



## Empowerment of the Community Through Traditional Art Training in Padangpanjang

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### ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to empower the community of Padangpanjang through training in traditional arts. By understanding the dynamics of their arts and culture, it is hoped that the community can preserve and develop traditional art that forms part of their identity. The methods used in the training include observation, socialization, practice, and evaluation. The results of the activities show an increase in interest and skills among the community members in traditional arts, which is expected to enhance their economy and cultural awareness. This increase is particularly important in the face of globalization that threatens the existence of local arts.

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### 1. Introduction

Cultural changes in the era of globalization pose significant threats to the existence of traditional arts in various regions, including Padangpanjang. The rapid spread of foreign cultures, often characterized by modern influences such as technology and popular media, has led to the marginalization of local arts and traditions. As communities become increasingly exposed to global trends, there is a growing risk that their unique cultural expressions may be overshadowed or forgotten, resulting in a loss of cultural diversity. Haviland (1988) highlights that environmental changes and increased contact with other cultures frequently lead to a decline in the values that underpin local cultures. This decline can manifest in various ways, such as reduced participation in traditional practices and a diminished appreciation for local heritage among younger generations. In this context, traditional arts, which are essential for preserving cultural identity, must be actively strengthened and preserved to ensure they remain vibrant and relevant.

Training in traditional arts emerges as a crucial strategy for maintaining cultural heritage while enhancing the economic independence of the community. Structured training programs can play a pivotal role in this effort by providing participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to practice and promote their cultural traditions. Such programs not only teach technical skills but also instill an understanding of the historical and cultural significance of the arts, fostering a deeper appreciation for one's heritage. Moreover, by passing down these skills to younger generations, communities can ensure that their traditional arts continue to thrive. This intergenerational transfer of knowledge not only fosters a sense of pride in cultural identity but also empowers individuals to contribute to their community's economy through art. Engaging in

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traditional arts can create economic opportunities, such as performances, workshops, and the sale of handmade crafts, thereby supporting local livelihoods and promoting cultural tourism. Ultimately, strengthening traditional arts not only preserves cultural identity but also enhances community resilience in the face of globalization.

Moreover, the arts in Padangpanjang boast a rich and diverse history that intricately reflects the behaviors and values of its community. The various forms of art that have developed, including traditional dance and silat (martial arts), serve as vibrant manifestations of the social and cultural values that have endured for centuries. These art forms encapsulate the essence of local traditions, acting as living narratives that convey the community's identity, history, and shared experiences. For instance, traditional dances often tell stories of historical events, folklore, and communal rituals, allowing participants and audiences alike to connect with their heritage on a deeper level. Similarly, silat, which is not just a martial art but also a cultural performance, emphasizes discipline, respect, and the importance of community bonds. These art forms provide invaluable insights into the community's historical narratives, reflecting the collective memory and identity of the people of Padangpanjang.

By conducting training programs in these traditional arts, there is hope that younger generations will not only learn the techniques involved but will also develop a profound appreciation for their cultural heritage. This educational approach fosters a sense of pride and ownership among the youth, encouraging them to actively participate in the preservation of their artistic traditions (Sumardjan, 1964). As they engage with these art forms, they become cultural stewards, empowered to keep the traditions alive for future generations. Engaging with traditional arts not only enriches individual lives by providing creative outlets for self-expression and personal growth but also strengthens the community's cultural fabric as a whole. As community members come together to share their skills and stories, they reinforce social ties and foster a collective identity. This communal engagement in the arts promotes cultural continuity, ensuring that the values, beliefs, and practices that define Padangpanjang remain vibrant and relevant in an ever-changing world.

## **2. Method**

The community service activity was conducted with a participatory approach that actively involved the local community throughout the process. This inclusive methodology ensured that the voices and needs of community members were at the forefront of the initiative. The methods utilized comprised several important stages, beginning with observation. This initial phase was critical for understanding the existing conditions and potential of the arts in Padangpanjang. Through careful observation, facilitators gathered insights into the community's artistic practices, preferences, and the resources available. This information was invaluable in designing a training program that specifically catered to the needs and desires of the community.

Following the observation phase, the next step was socialization. This phase aimed to introduce the goals and benefits of the training to the community in an engaging manner. During socialization, it was crucial to articulate how the skills being taught could enhance participants' quality of life, not only by enriching their cultural knowledge but also by providing them with practical skills that could lead to economic opportunities. By fostering a clear understanding of the program's objectives, community members were more likely to become invested in the training.

The subsequent stage involved training, where both theoretical and practical materials on traditional arts were delivered. This comprehensive training program covered essential techniques while also delving into the historical context and cultural significance behind each art form. Such an approach ensured that participants not only learned how to perform the arts but also grasped their importance within the community's cultural heritage.

Finally, an evaluation was conducted to assess the participants' skill enhancement and overall interest in the arts. This evaluative stage was essential for determining the effectiveness of the program and identifying areas for future improvement (Holt, 2000). By soliciting feedback from participants, the facilitators could refine their methods and content, ensuring that future training sessions remained relevant and impactful for the community.

### 3. Result and Discussion

The training in traditional arts in Padangpanjang encompasses a wide variety of art forms, including dance, randai (a traditional performance that combines music, dance, and drama), and silat (martial arts). This multifaceted approach not only showcases the richness of local culture but also provides participants with a diverse set of skills that are relevant to their cultural expressions. Each art form serves as a unique window into the community's values and historical narratives, offering participants a chance to engage with their heritage on multiple levels. The community responded to this initiative with high enthusiasm, reflecting a deep-seated appreciation for their cultural heritage. This eagerness to participate indicates a strong recognition of the importance of preserving traditional arts, especially in the face of modern influences that threaten to overshadow them. Many participants successfully mastered new skills throughout the program, demonstrating the effectiveness of the training initiative in revitalizing interest in traditional arts.

The structured training not only imparted practical skills but also instilled a greater understanding of the significance of these art forms within the cultural landscape of Padangpanjang. Participants reported feeling more connected to their heritage and expressed pride in their ability to perform and share these traditional practices. This revitalization of interest serves as a testament to the program's success in fostering a renewed appreciation for the arts, reinforcing the notion that cultural traditions are living, evolving practices that contribute to the community's identity. Furthermore, the skills acquired during the training can lead to various opportunities, such as performances at local events and festivals, which can help generate economic benefits for the community. By promoting traditional arts in this way, the program not only nurtures individual talents but also strengthens community ties, ultimately ensuring that the vibrant cultural heritage of Padangpanjang continues to thrive for future generations.

According to Soedarso (2001), these art forms are essential as they serve not only as a means of artistic expression but also as vital components of cultural identity. They embody the values and narratives that define the community, playing a crucial role in enhancing community welfare. Engaging with these arts allows participants to connect with their heritage on a profound level, fostering a sense of pride in their cultural identity. This connection is particularly important in an era where globalization threatens to dilute unique cultural practices. Throughout the training, participants were not only taught basic techniques but were also provided with a deeper understanding of the cultural context surrounding each art form. This comprehensive approach is significant, as it emphasizes that art is not merely a form of entertainment; rather, it serves as a powerful reflection of the community's values, beliefs, and customs. By contextualizing the techniques within their cultural significance, participants were better equipped to appreciate the roles that these arts play in their community.

For instance, understanding the historical background of a traditional dance can enhance a participant's ability to convey its emotional and narrative depth during performances. Similarly, learning about the philosophical underpinnings of silat can foster a greater respect for the discipline and the community's martial heritage. This deeper comprehension encourages participants to engage with their traditions more meaningfully, reinforcing the importance of these art forms in daily life and communal celebrations. Moreover, by grasping the cultural significance of the arts, participants can become advocates for their preservation and promotion. They may be inspired to share their knowledge with others, thus creating a ripple effect that encourages wider community participation in cultural activities. Ultimately, this enriched understanding not only benefits the individual learners but also contributes to the overall vitality of the community's cultural landscape.

Active participation in this training is expected to foster a collective awareness that is essential for safeguarding and developing the existing arts. By immersing themselves in their cultural practices, participants are encouraged to take on the role of cultural stewards. This responsibility entails not only practicing and preserving their art forms but also advocating for their significance within the community. By engaging deeply with these traditions, participants learn the stories and meanings behind each art form, which empowers them to share this knowledge with others, thereby ensuring that these invaluable practices are preserved and passed down to future generations (Tedjoworo, 2001). This process of cultural stewardship is vital for the sustainability of traditional arts, as it reinforces the idea that these practices are living components of the community's identity. When individuals actively engage with their heritage, they strengthen community bonds, creating a shared sense of purpose and belonging. This collective engagement

fosters a supportive environment where community members encourage one another to participate in cultural activities, reinforcing their interconnectedness.

Moreover, by cultivating a vibrant cultural landscape, the community is better positioned to thrive amidst the pressures of globalization. In a world where external influences can overshadow local traditions, a strong commitment to preserving and celebrating one's cultural heritage becomes even more critical. This vibrant cultural landscape not only enhances the community's identity but also attracts interest from outside, potentially leading to cultural tourism and economic opportunities. As visitors engage with the local arts, they contribute to the community's economy while also fostering appreciation for its rich heritage. Ultimately, the active involvement of community members in the preservation and development of their traditional arts ensures that these practices remain relevant and dynamic. By nurturing this cultural continuity, the community can adapt to changing circumstances while holding onto the values and traditions that define them.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The traditional arts training in Padangpanjang has proven to be successful in enhancing both the skills and cultural awareness of the community. Participants emerged from the program with improved competencies in various art forms, reflecting a deeper appreciation for their cultural heritage. This activity not only empowers individuals by equipping them with valuable skills but also strengthens social ties within the community. Through shared experiences and collaborative learning, participants foster relationships that are essential for community cohesion. Furthermore, the training serves as a model for other community service programs aimed at preserving local culture. It demonstrates the effectiveness of engaging community members in cultural practices as a means of empowerment and identity formation. By showcasing how traditional arts can be integrated into modern contexts, the program inspires similar initiatives in other regions, promoting a broader movement towards cultural preservation. However, to ensure the sustainability and continued development of traditional arts in Padangpanjang, further support from various stakeholders is crucial. This includes not only government backing but also involvement from cultural institutions, non-profit organizations, and local businesses. Collaborative efforts can facilitate access to resources, funding, and expertise that are necessary for ongoing training and cultural programming. By fostering a supportive environment, stakeholders can help ensure that traditional arts thrive, allowing future generations to inherit a rich cultural legacy. In conclusion, the success of this training initiative highlights the importance of community engagement in cultural preservation and underscores the need for ongoing support to sustain these vital practices. With concerted efforts from all sectors, Padangpanjang can continue to celebrate and develop its unique artistic heritage for years to come.

#### **Declaration of Conflicting Interest**

The authors state that there is no conflict of interest concerning the publication of this paper.

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