmaka* (drive the soul). As such, the *rebab* is the driving force of the *raos* of a gamelan performance (Sastrodarsono, in Sumarsam, 2018). Kunst (1949) considered the *rebab* as a king, the *kendhang* its prime minister, and the *gong ageng* the chief justice of the Supreme Court that ensured all sources of power were evenly divided. A *kendhang* is often referred to as *pamurba irama* (rhythm lead), and a *panjak juru kendhang* is required to be wise in order to create a suitable rhythm to a song. He must know when to slow down, speed up, and remain at a certain tempo. He must also determine when to sound *ket, thak, thung, ndang, dhet, bem, hen* (sounds of the *kendhang*) as markers for other instruments. Brinner (1995) stated that leadership in a gamelan is flexible, humble, and fluid. A leader of a gamelan does not always play the main role in a musical presentation. Sometimes, he stands out during a performance, but he also disappears completely from the sound of the *gendhing*.

Statement of the Problem

Some of the previous studies mentioned above still view leadership from an ethnomusicological point of view. This research aims to describe gamelan leadership from a psychological perspective. Thus far, research on aesthetic leadership has focused on the leadership of Western orchestral groups (Atik, 1994; Beau, 2016; Boerner & von Streit, 2007; Ginsborg et al., 2006; Khodyakov, 2014; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Matthews & Kitsantas, 2013; Morrison et al., 2009; Petricic, 2011; Shaw, 2004). The general philosophical, cultural, and aesthetic differences between gamelans and Western symphony orchestras provide a fresh view of the aesthetic leadership construct in music. This gap is addressed by the following research question: What is the aesthetic leadership role of a *panjak juru kendhang* in a gamelan?

Purpose

This study aims to explore the aesthetic leadership role of the *panjak juru kendhang* in Javanese gamelan in order to achieve a harmonious gamelan performance. As stated in the Oxford English Dictionary (Soanes & Stevenson, 2004), harmony is a combination of musical notes played together to produce a pleasing effect. Harmonious unity is thus connected to an aesthetic and beautiful musical presentation. The benefit of this research is to provide theoretical or scientific contributions for aesthetic leadership in music behaviour.

Method

Phenomenological qualitative research methods were applied to explore the leadership of the *panjak juru kendhang*. By using phenomenology, we can explore the experience of the subject naturally and focus on individual experiences (Kahija, 2017). In this process, the researcher sets aside personal experiences and related theories (*epoche*) to gaze the subject's experience more naturally (Creswell, 2013). A phenomenological approach is utilised to interpret aesthetic leadership events experienced by participants (Creswell, 2013). Before this research began, a preliminary study was conducted for approximately 3 months to explore related problems and establish a detailed report with the participants (Herdiansyah, 2015).

Participants

This study involved nine informants: three main informants consisting of *panjak juru kendhang* (*kendhang* players), three significant *pengrawit* (gamelan performers), and three expert informants consisting of academicians and Javanese art experts. The three main informants are males and have been actively involved in musical activities for more than 20 years, though they have not taken formal/academic musical education. Of the three *pengrawit*, two participants, Informants 1 and 2, are *pengrawit* (gamelan players) aged > 55 years and farm laborers who live in a village. Informant 3 (25 years old) is a *pengrawit* belonging to a student activity unit (UKM) on campus X. These three informants are *panjak juru kendhang* who have experience in teaching musical groups (*karawitan*) in their respective ensembles. Informants 4, 5, and 6 are *pengrawit* who have performed with the main informants. Informants 7, 8, and 9 are an academician, a doctor, and a professor in the

Javanese art of *pedhalangan* (puppeteering), Javanese dance, and *karawitan* in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, respectively.

This study received ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Psychology, Gadjah Mada University. All the informants signed an informed consent. Their description is summarised in Figure 1:

Main informants (<i>panjak juru kendhang</i>)	Informant 1
	Informant 2
	Informant 3
Significant gamelan performers (<i>Pengrawit</i> /gamelan players)	Informant 4
	Informant 5
	Informant 6
Expert informants (Academicians and Javanese art experts)	Informant 7
	Informant 8
	Informant 9

Figure 1. Research informants

Data Collection Procedure

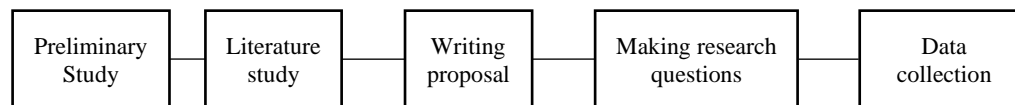


Figure 2. Data collection procedures

A preliminary study was conducted in the form of interviews, observations, and group interviews between October 2019 to January 2020 among various gamelan groups from professional, school/college, and hamlet/village musical groups. Later, other related studies were reviewed. A proposal and a list of questions were prepared. Data, comprising nine interview transcripts, some photographs and video documentation, were then collected. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to achieve flexibility and focus for interview purposes (Creswell, 2013). The primary data collection method in this study was personal interviews.

Data collection was carried out within one month. In this period, the participants' music practice sites were visited to make observations and collect data. Their residences were also visited during personal interviews. Research questions revolved around the aesthetic leadership of a *panjak juru kendhang* in gamelan ensembles.

Data Analysis

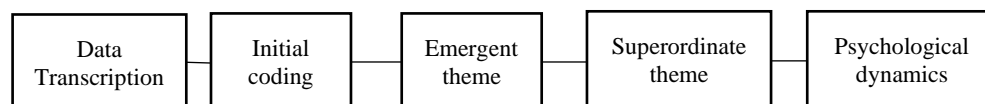


Figure 3. Data analysis

Data was analysed through interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). This analysis is based on 3 main pillars: phenomenology (the philosophy of phenomenology), hermeneutics (meaning/interpretation), and idiography (the study of humans and their uniqueness) (Kahija, 2017; Smith et al., 2009). In short, IPA was

used to interpret the experience of the subject naturally. Results generated from interview transcripts were coded using ATLAS.Ti 8.0 for Mac. Initial coding and emergent themes were made to code the early stages. Emergent themes were then grouped into broader themes of superordinate themes (Creswell, 2013; Kahija, 2017; Smith et al., 2009). After the themes emerged, connections and linkages between these themes were determined via psychological dynamics.

Results

This study obtained four cycles that were run until “harmony” was produced by the gamelan, which was spearheaded by the *panjak juru kendhang*. These four cycles included sensitivity of *niteni* (observing), making decisions, conducting *gotong royong* (egalitarian tasks), and building *raos*. The cycles emerged from the process of analysing the subject’s experience when playing the gamelan.

Ngemong Raos as a Concept of Music Psychology

The concept of *ngemong raos* refers to a typology of leadership within Javanese musical aesthetic leadership. It is a unique concept that emerges and distinguishes itself from Western concepts of leadership. The term *ngemong* can be translated into English as “nurturing”. The word is taken from the Javanese terms *momong*, *among*, *ngemong* (Dewantara, 2013; Samho, 2013). This information was conveyed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, an educational and cultural activist from Java, Indonesia. He is also known as the “father of education” in Indonesia. This concept is used to describe the process of caring for children. *Momong* is the ability to care with sincerity and compassion. *Among* is the ability to be a good example/role model. *Ngemong* is the process of observing, caring for, and taking full responsibility. Related to this concept, *ngemong* is used to refer to the process of observing. Observing is defined as the process of actively looking at the surroundings and responding responsibly. It is the main role of a *panjak juru kendhang*.

Raos is related to the concept of *Kawruh Jiwa* (knowledge of the soul), which was introduced by Ki Ageng Suryo Mentaram, a Javanese philosopher. Here, man must control *kramadangsa* (ideal self) to avoid egoism. As a powerful person, a *panjak juru kendhang* must be able to control his *kramadangsa* as a leader. One of the concepts of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s *raos sih* is that *raos* is manifested when someone is able to control his or her desire to pursue personal interests, because his or her basic love is always directed to make others happy (Sugiarto, 2015).

The concept of *ngemong raos* in the role of *panjak juru kendhang* requires the *kendhang* player to actively observe the people (*pengrawit*) around him in order to understand the *raos* of each individual and achieve the *raos* (soul) of the group, thereby achieving harmony. The *raos* should be nurturing because *ngemong* does not just happen through thought (cognitivism). Rationalities and theoretical considerations also arise, consequently blocking the *raos* itself. Thus, the gamelan should be played with one’s heart (soul).

In simple terms, the concept of *ngemong raos* aesthetic leadership can be described in the cycle shown in Figure 4. A *panjak juru kendhang* must be sensitive to the ability of the *pengrawit* (gamelan player) around him (sensitivity of *niteni*). After knowing a player’s ability, he adjusts it within the abilities of the team to minimise the gap between the abilities of all other players. This action requires self-control, which in turn enables other players to respond to the harmony of the ensemble. After making observations, the *panjak juru kendhang* makes decisions on how fast the *laya* (tempo) should be. The concept of *gotong royong* is still highlighted here, where being the hero of the group is not the goal. *Gotong royong* means helping and sharing. A *panjak juru kendhang* needs to share his knowledge and experiences about musical performances. He also needs patience, because not all players can immediately understand the techniques or skills required. When all technical adjustments and corrections are made, the *panjak juru kendhang* leads the team to build the *raos*. This process continues until the musical performances are in the right zone so that they can work harmoniously.

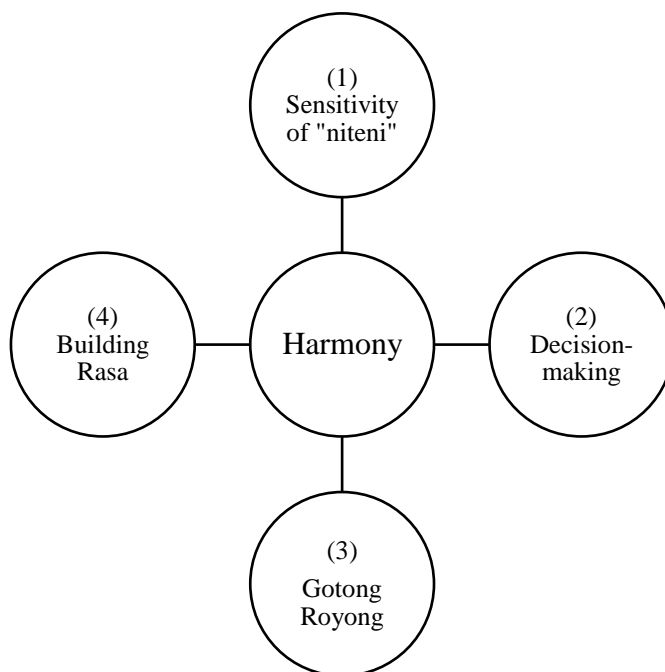


Figure 1. Aesthetic leadership cycle of *ngemong raos*

Sensitivity of *Niteni* (Observing)

Niteni (observing) refers to the act of watching and listening attentively. To *ngemong raos*, a *panjak juru kendhang* must observe the players around him with *raos* (soul). This situation requires the sensitivity of *niteni* of a *panjak juru kendhang*. Players are in the middle of an ensemble. The *panjak juru kendhang* observes the surroundings and responds musically by using *raos* to achieve harmony.

... A person who plays the gamelan should listen to the *kendhang* or the bonang, so if the feeling that I build is similar to the one when I play the kenong or the gong ... it feels like it. Otherwise, you cannot ... (Informant 2).

A *panjak juru kendhang* must instil ethics of “listening sensitivity” to other *ricikan* (gamelan instruments) with *raos*. The ability to listen is part of observing sensitively because a *panjak juru kendhang* is the leader of the ensemble. “He should be able to listen to other instruments. He must have mastery in *gendèr* and *rebab* virtuoso, or he should at least know how to play the instruments” (Informant 7). In addition, a *panjak juru kendhang* is also required to master all gamelan *ricikan* especially *rebab* and *gender*.

When you hit too hard, you cannot hear the *rebab* virtuoso. The voice is drowned, and the *sindhen* (singer) sinks ... (Informant 2).

Furthermore, *niteni* allows the *panjak juru kendhang* to maintain sound balance in the gamelan ensemble. Both hard and soft *ricikan* must be played according to its portion and duties. Developing an observational attitude requires the ability to be emphatic and submissive so that squabbling among team members can be avoided. The main vision of a *panjak juru kendhang* is to save the team. Empathy relates to how the *panjak juru kendhang* can determine the strengths and weaknesses of his ensemble so that he can adjust the *laya* (tempo) and dynamics of the music.

Informant 6, who is head of the Village Gamelan Association at Village X in Yogyakarta was asked to play *Gendhing Ngayogjan* but Informant 2 said, “No! You cannot play the *dhemung* variation of that piece. The problem is *neng nong neng ngong nong neng* [imitating *dhemung* voice] ... if you still look at the notation, it will not be done!” In this case, Informant 2 understood the ability of the group that he led. He musically and personally understood that if Informant 6 played in that manner, the harmony would not be formed. As such,

Informant 2 did not allow them to play the song. Informant 3 also emphasised that the *panjak juru kendhang* must know the players' skills before they practiced a song.

... Know the players first, the atmosphere, and the background of the player so that idealism should not be presented ... (Informant 3).

Panjak juru kendhang must be able to suppress *kramadangsa* (idealism) and adapt well to the ensemble players' conditions. Perhaps a *panjak juru kendhang* has the musical abilities above the other *pengrawit*. However, he needs to observe who he plays with and how capable he is. Suppressing idealism can help the *panjak juru kendhang* make those decisions.

Decision-Making

Decision-making refers to the act of making decisions on the facets that should be observed in an ensemble in order to suppress a *panjak juru kendhang's kramadangsa* (idealism). Some of the facets that should be addressed include the following: how the *panjak juru kendhang* determines the *laya* (tempo) and how they present the atmosphere of *kendhangan* (i.e., the way a *kendhang* is played) so that all players can follow the flow of the ensemble. If some players fail to harmonise with the rest of the team, the task of the *panjak juru kendhang* is to *ngemong* so that the group can still carry on in harmony even in awkward conditions.

Various methods can be performed to slow down the tempo, but I only use one method. I do not apply too many variations. I am trying to follow this method because it is better to save all of my friends (Informant 3).

A *panjak juru kendhang* may also choose to give in so that the group can still carry on harmoniously. He could bring down the tempo and follow the flow of the group.

... So, *ojo dumeh*, just because you have the power as a *kendhang* player to do whatever you want. Set the tempo selfishly without observing the player's abilities around you ... (Informant 6)

Ojo dumeh is a Javanese saying that means "do not be arrogant!" Even though a *panjak juru kendhang* is superior to other players, he should not think so. He must prioritise the ensemble. The main role of a *panjak juru kendhang* is to unite the group and to achieve harmony.

A *panjak juru kendhang* interacts and collaborates with many people, so "he needs to have self-control" (Informant 7). This form of self-control is translated into several attitudes, such as having patience and controlling his ego. Informant 7 observed: "The *panjak juru kendhang* must be patient, because he is nurturing several characters ...". His patience should be similar to that shown by Informant 2 when he was teaching an elderly gamelan group in Region X:

...These women are a bit slow, so they should practice properly and be given examples on how to play the gamelan. The theory is as such; it is clear, so the bonang is like this; this one is called *mbalung* ... (Informant 2).

Informant 1 also demonstrated patience through the testimony given by his student: "His teachings [Informant 1] can easily be understood. I have never witnessed him being angry with the ensemble" (Informant 4). Likewise, the expert informant (Informant 9) mentioned, "The main criterion for leading the gamelan corps or a gamelan orchestra is patience. This attitude is important because gamelan plays with *rasa*" (Informant 9). Informant 9 further indicated that *rasa* would be formed when the players are able to control their ego. Thus, controlling the ego is not only a task for the *panjak juru kendhang* but also other players.

Gotong Royong

Gotong royong in a musical context means that no single person is dominant in the group, i.e., all players collaborate to achieve harmony and respect among one another through their respective duties and roles within the ensemble. This is unlike the leadership of Western music, where there is a need for charismatic leaders (Atik, 1994; Petricic, 2011). In gamelan, this criterion does not always appear. Charismatic leadership in a gamelan ensemble will be more visible in the relationship between teacher/coach and students.

The presence of Informant 1 [my teacher] is what I have been waiting for. There is encouragement. Like there is ... there is like a mother figure to me” (Informant 4).

Informant 4 felt that the presence of Informant 1 in the gamelan group was important because it could inspire him. “I wouldn’t be able to play gamelan like this without him” (Informant 4). Concurrently, Informant 5 stated that “He [Informant 3] has the ability to train us when the coach doesn’t come. He can play the drums, teach the gongs, and all the instruments” (Informant 5). This means that the presence of someone who is able to lead is needed to trigger *gotong royong* in an ensemble.

On the other hand, *gotong royong* can also occur when there is no charismatic figure. They can just *ngeli* (flow together), united by their common interests, which then makes a community, chemistry, and a collective peak (Tan et al., 2020). No absolute leadership dominated by just one person needs to exist. Even a *panjak juru kendhang* cannot arbitrarily adjust the tempo.

Gamelan is collective in nature, so no domination exists in one particular group in a collective society (Informant 8).

This usually occurs in the context of professional gamelan groups where the players already have high skills and understand their respective duties. The members of a gamelan ensemble emphasise a sense of equality with one another. Naturally, they can play as a group with this sense of *gotong royong*.

In the context of gamelan playing among amateurs, it has its own challenges. “When I lead people who are less capable than me, it is more difficult to maintain rhythm, dynamics should be played softly ...” (Informant 3). Therefore, even though a *panjak juru kendhang* possesses very high skills, he has to try to save his ensemble by *ngemong*.

In the context of a professional gamelan group, *ngemong* is needed. Sometimes, when all the players are equally clever and skilled, players have to set aside their egos. This situation had been experienced by Informant 1 and Informant 2. One of his players deliberately “tackled” him by speeding up the tempo based on whims. Even under these conditions, to save the group, the *panjak juru kendhang* had to *ngemong*.

Usually, I give in. Succumbing in the sense of whether you want it or not, we must follow the person who can be called *ngeyel* (stubborn), so stubborn people must follow. If you do not follow them, you can fall apart in the middle of a song. That is my way, and it is just like that (Informant 1).

Sometimes I also have unpleasant experiences. When the *kendhang* is played well, the other *pengrawit* may attempt to break the tempo. It makes me hate it as the gamelan becomes inharmonious (Informant 2).

From the experiences of Informant 1 and 2, when one person in the ensemble does not have a sense of *gotong royong*, the ensemble becomes chaotic. Situations like these call for the leadership of a *panjak juru kendhang*, who tries to go with the flow of the group so that *gotong royong* can continue.

Building Raos

Panjak juru kendhang is like a “driver controlling a car” (Informant 2), i.e., the car accelerates or slows down depending on the driver. Passengers feel comfortable or worried depending on *kendhangan* or the way a *kendhang* is played. When the car goes over a bump, the driver can step on the brake to slow down, so it does not lose control. “The feeling when playing a *kendhang* is felt right in the heart” (Informant 2). Energy is

transferred to other players when the *panjak juru kendhang* can play with soul. “When it is ripe, the *rasa* is enjoyable ...” (Informant 5).

The *rasa* of the *panjak juru kendhang* must be in line with that of the *pengrawit*. When playing in a group that does not understand the *rasa*, a musician usually feels stiff because his ability and *rasa* are not on the same frequency. “Playing gamelan with juniors who have just started playing is stiff ...” (Informant 3). Mastery of various aspects other than musical technique is needed. However, it veers more to the sense of *ngemong*. Therefore, a player must not stand out from his *kendhangan* to form the *raos* of the group. In this context, being stiff is not bad; instead, it means “giving in” to follow the flow (flow of *raos*) in the group.

A *kendhang* player must know when he must present *irama 1*, in what character, for example, oh this is *sigrak* (play with spirit) but *alus* (soft) ... Ooh a little bit dashing ... ooh a little bit coarse... similar to *irama 1*, the leader must know *irama*, because not all *kendhang* players know this character ... (Informant 7).

Irama refers to the rhythmic density. The *panjak juru kendhang* is vital in delivering *raos* here. If the *kendhangan* in accordance with the *gendhing* (repertoire) character, energy can be responded to by other *pengrawit*. The *panjak juru kendhang* gives cues to instruct the *pengrawit* to play softly or loudly.

From the softest *wasp* like the *gendèr* to loud percussions like *saron* or *bonang*, this must be put together. Players will be required to play *rep* (softly), with cues coming from the gamelan leader. From the *kendhang* player. The conductor is the *kendhang* player (Informant 9).

Thus, one of the important roles of a *panjak juru kendhang* is to build *raos*, because playing the gamelan is different from a Western symphony orchestra. In gamelan, playing with *raos* is more important than just reading the notation. A flow is achieved when *raos* is formed.

Discussion

This study aims to explore the role of aesthetic leadership in Javanese gamelan. The aesthetic leadership role is described within the concept of *ngemong raos*, which includes sensitivity of *niteni*, decision-making, conducting a *gotong royong*, and building *raos*. The sensitivity of *niteni* refers to watching and listening attentively to the *pengrawit* around the *panjak juru kendhang* within the ensemble. Decision-making refers to empathetic decision making while considering the ensemble and suppressing a *panjak juru kendhang*'s *kramadangsa* (idealism). *Gotong royong* refers to the act of togetherness, where all players work together to achieve harmony and respect one another in their duties and roles within the ensemble. Building *raos* is the role of a *panjak juru kendhang* who delivers *rasa* in the gamelan.

This cycle is carried out sequentially, from *niteni* sensitivity to building *raos*. This is a continuous process, where every aspect of the cycle can be experienced through practicing and performing. The role of aesthetic leadership during the rehearsals will be higher than that of a performance. This is because when in rehearsal, communication with the *pengrawit* is more intimate. The same can be observed of an orchestra conductor who is actively involved in rehearsals (Price & Byo, 2002).

Based on the research analysis, there are several musical and extra musical attributes (personality) that *panjak juru kendhang* have to be able to carry out. This includes listening emphatically, having sensitivity to others, and helping in the process of *niteni* and *gotong royong*. Problem solving skills, nurturing skills, patience and self-control make it easier for leaders to make decisions and build *rasa*. Certainly, a leader of music must have musical abilities above the average of other players and have the ability to teach in order to inspire other *pengrawit*.

Our data suggests that the four cycles of *ngemong raos* aesthetic leadership is the embodiment of Javanese leadership philosophy, which emphasises the characteristics of a nurturing leader. Furthermore, the attitude of being patient and being *oyo dumeh* (to not feel arrogant) is a natural part of Javanese leadership (Achmad, 2018). Even in Javanese puppet theatre (*seni Wayang*) characters, leaders, role models, or central characters are the heroes and not kings such as Sri Ramawijaya, Prabu Basukarna, Sri Kresna or Batara Guru. Rather, role models include the figure of Semar, who works as a clerk (servant) behind the scenes and

implements *tut wuri handayani* (to give encouragement in the background) to provide motivation and spirit in the background (Endraswara, 2018). In gamelan leadership, these attributes may or may not appear within the role of the *panjak juru kendhang*. It is important for the *panjak juru kendhang* not to be too prominent and dominating among the others (Brinner, 1995). However, his presence is still important and makes an impact on his group. Tan et al. (2020), who studied the concept of flow in Javanese gamelan found that a leader must downplay hierarchy, select music that musicians enjoy, and foster a friendly and relaxed environment to embody a sense of community in the ensemble.

Western symphony leadership emphasises the charismatic nature of a conductor, which is the most dominant and influential aspect of a conductor (Atik, 1994; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Petricic, 2011). The conductor clearly stands out from the crowd. Standing on a podium, he is in a physically higher position than the other players so that the cues can be seen more clearly; his attire is also distinct from other players, and he controls and assumes full responsibility for the ensemble's sound quality (Gibson, 2017; Ippolito, 2019; Lisk, 2006; Wittry, 2007). A special tribute is also given to the conductor as he enters and leaves the stage. This situation is different from that of the *panjak juru kendhang*, who is positioned in the middle of the ensemble. His whereabouts are sometimes unknown because his appearance is visually not any different from that of other *pengrawit* (gamelan players). Gamelan playing emphasises a sense of equality and cooperation. The dominance of one person is rarely highlighted. A gamelan is not meaningful without harmony among players (Dunbar-Hall, 2011). This phenomenon bodes with gamelan philosophy. According to the teachings contained within *Taman Siswa* by Ki Hadjar Dewantara (Dewantara, 1959, 2013; Samho, 2013), a *panjak juru kendhang* is in the centre of an ensemble; his teachings ascribe to the values of *ing madya mbangun karsa*, where a leader of a society should be motivating and encouraging.

This study also discussed the delivery of a *raos* driven by a *panjak juru kendhang*. When all players have mastered the material well, *raos* can emerge. This feeling is related to the *raos* of the *pengrawit*, the group, *gendhing* (repertoire), and of the *panjak juru kendhang* as leader of the ensemble. All these aspects build *raos* in a gamelan performance. Previous literature on *raos/rasa* have yet to connect the significance of gamelan leadership in delivering *raos* (Benamou, 2010; Brinner, 1995; Kunst, 1949; Weiss, 2006; and Sumarsam, 2013). Before concluding, some of the limitations of this study must be acknowledged. The focus of this research is on leadership within the Javanese gamelan of the Yogyakarta style, where most informants are native Javanese speakers. Most of the interviews were conducted in the Javanese language, and there are words that we cannot simply be translated. Javanese usually adhere to the principle of *oyo dumeh* (to not be arrogant), and in this study, there are almost no equivalent words to describe those who "glorify" themselves. Even the words of praise and greatness of Informants 1, 2, and 3 all came from significant gamelan performers (Informants 4-6). The main informants of this study were those who learnt gamelan independently, within their own environment, not through formal gamelan schools. Further research can be extended to informants who are products of music school. The aesthetic leadership of the gamelan can also be extended to other styles of gamelan including Balinese and Sundanese gamelan where cultural elements and characteristics of a "song" contain uniqueness of the region that must be learned. As such, there is a possibility that the aesthetic processes of leadership may also be different.

Conclusion

This research sought to explore aesthetic leadership in Javanese gamelan from the perspective of music psychology. Qualitative research was conducted to explore leadership aspects of the *panjak juru kendhang*. The findings indicate that the role of aesthetic leadership of the *panjak juru kendhang* is contained within four cycles of *ngemong raos*, which includes sensitivity of the *niteni*, decision making, conducting *gotong royong*, and building *raos*. This emergent model may be used as a theoretical framework for future research on aesthetic leadership within a musical context. It also offers practical applications of *ngemong raos* where leadership is expressed through leader-follower relationships within gamelan ensembles.

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Biography

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