

## Ethnobotanical Study of Plants Used For The Wedding Ceremony in The Boyolangu Subdistrict, Tulungagung District, East Java Province

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### Abstract

Javanese ethnic still upholds local wisdom including marriage customs. Traditional wedding ceremonies inherited from ancestors are still practiced up to present in the Boyolangu subdistrict, Tulungagung District, East Java Province. Traditional wedding ceremonies in this area are often carried out by utilizing plants during the procession, especially at the procession of temu manten. The use of plants in this procession is closely related to ethnobotany. Ethnobotany is an ecological discipline and the principle of the community's conception of local plants sources that can be used as a protector of cultural values. This research aims to find out the types of plants that are used as in the traditional wedding ceremonies and to provide an understanding of conservation of certain plants typically used for traditional wedding ceremonies. This research used quantitative descriptive design and applied a purposive sampling technique. It involved 10 respondents of community and 1 key informant (dukun manten or shaman). Based on the results of the study, the community in this area uses a total of 14 species of plants of 11 families at a traditional wedding ceremony. Commonly, the community utilizes the leaves and other parts of plants such as fruit, seeds, stems, and flowers. They are directly arranged in a certain way and used. The plants are obtained from around the yards of the community's house.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a high diversity of plant species (Komalasari, 2018). The high biodiversity provides potential plants that are not widely known by the public (Prananingrum, 2007). Besides, this country

has high ethnicity and cultural diversity (Purwanti et al, 2017).nJavanese, one of the Indonesian ethnics still upholds local wisdom which can be seen in its traditional wedding ceremonies (Pratama and Wahyuningsih, 2018).mThe Javanese traditional wedding

ceremony is passed down from one generation to the next. The traditional wedding ceremony utilizes some plants that are believed to have a philosophy of kindness for those who run the ceremony.

The wedding ceremony tradition is still widely practiced in East Java areas including Tulungagung district. This district is bordered by Blitar district on the east side, Kediri district on the north side, Trenggalek district on the west side and Hindia Ocean on the south (Figure ). The wedding ceremony tradition is still practiced in this district because Tulungagung has a close history with the ancient kingdoms in Indonesia. This is proven by Sanggrahan Temple and Gayatri Temple which is the heritage of Majapahit Kingdom (Wasisto, 2009)

Boyolangu is one of the subdistricts in Tulungagung district that still widely practice the traditional wedding ceremonies. The traditional wedding ceremony often utilizes some plants for its procession. The use of plants in the wedding ceremony in this area is related to ethnobotany. Ethnobotany is one of the disciplines of ecology and the principle of community conception of local plants resources that can be used as a protector of cultural values (Supriyati *et al*, 2017).

Plants are used in the procession of *temu manten* or when the bride and groom meet. *Temu manten* is one of the Javanese traditional wedding processions conducted at the bride's house which is held after the marriage contract procession. This procession covers a series of stages including *kembar mayang*, *balangan gantal*, *wiji dadi*, *sindur binayang*, *pangkon*, *kacar-kucur* and *sungkeman* (Pratama and Wahyuningsih, 2018).

Considering the elaboration above, it is necessary to study the use plants based on traditions in procession of *temu manten*. This research aims to find out the types of plants, the parts of the plants, the procedure to get the plants, and the philosophy of plants used in traditional wedding ceremonies in Boyolangu. Further, it is to provide

understanding for the public about conservation for certain plants that are used for traditional wedding ceremonies as well as the preservation of cultures.

## 2. MATERIALS and METHODS

### Data Collection

Boyolangu is a subdistrict in Tulungagung district with an area of 37,69 km<sup>2</sup> and total of 17 villages. Boyolangu subdistrict is bordered by Tulungagung subdistrict in the north, Sumbergempol subdistrict in the east, Campurdarat subdistrict in the south and Gondang subdistrict in the west. Data obtained through five weddings in three villages in Boyolangu subdistrict.

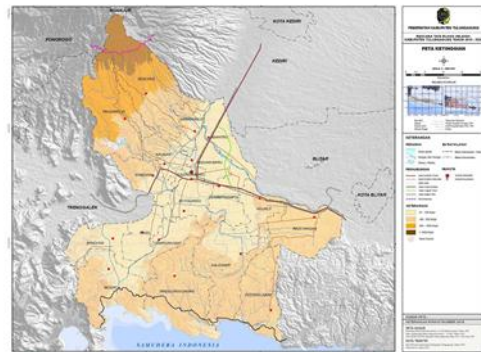


Figure 1. Regional and topographic maps of Tulungagung district

### Respondents.

This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected using a semi-structured interview. It applied a purposive sampling technique for selecting the informant based on certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2007). The selected informant was *dukun manten* (shaman) as key informants. Whereas the selection of the respondents was based on snowball sampling by getting the recommendation from the key informant and it involved a total of 10 respondents.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained in the form of qualitative and quantitative data which are then analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis.

3. RESULTS





Figure 2. Map point location of wedding ceremony location

Based on the results of the interview with the key informant and 10 respondents, the community in the study areas uses 14 species of plants of 11 families at a traditional wedding ceremony (Table 1.). The community used 14 types of plants in *temu manten* procession. The use of these plants is based on knowledge passed down from one generation to the next.

Table 1. Types of Plants that used in the Wedding Ceremony of the Boyolangu Subdistrict Community

No	Common/ Local Name	Scientific Name	Family	Used Part	Utilization	Philosophical Meaning
1.	Coconut (Kelopo)	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed like the Cave Swiftlet bird	Give meaning that the bride and groom can cross the household without fear of danger
		<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed like a dagger (keris)	Give meaning that the bride and groom have strength
		<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed into gunungan or pagedene kembar mayang	Give the meaning to the bride and groom always together under any circumstances and respected by the community
		<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed like an umbrella	Give meaning to the bridal couple is protected from all disturbances

	Cocos nucifera	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed into pecut samandiman	So that the bride and groom are able to live a life without relying on others
					
	Cocos nucifera	Areca ceae	Young leaves	Formed like a fish bone	So that the bride and groom are always protected by god
					
	Cocos nucifera	Areca ceae	Fruit	One length is placed at the entrance of the tarub and used for offerings	Give a sturdy household meaning
					
Banana (Gedhang)	Musa sp.	Musac eae	Fruit	It is hung at the entrance of the tarub and used at offerings	Give meaning to the household which is bestowed fortune
					
	Musa sp.	Musac eae	Stem	Used as a base on kembar mayang	Give meaning that the bridal have strong households
					
Banyan Tree (Ringin)	Ficus benjamin a	Morac eae	Petiole and leaf	Plugged into the kembar mayang	Gives great meaning to the bride's family
					

Puring	Codiaeum variegatum	Euphorbiaceae	Leaf	Plugged into the kembar mayang	Give meaning so that in the household there is no dispute
					
Andong	Cordyline fruticosa	Asparagaceae	Leaf	Plugged into the kembar mayang	Give meaning so that the bride and groom's family can be lived beautifully
					
Rice (Pari)	Oryza sativa	Poaceae	Stem and leaf	Placed at the entrance of the tarub	Give meaning so that food needs are fulfilled
Sticky Rice (Ketan)	Oryza sativa var. glutinosa	Poaceae	Seed	Used in the process of shredding (kacar-kucur)	Giving meaning so that in the future the family of the bride will always have sufficient food
Sugar Cane (Tebu)	Saccharum sp.	Poaceae	Stem	Placed at the entrance of the tarub	A sign that the bride is truly ready to marry a partner
Rose (Mawar)	Rosa sp.	Rosaceae	Flower	Used in the foot wash process and placed on offerings	Gives meaning that given a beautiful household
Jasmine (Melati)	Jasminum sambac	Oleaceae	Flower	Strung together and used by the bride	Gives meaning that given a beautiful household
White Champak (Kantil)	Michelia sp.	Magnoliaceae	Flower	Strung together and used by the bride	Gives meaning that given a beautiful household
Common/Local Name	Scientific Name	Family	Used Part	Utilization	Philosophical Meaning
Betel (Suruh)	Piper betle	Piperaceae	Leaf	Used for the betel throw process (bandem suruh)	Gives meaning that the bride is immediately blessed with her offspring and is kept from reproductive disorders
Cananga (Kenanga)	Cananga odorata	Annonaceae	Flower	Used in the foot wash process and placed on offerings	Gives meaning that given a beautiful household
Areca Palm (Jambe)	Areca catechu	Arecaeae	Flower	Plugged into the banana stem in kembar mayang	Giving meaning so that the bride and groom's family have a firmness and are not easily influenced

The most widely used plants in the traditional wedding ceremony in this area are

coconuts (18%) (Figure 3.) because the parts of coconuts are used in kembar mayang,

offerings, welcome gate, and marker poles. Some of the plants that are least utilized in are sticky rice, rice, puring leaves, andong leaves, banyan, sugar cane, areca flower, betel leaves, jasmine and *kantil* flowers with a percentage of 5% (Figure 3). They are less likely used because they are only used at *kembar mayang*, a welcome gate or *balangan gantal* procession only.

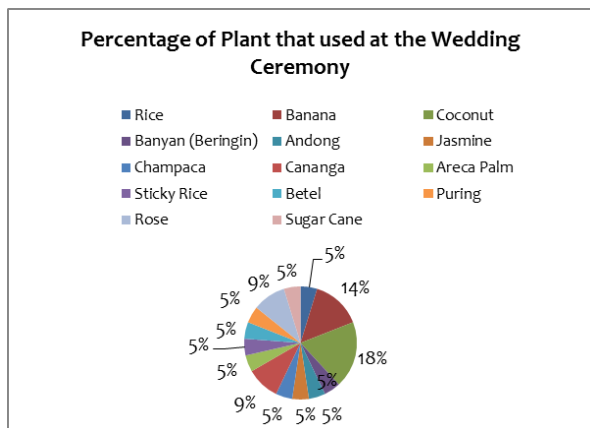


Figure 3. Percentage of Plant that used at the Wedding Ceremony of Boyolangu Subdistrict

The most widely used parts of plants at the traditional wedding ceremony in this area are flowers and leaves (29%) (Figure 4). The flowers cover roses, jasmine, cananga, *kantil* and areca flower. The use of leaves reaches 29% while fruit and seeds only reach 12% of each. The fruits cover bananas and coconuts, while the seeds are sticky rice and rice which are still in their stalks.

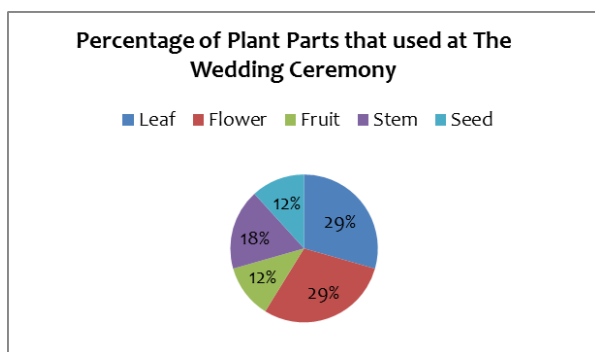


Figure 4. Percentage of Plant Parts that used at The Wedding Ceremony of Boyolangu Subdistrict

#### 4. DISCUSSION

##### Species of Plants Used at the Wedding Ceremony

This study focused on analyzing plants used at the procession of *temu manten*. Suwarno (2006) defines *temu manten* as *panggih* or *dhaup* in which the bride and groom meet. This procession consists of a series of processes such as *kembar mayang*, *balangan gantal*, *wiji dadi*, *sindur binayang*, *pangkon*, *tanem*, *kacar-kucur* and *sungkeman*. Not all procession used plants. The procession that uses plants only *kembar mayang*, *balangan gantal*, *wiji dadi* and *kacar-kucur*.

Based on interviews with one key informant (shaman *manten*) and 10 respondents (people who are good at creating *kembar mayang*), the study found that the community in this area used 14 types of plants at the traditional wedding ceremony (Table 1.). These plants are from 11 families.

The plants of 11 families are divided into 3 groups of use at the wedding ceremony, namely offerings (*sesajen*), *kembar mayang* and *temu manten*. The offering used red and white roses (*kembang telon*), cananga flowers, a bunch of banana (*pisang raja*), young coconut fruit, sticky rice seeds, and Javanese chicken eggs (Figure 5.). The offering was placed on a plaited tray and then placed in certain places such as the wedding hall, kitchen, tables for placing *kembar mayang*, and near the sound system. The offering means for protecting the series of events from any distractions.



Figure 5. Coconut fruit, banana fruit and kembang telon on sesajen

Most of the plants are used for *kembar mayang*. *Kembar mayang* is a bunch of young coconut leaves (*janur*), some other leaves and areca flowers. The shaman prepared two *kembar mayang* for each wedding ceremony. *Kembar mayang* means as a tree of life that can provide everything desired (Widayanti, 2008).

The mostly used plant for *kembar mayang* is young coconut leaves (*janur*). *Janur* has a flexible texture so that it can be easily formed and not easily torn. Then, *janur* is formed into certain shapes such as sriti birds, *keris*, mountain, umbrella, *pecut samandiman*, and fish bones with the philosophical meaning that it is believed to bring blessings to the couple. Other plants used in *kembar mayang* are puring leaves, andong leaves, banyan leaves, banana stems and areca flower. In the Javanese tradition, typically *kembar mayang* was brought by two virgin girls and 2 virgin boys during the procession of *temu manten*.

The plants used during the *temu manten* are betel leaves for *balangan gantal*. The betel leaves are rolled and tied using yarn and then the bride and groom throw the rolled leaves to each other. In this procession, the groom steps on eggs, and then the bride wash his feet. The waster used in this process (*wiji dadi*) contains white roses, red roses, and cananga flowers (Figure 6.)



Figure 6. Procession of *wiji dadi*

*Temu manten* is closely related to the welcoming gate at the entrance of the wedding tent. The gate was fitted with bunches of plants to welcome invited guests

(Figure 7.). The plants consisted of bananas, coconuts, sugar cane, rice, and young coconut leaves (*janur*). Young coconut leaves (*janur*) are also used as markers in the aisles of houses arranged lengthwise on a pole.



Figure 7. The gate of wedding ceremony

### Parts of the Plants Used at the Wedding Ceremony

The results of interviews with key informants and 10 respondents showed that the parts of the plant used from coconut trees (*Cocos nucifera*) are young leaves (coconut) and coconut fruit. The coconut leaves were mostly used for *kembar mayang*, welcome gate, marker pole in the alley of the house. The coconut leaf (*janur*) has a flexible texture so that it can be easily formed and not easily torn.

Parts of banana trees (*Musa sp.*) which are used for the wedding ceremony are fruit and stems. A stalk of bananas was used for offerings and also placed on welcome gate. The banana stems were used as the base of *kembar mayang*. The banana stems are soft and it is easy to plug the components of *kembar mayang* into the banana stems.

The part of banyan trees used at the wedding ceremony is the leaves (*Ficus benjamina*). The leaves were used in *kembar mayang* in which they were plugged into the banana stem. Puring leaves (*Codiaeum variegatum*) and andong leaves (*Cordyline fruticosa*) have beautiful colors and patterns and believed by the community in this area to bring happiness to the bride's family. The beautiful color of andong leaves is due to its content of tannins and saponins which can be used as textile dyes (Widia, 2014). The use of

parts of the plant is based on community knowledge that has been passed down for generations.

The next parts of plants used for the wedding ceremony are rice stems and leaves (*Oryza sativa*). They were placed on welcome gate tied with others such as sugarcane stalks, bananas, and coconuts, and *janur* that have been curved. Red and white roses and cananga flowers were used for offering added with Javanese chicken eggs, a bunch of bananas, and one coconut. Jasmine and *kantil* flowers are arranged in certain ways for decorative use at the traditional wedding ceremony in this area. These flowers have a distinctive and fragrant flower aroma due to their essential oils content.

In *temu manten*, there was *balangan gantal* procession which used rolled betel leaves. The leaves were tied with white thread. The roll will be thrown at one another by the bride and groom during the exchange of *kembar mayang*. Each roll consisted of one wide betel leaf.

#### **Procedures to Use the Plants at the Wedding Ceremony**

According to the key informant and the respondents, the parts of the plant which were used directly are bananas, stems, and seeds of rice, roses, cananga flowers, puring leaves, andong leaves, banyan and coconuts. The direct use here means that the parts of the plant were directly taken from the plants without going through any process. Betel leaves used in this tradition were rolled with white thread. Banana stems were cut into 30 cm length as the base of *kembar mayang*. *Janur* was formed into some shapes which certain philosophical values. Jasmine and *kantil* flowers are arranged in a certain way for decorative use.

#### **Procedure to Get the Plants for the Wedding Ceremony.**

Based on responses from key informants and respondents, plants used in the traditional

wedding ceremony of the Boyolangu subdistrict were obtained from the yard such as coconut, banana, andong leaves, puring leaves, areca flower, betel, banyan, betel, and rice. However, jasmine and *kantil* flower could be ordered from the person in charge of the bridal makeup. It has been ordered a few days before the procession as it would take longer if the community arranged it. Rose, sugar cane and sticky rice were purchased at traditional markets.

The plants used for wedding ceremonies in the Boyolangu sub-district were taken from the yard of the house because the plants grow wildly and abundantly for example areca flower, banyan, puring leaves and andong leaves. Some were deliberately planted by women and they could easily grow without complicated care, for example, coconut, banana, betel and rice.

#### **Meaning of the Plants Used at the Wedding Ceremony**

According to key informants, *janur* (young leaves of coconut) comes the Arabic word of 'nur' which means light. It was mostly used in *kembar mayang* (Figure 8A.). The use of *janur* has some philosophical meanings such as expecting blessings for the couple, protecting the couple from any distractions, and being respected by many people. The use of puring leaves in *kembar mayang* means to avoid the couple from conflict of opinions and quarrels (read: *uring-uringan* in Javanese, in which it comes from the word puring) (Figure 8B.). Andong leaves have the meaning of beauty expecting that the couple is expected to live beautifully and peacefully without any disturbance. Areca flower embedded in *kembar mayang* means that the bride and groom have a firm attitude and are not easily influenced by others (Figure 8C.).





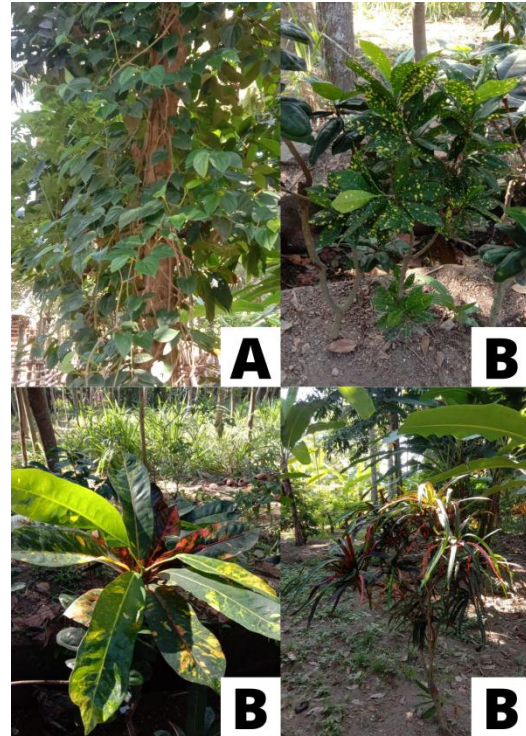
Figure 8. A. Janur (young leaves of coconut) on kembar mayang, B. Puring and andong leaves and C. Banyan leaves and areca flower on kembar mayang.

Banyan leaves used on kembar mayang means that the bride and groom's family have a big soul in accordance with the morphology of banyan trees which can grow large and sturdy. Banana stem (debog) used for kembar mayang means foundation expecting that the marriage has a strong foundation. Flowers such as roses, jasmine, kantil flowers and cananga flowers mean beauty and expecting that the bride and groom's family can become a happy family without any harm. The use of seeds means that the bride and groom will be able to fulfill their daily needs.

#### Conservation Efforts to Maintain Plants Used in the Wedding Ceremony

The effort to maintain the plant used in the wedding ceremony was by planting the plants in the yard (Figure 9). The plants used by the community in the Boyolangu subdistrict were

easily grown and required simple nursery. The number of plants around the area was still abundant. The plants were mostly planted by women (housewives). Conservation efforts are based on the self-awareness of each community. There was no conservation program for those plants.



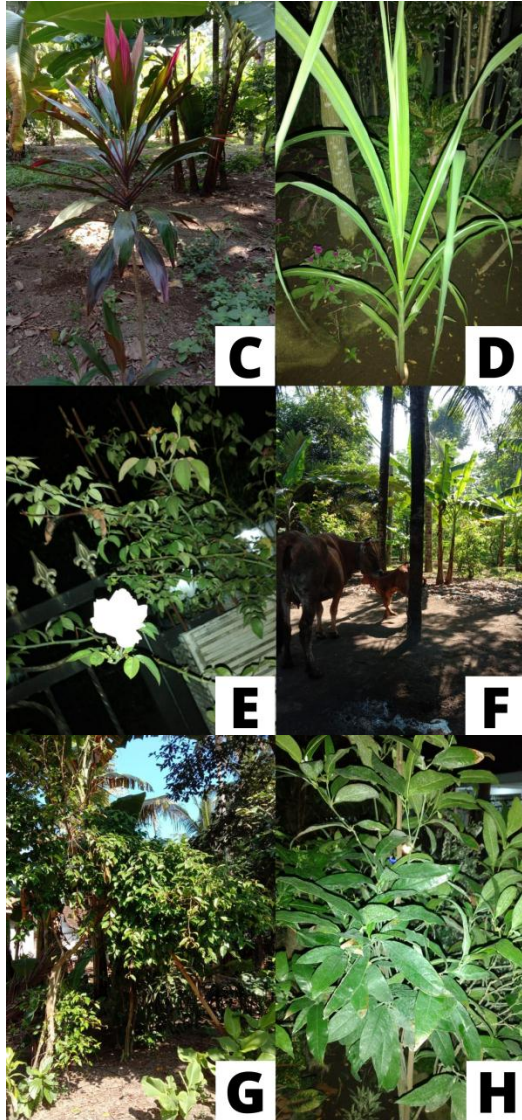


Figure 9. A. Bettle plant, B. Puring, C. Andong, D. Sugar Cane, E. Rose, F. Banana and Coconut Tree, G. Banyan Tree, H. White Champak

Identifying conservation efforts is intended to determine the role of society in preserving traditional wedding ceremonies. According to the respondents, only people aged 45 years or older could make *kembar mayang* with the meaning of kindness. The adolescents do not play roles in the conservation of the plants because they lacked a sense of patience. According to respondents, people aged younger than 40 do not know the meaning of the parts of the shaped *janur* which required complex ways to create. Further, it requires

patience and training for designing the shape which in accordance with heritage. Thus, they are less likely to take roles in this aspect.

## 5. CONCLUSION

A total of 14 types of plants are utilized by the community in Boyolangu subdistrict at the traditional wedding ceremony. Parts of plants that are widely used at wedding ceremonies are leaves. The other parts are fruit, seeds, stems and flowers. The plants are used directly and formed or arranged in a certain way. The plants are obtained by from yards.

## 6. Acknowledgment

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