

Defending Cultural Identity Through Nusantara Dance Learning: An Empirical Study on FBS UNNES Students

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ABSTRACT

In the era of globalization that erodes local values, the defense of cultural identity is urgently needed, especially among the younger generation. This study explores how the Nusantara dance learning in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program contributes to strengthening students' cultural identity. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and academic documentation. The results showed that integrating traditional dances, such as Tari Saman, Ngarojeng, Srikandi Yudha, and Jaran Goyang, into the curriculum improved students' artistic skills and fostered awareness and pride in local culture. Students experience identity transformation from connoisseurs to active cultural actors through practice, performance, and community service. This study recommends strengthening culture-based pedagogy, improving infrastructure, and cross-community collaboration as a strategy for cultural preservation sustainability in the higher education environment.

Keywords: *cultural identity, archipelago dance, art education, students, cultural preservation*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of increasing globalization, the cultural identity crisis poses a significant challenge to many individuals, particularly among the younger generation. While globalization offers greater access to foreign cultures and information, it can threaten the existence and sustainability of local cultures. This crisis impacts not only individual identity but also the recognition and appreciation of the unique and valuable cultural heritage that has existed for centuries. In this regard, dance education is becoming an essential tool for preserving cultural identity, especially in a culturally diverse country like Indonesia, where traditional dance is a visual representation of local cultural heritage (Njeze et al., 2020).

Dance is not only considered a form of entertainment but also a medium that can convey values, traditions, and stories that are important in the context of society. In learning dance, especially archipelago dance, the younger generation can gain a deeper understanding of their cultural background and the role of dance in social, spiritual, and cultural life. Thus, dance art becomes a strong representation of local identity, which serves to strengthen the sense of attachment of individuals to their cultural roots amid increasingly strong global cultural influences (M. T. Wang, 2020).

The urgency of strengthening cultural identity among students, especially dance students at the Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang (FBS UNNES), has arisen in response to the increasing prevalence of foreign culture, which tends to be more popular and appealing. Learning programs that integrate Nusantara dance into the dance education curriculum in the FBS UNNES Dance Education study program provide technical knowledge and foster a spirit of love and appreciation for local culture. Through intuitive and practical dance learning, students are empowered to express their cultural identity, thus providing them with the means to strengthen their awareness of the importance of their cultural heritage.

Additionally, dance education rooted in cultural identity allows students to explore the social and cultural values inherent in this art form. It can also serve as a means for

students to participate in broader cultural activities, such as festivals and performances, to showcase their skills and share knowledge about Nusantara dance with the general public. This is important to reinforce the existence of local culture in the broader context so that it is not simply seen as an abandoned relic, but as an active part of living social dynamics (Walker et al., 2023).

Dance as a cultural form offers a unique way of building cultural awareness among the younger generation, characterized by emotional engagement and hands-on experience. It is not just about learning the movement, but also about understanding its meaning. Thus, an effective Nusantara dance learning program facilitates deeper learning, fosters a love for culture, and cultivates personality values rooted in their cultural heritage (Nightingale & Richmond, 2022). Through this activity, students are expected to internalize their cultural identity and develop a sense of pride in local wisdom, which, in turn, can help mitigate the negative impact of globalization.

Furthermore, in the context of higher education, it is essential to assess how dance learning, especially Nusantara dance, can be used to strengthen cultural identities that adapt and integrate traditional values with modern knowledge. Students are the successors of tradition and agents of change, conveying cultural values to future generations. Therefore, dance learning that focuses on the defense of cultural identity must be an integral part of the dance education curriculum in universities, such as Universitas Negeri Semarang (Arrington-Sanders et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the expansion of Nusantara dance learning will also facilitate intercultural dialogue, thereby improving the quality of students' social interactions. In this context, students of the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, can bridge generations, collaborate with local community leaders and artists, and build more opportunities for participation in cultural events on campus and in public spaces. This process will improve students' social skills while strengthening community bonds through inclusive cultural performances (Spillane et al., 2021).

Through this approach, Nusantara dance learning not only educates students about the techniques of various dance movements but also guides them in understanding and appreciating the importance of cultural identity in daily life. That way, learning Nusantara dance is significant in defending cultural identity, considering the importance of reaching the younger generation, especially students who are future cultural heirs (Posa et al., 2021). Education that focuses on cultural awareness encourages individuals to think critically about their identity and their cultural relevance in a global context.

Thus, learning Nusantara dance in the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, can be seen as a strategic effort to address the challenges of the cultural identity crisis in the era of globalization. Through practical learning, students can acquire skills and knowledge that enrich their personal lives and help strengthen local cultural values. Therefore, this study aims to delve deeper into how Nusantara dance learning can contribute to increasing awareness and appreciation of cultural identity among students in general and students of the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts UNNES, as well as how the results of this research can be applied in a broader context, it is essential for educators and policymakers to realize and support the importance of education dance as a vital means in the defense of cultural identity. Through proper support and development, dance can function as a form of artistic expression and as a pillar in forming a strong cultural identity among the younger generation. Active involvement in cultural activities and creating opportunities to share cultural heritage are also crucial in these efforts.

Literature Review

Cultural identity is a social construct that reflects the uniqueness of a group of people, encompassing values, traditions, language, and social practices passed down from one generation to the next. In the context of a multicultural Indonesian society, cultural identity is one of the pillars

supporting the community's intellectual and social property. According to Nabilatunnisa (2022), art plays a crucial role in preserving and representing a community's cultural identity. This is because the arts, which include dance, music, and other fine arts, serve as a medium of entertainment and a means to express cultural and historical values. Therefore, the defense of cultural identity is essential for maintaining the sustainability of a community and strengthening collective consciousness amid ongoing social and cultural shifts.

However, in this era of globalization, local cultural identity faces significant challenges. Globalization can lead to cultural homogenization, where global popular culture displaces diverse regional cultures. Research by Wati et al. (2024) shows that the current globalization not only threatens the existence of local culture but also causes the younger generation to lose interest and knowledge of their cultural heritage. This impact becomes increasingly evident as individuals adopt foreign cultural values and practices that are considered more modern or attractive. Thus, educational institutions need to design programs that integrate the preservation of local cultural values into their curriculum to maintain the continuity of cultural identity among future generations.

The approach of dance education as a tool of cultural preservation offers interesting potential. As a form of artistic expression, dance art presents musical movements and accompaniment and conveys the profound values and meanings inherent in each dance. According to research by Gunawan & Ritonga (2023), traditional dance contains educational values that can be obtained through the movements and lyrics sung by the dancers. Through dance education, students can learn to understand the complexities of their own culture while building a sense of love and pride in their cultural heritage. This shows that dance education includes technique and performance and requires an introduction to the cultural context that underlies it.

In a study conducted by Cahya (2023), the importance of instilling *civic culture* values in dance learning was also emphasized. This approach enables students to learn about values of common interest within the context of their local

culture and how those values can be defended through artistic practice. This suggests that art education is about creativity and fostering a sense of identity and social responsibility among students. Art learning, especially dance, can integrate those aspects to provide a rich and contextual learning experience.

Furthermore, the concept of cultural acculturation provides a strong theoretical foundation for this research. Acculturation, as discussed by Pangastuti and Ikhwan (2022), refers to the process of interaction between two different cultures that results in a change in both parties. In the context of learning Nusantara dance, this acculturation process can incorporate new elements without compromising the essence of the original culture, allowing for the maintenance of cultural identity while remaining relevant to contemporary times. Thus, openness to the influence of other cultures does not have to involve a loss of local identity, but rather a form of elaboration that enriches that culture.

In an in-depth study of dance art in Indonesia, research by Adela and Akmam (in Pangastuti & Ikhwan, 2022) emphasizes the importance of cultural preservation carried out through formal education in schools. The study indicates that cultural conservation cannot be relied on solely through sporadic activities, but must be an integral part of the curriculum taught to school students through intra- and extracurricular activities. This aligns with the goal of education, which is to foster the development of strong character and cultural identity in the younger generation.

To address the problem of globalization that threatens cultural identity, it is essential to adopt a proactive approach in art education, as demonstrated by Syakruni's research (2024). This research suggests that the use of local culture-based learning methods can be an effective tool for preserving cultural roots. This method not only teaches dance techniques but also emphasizes cultural experiences and the formation of a strong identity in students' eyes. Thus, FBS UNNES students are expected to act as agents of change in cultural preservation through dance.

Research into dance teaching should also be conducted

to better understand how the curriculum can reflect local values. Research by Tumanggor and friends (2024) highlights the importance of dance extracurricular activities in strengthening the cultural identity of the archipelago. By encouraging students to participate in dance activities, their cultural identity is preserved, and they build a sense of ownership of the culture they inherited. This research demonstrates that learning through hands-on experience and immersive art recreation can enhance students' appreciation of local cultural values.

From the above studies, it is clear that there is a synergy between dance education as a tool for cultural preservation and the implementation of a curriculum that prioritizes local cultural values. In the context of this research, there is an excellent opportunity to explore further how Nusantara dance learning in the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, UNNES, can function as a medium for maintaining and strengthening students' cultural identities, as well as serving as an adaptive response to existing global challenges. Through learning oriented towards preserving the deepest cultural identity, it is hoped that students, as the vanguard of the younger generation, can become ambassadors for their own culture.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method, to explore and understand the process of defending cultural identity through learning Nusantara dance among students in the Dance Arts Education Study Program at the Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Semarang. Proposed as the most appropriate method, the qualitative approach provides researchers with space to explore students' subjective meanings and experiences within the context of dance as a form of local cultural expression. The case study method employed here focuses on the process of implementing learning in the Nusantara Dance course, which is part of the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program. It covers various aspects, including curriculum, pedagogy, and student participation in dance learning rooted in tradition. This aligns with the view that qualitative research seeks to

understand phenomena in depth within their context, rather than merely explaining them from an external perspective (Fadli, 2021; Kang, 2023; Ørbæk & Engelsrud, 2020).

The research location is focused on the Dance Arts Education Study Program at FBS UNNES, which is recognized as an educational institution that emphasizes the teaching of dance arts based on local works and cultural heritage, serving as a form of cultural conservation. In this context, students are expected not only to master dance skills but also to understand and internalize the values and cultural identities contained in each dance movement. This creates opportunities for students to develop a sense of pride in their cultural heritage amid the challenges of globalization and modernization that increasingly dominate daily life (Fadli, 2021).

This study employed several techniques to collect data, including classroom learning observation and practice of Nusantara dance courses, in-depth interviews with lecturers and students, and documentation that included syllabi, learning modules, and field notes. Learning observation aims to analyze the interaction between lecturers and students and the dynamics that occur in various practice sessions of various dance movements. This provides a contextual overview of how traditional dance learning occurs within an academic environment, such as Saman dance from Aceh, Ngarojeng dance from Betawi, Srikandi Yudha dance from West Java, and Jaran Goyang dance from East Java. In addition, in-depth interviews are designed to explore the individual perspectives of students and lecturers regarding the benefits of learning Nusantara dance in building and maintaining cultural identity. Documentation is also important as a supporting background, providing formal information that can help understand the structure and purpose of dance learning. (Chan et al., 2024; Hauser, 2024; Raharjo, 2021).

In data analysis, this study follows steps that include data reduction, thematic categorization, and interpretation based on identity theory and art education. Data reduction is carried out by selecting relevant information from observation and interview results so that the remaining ones reflect the essence of the main findings. Then, thematic categories will be developed from the reduced data, allowing researchers to

identify important patterns and themes related to the defense of cultural identity in learning archipelago dance. In the final stage, interpretation is carried out by linking the findings with existing theoretical frameworks, especially those related to cultural identity and art education, to provide a deeper and more thorough analysis of the role of dance education in the context of Indonesian culture (Park et al., 2023; Xia, 2023; Xu, 2022).

Through this applied method, a holistic and contextual understanding of the challenges and opportunities in defending cultural identity in the era of globalization can be produced, as well as an illustration of how dance education can serve as a bridge to increase cultural awareness among students of the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program. This research focuses not only on the technical aspects of dance but also on its social and cultural significance, creating a crucial foundation for strengthening the cultural identity of the younger generation. Thus, this methodology can make a significant contribution to the development of a dance education curriculum that is more responsive and relevant to the challenges of the times, as well as addressing cultural identity issues faced by the younger generation in the context of education in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Nusantara Dance Learning in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program

Implementing Nusantara dance learning in the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES) includes a learning structure designed with special attention to the diversity of Indonesian traditional dance. Among the various types of dances taught are the Saman Dance from Aceh, the Ngarojeng Dance from Betawi, the Srikandi Yudha Dance from West Java, and the Jaran Goyang Dance from East Java. The learning material not only focuses on the techniques of various dance movements, but also includes an in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, and historical context behind each dance. This is crucial for providing students with a comprehensive

understanding, enabling them to appreciate and maintain the cultural identity inherent in dance (Marbun, 2023).

Teaching methods are diverse, incorporating a combination of theory and practical applications. In the classroom, lecturers employ a demonstrative and participatory approach, enabling students to engage in the learning process actively. In the teaching of Saman Dance, for example, group techniques are employed where students learn coordination and collective movements. In contrast, Ngarojeng Dance emphasizes learning by combining elements of theater and music. In addition, the evaluation method is carried out comprehensively, including practical assessments, written exams, and students' self-reflection on the learning that has taken place. This assessment aims to assess not only technical ability but also students' understanding of the value and function of dance in a cultural context (Setyawati et al., 2023).

The integration of local contexts in learning Nusantara dance in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program is very prominent. Learning sessions often involve introducing elements of local culture, such as the traditional clothing and musical instruments used in the dances. In this way, students learn to recognize and appreciate their own culture, allowing a sense of love and pride in cultural identity to develop. It also facilitates dialogue between the younger generation and their cultural heritage, creating a bridge between tradition and innovation (Perdana et al., 2023). Teaching dances such as the Jaran Goyang Dance not only teaches movement but also invites students to understand the increase in social attachment and values contained in the lifestyle of the people of East Java.

In learning archipelago dance, the application of innovative strategies is essential to ensure that learning can run effectively and be relevant to the needs of current students. One of the increasingly popular approaches is using technology in the learning process, as noted in research by Iriyanto et al. Iriyanto et al. (2023) demonstrate that incorporating learning videos into teaching basic dance movements can enhance the quality of learning among students. With more interactive and engaging media, students can more easily understand the various dance movements taught. Innovation in learning like

this is significant, considering that the current learning trend is increasingly shifting towards more digital and technology-based methods.

Another relevant strategy is the implementation of project-based learning, which has been shown to increase student motivation and engagement. Wijaya and Setiawan (2023) demonstrate that this approach enables students to actively collaborate on completing projects related to dance materials, which include various dance movements and styles. As a result, they learn about dance techniques and develop creativity and critical thinking skills. Project-based learning methods provide a well-rounded learning experience, where students can apply dance theory in practice while honing their interpersonal and collaborative skills.

Nusantara dance learning also functions as a means of character formation in students. Research by Nurhasanah Nurhasanah (2023) shows that learning dance arts can shape character and improve social values, such as cooperation and discipline. Regular Nusantara dance learning and performances can help students develop their dance skills and moral values essential to community life. Learning dance can foster the development of positive character traits among students and help them appreciate the importance of teamwork and group responsibility.

In addition, the influence of Nusantara dance learning on the development of student tolerance attitudes cannot be ignored. Research by Muslihah and Nuriyanti (2023) demonstrates that students can develop a tolerance and appreciation for diversity through learning that emphasizes cooperation. In group learning involving dance, students learn to respect each other's opinions and ideas, even from different backgrounds. Dance learning that fosters collaboration aligns with strengthening the profile of Pancasila students, emphasizing tolerance and respect for differences.

Curricular activities in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program are not limited to classroom learning. Various extracurricular activities, such as art performances and dance festivals, are held regularly to give students a platform to display their work. The art performances involved

collaboration between students from various departments, focusing on art and cultural performances. In this context, students participate in community service programs that include organizing workshops and dance performances within the community. This aims to introduce Nusantara dance to the broader community and increase awareness of the importance of preserving local culture (Efendi & Sari, 2023).

The community service activities carried out not only serve to demonstrate dance but also to discuss the meaning and value contained in certain dance traditions. FBS UNNES students conducted Srikandi Yudha Dance workshops in local schools and communities, allowing children and adolescents to learn about traditional dances with heroic value. Students' involvement in the community strengthens their cultural identity, enriches the learning experience, and expands the reach of dance education for the community (Syakruni, 2024).

In line with curriculum efforts designed to facilitate comprehensive cultural learning, the study's results show that activities such as performances and dance festivals have successfully increased student participation in learning. Students who are actively involved in this activity show a more positive attitude towards their own cultural identity and are more responsive in understanding the differentiation between different types of dance (Gunawan et al., 2023).

The importance of recognizing the archipelago dance tradition in the curriculum is a message from character education that underlies the pedagogical process in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program. Through contextual art learning, students are taught technical aspects, ethical values, tolerance, and solidarity. Dance learning is positioned as a medium to develop students' capacity to work and support strong character formation (Marbun, 2023). This contributes to their social identity as individuals who love the national culture and value diversity.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, students and lecturers agreed on the importance of preserving the Nusantara dance. They agreed that good learning should prioritize aspects of interaction between local and modern cultures, reflecting the relevance of dance in everyday life. The

learning carried out at FBS UNNES is not only a teaching routine, but also directed to make students cultural ambassadors who will continue to preserve dance values for future generations (Hidayati et al., 2022).

Thus, the implementation of Nusantara dance learning in the FBS UNNES Dance Education Study Program is a model that has the potential to significantly influence the defense of cultural identity among the younger generation, especially students. Through empirical studies, it is hoped that more ideas and methods can be obtained that can be implemented in dance education at large, as well as make a real contribution to the preservation of local culture in Indonesia amidst the increasingly rapid current of globalization.

Student Response to Nusantara Dance Learning

The students' response to learning Nusantara dance in the Dance Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, shows a very positive attitude towards the process of defending cultural identity. According to the research results, students expressed a strong perception that learning dance is not only an art form but also a means of preserving their local culture. This motivation arises from the realization that dance is a symbol of identity that carries the story and history of each region in Indonesia, such as the Saman Dance from Aceh, the Ngarojeng Dance from Betawi, and the Jaran Goyang Dance from East Java. Messi stated that a deep understanding of culture through dance can create a stronger sense of pride and attachment to one's cultural heritage. (Syamsiah et al., 2021).

The students' experience when reflecting on cultural values through dance practice is also an important part of this learning. Through a participatory learning process, students are introduced to dance techniques and movements and the cultural context in which these techniques and movements are performed. However, they are also asked to explore the meaning and philosophy behind each stage of describing the various dance movements. For example, when studying the Srikandi Yudha Dance, students are invited to explore the value of heroism and women's fortitude in history. These activities

enable them to engage emotionally and intellectually, strengthening their understanding of cultural heritage and its relevance in daily life. (Prayudha.S & Malik, 2021).

The transformation of students' cultural identities from spectators to cultural actors is also clearly observed in this study. Before participating in dance learning, many students simply enjoy dance performances without understanding the essence and process behind them. However, after engaging in dance practices, they begin to see themselves as part of a larger tradition. Students report that active participation in dance gives them a more profound sense of belonging to their culture. The courage to dance in art performances and festivals is also an indication of this change. From previously feeling awkward, they now feel confident to display the results of their hard work in front of the public. (Ismiati & Andayani, 2021).

Furthermore, this shift in position from spectator to actor has another positive impact: the emergence of interest in learning more about the local culture and efforts to teach these values to others, both within and outside the learning environment. Through extracurricular activities, such as community service, students are directly involved in introducing dance to children in schools. This demonstrates that they are not only learning, but also sharing and contributing to the preservation of culture. (Ningsih, 2020).

Students also stated that participating in dance performances increased their love for local culture. This involvement strengthens the social bonds between them, which also contributes to the formation of a supportive community. These activities foster a favorable knowledge-sharing climate and form a strong collective identity among cultural actors. (Manasikana et al., 2022).

In the context of learning, students also revealed that learning dance is not just a physical activity but a profound cognitive and emotional process. They believe the dance taught can serve as a bond between generations, reminding them of the importance of learning and preserving cultural values. This process becomes a means to strengthen their character and identity as individuals who value cultural heritage. (Farah & Nasution, 2020).

The results of this study indicate that learning Nusantara dance at FBS UNNES has a significant impact on strengthening students' cultural identity. Students feel more connected to their cultural identity after learning dance, which fosters a desire to protect and promote traditional culture in the modern era. Through thorough learning, they not only become dancers but also cultural ambassadors who play an active role in preserving local cultural values. (Budi et al., 2024).

Thus, the survey results show that 90% of students consider learning dance a valuable experience in maintaining their cultural identity. Levels of motivation and commitment to cultural preservation are also increasing, with many expressing plans to engage more actively in community arts and cultural activities after completing their studies. (Astuti et al., 2023).

It is essential to acknowledge that the success of this learning is inextricably linked to the role of lecturers and program managers who support and encourage students to become more involved in the practice and teaching of dance arts. Nusantara dance learning not only presents technical skills, but more than that, it forms a character and identity that can be relied upon by students in the future as the next generation of Indonesian culture. (Nurhidayati et al., 2022).

Cultural Identity Defense Analysis

An analysis of the defense of cultural identity through learning Nusantara dance at the Faculty of Languages and Arts (FBS) of the Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES) reveals that the role of lecturers as facilitators of cultural preservation is crucial. Lecturers are responsible for transferring dance knowledge and skills to students and have a strategic role in building cultural awareness and strengthening student identity. Through teaching methods involving discussion, collaboration, and reflection, lecturers can create an environment that distinguishes between learning dance as an art and reflecting values and traditions that must be preserved. These findings align with research that demonstrates arts education can serve as a bridge in preserving cultural heritage. (Sun et al., 2024).

However, the challenges in learning dance at FBS UNNES mainly arise from the younger generation's declining interest in local culture. Many students are more interested in modern art, pop entertainment, or foreign cultures that are more prevalent in public spaces. This is a challenge for lecturers to convey the importance of learning and understanding traditional dance as part of the nation's identity. For example, when taught about the Jaran Goyang Dance, students must be invited to understand the social and historical context behind the dance, rather than just learning the physical movements. Previous research has also stated that students' interest in local culture is often influenced by the development of media that attracts more attention. (Susilo et al., 2024).

Based on the assessment of the pedagogical approach's effectiveness regarding local culture, the results showed that students experienced an increase in awareness and a deeper understanding of cultural values through dance practice. Implementing a curriculum that integrates dance with elements of local culture and the local community's history has proven effective in increasing student motivation for learning. This approach teaches dance techniques and instills a sense of pride in their cultural heritage. This is supported by the literature that notes that education that reflects local values can strengthen cultural identity among the younger generation. (Sun et al., 2024).

However, although many students show positive interest, other obstacles are also faced in learning, such as the lack of adequate facilities for dance practice. Limited practice spaces, musical instruments, and access to qualified traditional dancers can limit students' learning experiences. Therefore, support from institutions is necessary to enhance infrastructure and provide sufficient resources, enabling dance learning to occur optimally. This is crucial to ensure that students receive a high-quality learning experience in the field of dance, enabling them to better understand and appreciate the cultural traditions that exist. (Arkhurst et al., 2024).

Through the measurement table carried out on the learning methods applied, it is clear that activating extra-academic activities, such as art performances and participation in dance festivals, is very helpful for students in understanding

the broader cultural context. For example, when students participate in local dance festivals, they not only dance but also interact directly with the audience, creating a deeper opportunity to discuss the meaning and value of each dance movement. This type of interaction is considered highly effective in fostering a strong emotional connection between students and the cultural heritage they are studying (He & Sensai, 2024).

Additionally, students' participation in these activities creates a space for collaborative learning, allowing them to share experiences and knowledge. In this case, the discussions that take place among students while preparing for a dance performance often deepen their understanding of the cultural elements that underlie each traditional dance. This also provides an opportunity for students to delve deeper into their traditions and preservation strategies. (S. S. Zhang & Wu, 2023).

Another aspect to note is that local communities also play a significant role in supporting cultural preservation. There is a strong incentive to invite the community to actively participate in this learning, such as hosting workshops on campus by cultural figures or traditional dancers. Community involvement strengthens the local culture and provides students with hands-on experience in learning how local communities maintain and preserve their traditions. (Liu & Nicolas, 2024).

However, in the context of globalization, which continues to demand change, the sustainability of efforts to defend cultural identity must be periodically evaluated. The demands for information speed and various entertainment options can affect students' interest in learning traditional dance arts. Therefore, a learning strategy that is constantly updated and relevant to the needs of the younger generation is needed to ensure that cultural values remain alive and relevant in this modern era (W. Wang & Woramitmaitree, 2024).

Overall, allowing students to engage in learning processes based on local contexts and demonstrate their active role in cultural participation is an effective way of defending cultural identity. Students not only learn dance techniques but

also build their identity as agents of change who contribute to cultural preservation in an increasingly global region. This research demonstrates that success in learning archipelago dance can strengthen students' cultural identities, enabling them to become preservationists and disseminators of their traditional values in the future. (E. Zhang & Choatchamrat, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Nusantara dance learning in the Dance Arts Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang (FBS UNNES) has a very strategic role in the process of defending cultural identity among students. Amid the challenges of globalization and the increasing dominance of foreign popular culture in social spaces, traditional dance learning has proven to be an effective medium for instilling cultural values, strengthening emotional attachment to local culture, and shaping students' cultural identities.

Through a culture-based pedagogical approach, the integration of technical, philosophical, and contextual aspects of archipelago dances, such as Saman, Ngarojeng, Srikandi Yudha, and Jaran Goyang, has enabled students to gain a deeper understanding of the nation's cultural diversity and richness. The students' very positive response showed that this learning not only improved their dancing skills but also triggered a new awareness of the importance of their role as cultural actors, not just connoisseurs.

The transformation of identity from spectators to cultural actors reflects the success of the curriculum and learning methods that place students as active subjects in cultural preservation. Students not only master dance movement techniques but also understand the values contained in each dance and contribute to socio-cultural activities such as performances, festivals, and community service. This expands the reach of dance education not only in the academic setting but also in community life.

However, challenges remain, such as the low interest of some younger generations in local culture, limited support facilities, and the need for learning innovations that are more relevant to the times. Therefore, an adaptive and creative Nusantara dance learning strategy is necessary, combining collaborative methods, learning technologies, and project-based and hands-on approaches.

With strong institutional support, community involvement, and the strengthening of lecturers' roles as cultural facilitators, Nusantara dance learning can not only maintain cultural identity but also encourage the formation of a young generation that is proud, aware, and able to become agents of the nation's cultural preservation. Therefore, dance education must continue to be developed as an integral part of character education and nationalism that is contextual and has high transformative power.

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