Expressing Philosophical Discourse In Pencak Silat As A Pillar of Character Education And Strengthening Social Ties In Society

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**ABSTRACT**

The interest in pencak silat is waning, evident in the current generation's preference for kempo, karate, and taekwondo. However, pencak silat holds significant societal value, fostering a heightened concern for others. This study aims to explore and analyze the philosophical discourse of pencak silat as a fundamental element of character education and social cohesion in society. The research methodology adopted is a literature study involving a thorough search and review of various works on pencak silat, encompassing art, culture, aesthetics, and its role in strengthening social bonds among teachers, students, and their peers. The findings of this study emphasize that pencak silat is a valuable cultural heritage of Indonesia's ancestors, deserving preservation and conservation as it serves as a cornerstone of character education, encompassing nine core values. These character values are deeply ingrained within pencak silat, making it an effective platform for fostering personal growth and moral development. Through pencak silat, social bonds are fortified, enhancing camaraderie and harmonious relationships among different community groups. Two essential aspects that contribute to strengthening social ties in pencak silat are the sense of brotherhood among practitioners and the cultivation of strong spiritual values that resonate within every student engaged in pencak silat training.

**1. Introduction**

Pencak Silat, a native Indonesian martial art, holds significant cultural value as a well-known traditional art form. However, the younger generation recently prefers learning martial arts like Taekwondo, Karate, and Kempo from China and America. Preserving and promoting Pencak Silat among the youth becomes crucial to ensure the continuity of this original tradition in Indonesia. According to data from BPS in 2018, Indonesia had approximately 63,000,000 young people out of 265,000,000. Empowering these youth to become productive members of society can significantly contribute to the nation's development and resilience.

On the contrary, if the younger generation lacks positive character traits and remains unproductive, it may burden the state and lead to national decline (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018). The young generation,
often referred to as the "net generation," embodies several key aspects like freedom, customization, scrutiny, integrity, collaboration, entertainment, speed, and innovation (techno-literate) as highlighted by Top Scott in Widhyharto (2014). These aspects shape their expressions and actions in various areas of life.

The nation needs to emphasize the importance of Pencak Silat and its cultural significance, encouraging young people to embrace and learn this traditional martial art. By doing so, they can develop strong character traits and contribute positively to the progress and preservation of Indonesian heritage and identity. These eight aspects can be considered as indicative of the current and future expression of youth's lives. As the new generation emerges, it brings forth new behaviors and mindsets, including interactions with old-new and even anonymous identities. They demonstrate sensitivity to their surroundings by becoming individual activists while also displaying the potential to engage in copyright infringement and accessing unlimited sexual formations.

Furthermore, youth and the latest media possess the power to initiate new social movements capable of influencing government decisions in both online and offline dimensions (Widhyharto, 2014). The continual emergence of various issues involving the Indonesian youth could jeopardize national security. Alongside parental and educational supervision, social interaction within a healthy community can help neutralize the nation's character degradation risks among young people. The responsibility of actively supervising and nurturing the moral character of the youth is not solely the government and society's duty but must also involve youth-oriented organizations (Endralesmana, 2018). It is essential that the younger generation of Indonesia avoids excessive self-indulgence and instead cultivates self-awareness and self-control in their behavior. A place that can contribute to safeguarding and building good character is by reverting to Indonesian culture, which is rich in life values, one of which is Pencak Silat.

Teenagers and youth greatly benefit from the support they receive from their environment. The various forms of social support they encounter, ranging from encouragement, attention, appreciation, and assistance, to affection, foster a sense of being loved, cared for, and valued by others. When individuals experience positive acceptance and appreciation, it tends to cultivate a positive attitude towards themselves, leading to greater self-acceptance and appreciation (Kumalasari & Ahyani, 2012). Environmental factors play a crucial role in adolescent development, as the environment serves as a medium for adolescents and youth to experiment with implementing the knowledge they acquire. This implementation can positively and negatively impact themselves and the surrounding environment. Consequently, character education becomes essential in guiding the younger generation's knowledge within their social circles, preventing them from engaging in negative actions that may compromise the values upheld in society, such as delinquency and crime (Shidiq & Raharjo, 2018). By providing character education that promotes positive values and responsible behavior, adolescents and youth can be equipped to make informed decisions, maintaining a harmonious relationship with their environment while contributing to a more ethical and socially responsible society.

Teaching pencak silat in society extends beyond self-defense training, as teachers and trainers diligently impart moral and ethical teachings to their students. Pencak silat holds a profound philosophy and is considered a crucial pillar of education in Indonesian society. The teachings conveyed aim to shape individuals into ideal, pious, responsive, tough, honest, virtuous, and self-controlled beings within society. Teachers diligently instill these qualities because they are essential characteristics possessed by fighters who have been taught from generation to generation through traditional martial arts (Utomo, 2017). The potential for character formation through pencak silat aligns with Yuliawan's (2016) perspective, emphasizing the ample opportunities for character education within physical education and sports, particularly in the realm of pencak silat. Failure to appreciate the cultural traditions of pencak silat among the younger generation may result in losing its philosophical values and significance. Therefore, this study becomes intriguing as it delves into the philosophical aspects of pencak silat, acknowledging its role as a pillar in character education within society. Besides being a sport, pencak silat also instills moral values such as cooperation, honesty, respect, responsibility, and other virtues. The primary purpose of this paper is to analyze and explore the philosophy of pencak silat as a vital component of character education, while also contributing to the strengthening of social bonds within society.

2. Method

The research method employed in this study is a literature review, which involves conducting a comprehensive literature search and analyzing various studies on pencak silat, focusing on its aspects of art, culture, and aesthetics, while also exploring how it fosters social bonds among teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. Unlike a field study, this research does not involve direct observations or data collection in real-world settings but relies solely on a thorough review of written data. These data consist of documents from previous studies on pencak silat and other written references about the subject matter.

The researcher's role in library research goes beyond merely reading, recording, and summarizing existing information on pencak silat. Instead, the primary objective is to identify new phenomena and symptoms by meticulously analyzing the collected data. The data are meticulously reviewed and re-analyzed to unveil novel findings. As a result, the researcher examines previous research outcomes and references
related to randai to uncover fresh insights on the pillars of character education in pencak silat. The process involves critically evaluating existing literature and identifying potential gaps or areas that require further investigation. By synthesizing information from various sources, the researcher endeavors to generate innovative perspectives and contribute to understanding character education in the context of pencak silat. This approach fosters an in-depth exploration of the subject matter, enabling the researcher to draw conclusions and propose recommendations based on the comprehensive literature analysis.

3. Result

a. History of Pencak Silat in Indonesia

The term "pencak silat" holds diverse interpretations, and before delving into its philosophy, it is essential to understand its meaning. The term is composed of two words, each contributing to its significance. "Pencak" refers to fundamental martial arts movements governed by specific rules, while "silat" embodies a comprehensive self-defense system rooted in spirituality. Pencak silat is a captivating subject of study due to its profound philosophical aspects and its role as a crucial pillar of education in Indonesia. It is imperative to explore this topic within the context of Indonesia's educational principles. Another perspective on the term comes from Thomas A. Green's book titled "Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia of History and Innovation," where he notes regional variations in the usage of "pencak" and "silat." Central and eastern Java predominantly use "pencak," while Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, and Kalimantan favor the term "silat."

As pencak silat continues to evolve, new interpretations emerge. According to Green, "pencak" accentuates artistic elements and the beauty of movement, whereas "silat" embodies the core principles of self-defense in combat situations. This martial art is the product of Indonesian cultural heritage, symbolizing the nation's defense and preservation of its identity and integrity. Individuals keen on exploring the art of pencak silat can access valuable knowledge through the "Basic Skills of Pencak Silat" book, a comprehensive guide crafted to facilitate learning for enthusiasts or aspiring practitioners. Through studying this ancient practice, learners can delve deeper into the philosophy that underpins pencak silat and gain insights into its significance within Indonesian society.

Indonesian pencak silat historians trace the origins of this martial art back to the 7th century AD, dating its existence for over a millennium. Its historical roots can be traced to the indigenous tribes of Indonesia, who honed their combat skills in hunting and warfare, wielding weapons such as machetes, shields, and spears. Remarkably, this discovery aligns with weapon artifacts from the Hindu-Buddhist era, featuring sculptures and reliefs depicting horses, showcasing the fundamental movements of pencak silat, which are also evident in the iconic Borobudur and Prambanan temples. By the 14th century, pencak silat underwent a rapid evolution, spreading its influence throughout the archipelago. Its versatile nature enabled it to transcend beyond a martial art, evolving into a spiritual practice incorporated into Islamic boarding schools by Islamic propagators. Moreover, pencak silat garnered recognition as a formidable self-defense system, empowering residents to confront invading forces during challenging times bravely. The development and enrichment of pencak silat were further shaped by notable figures in Indonesia's past. These revered individuals, such as Panembahan Senopati, Sultan Agung, Prince Diponegoro, Teungku Chik at Tiro, Teuku Umar, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, and courageous female warriors like Sabai Nan Aluih, Cut Nyak Dhien, and Cut Nyak Meutia, played pivotal roles in nurturing and refining the art (Sudiana, 2017).

Throughout history, pencak silat has been more than just a martial art; it reflects Indonesia's rich cultural heritage and the enduring resilience of its people in the face of challenges. Rooted in ancient traditions, pencak silat has evolved into both a spiritual practice and a formidable self-defense system, making it a significant aspect of the nation's identity. As the art continues to be embraced and passed down through generations, it symbolizes the Indonesian people's strength and legacy, preserving their history, values, and spirit for the future.

Moreover, the evolution of pencak silat's abilities and movements has been a natural progression, drawing inspiration from the natural motions of plants and animals. These movements were initially developed for hunting and warfare purposes, reflecting the seamless integration of martial techniques with nature. Donald Frederick "Donn" Draeger, a renowned martial arts expert and scientist from Japan, has highlighted the presence of martial arts evidence dating back to the Hindu-Buddhist era in the archipelago. This evidence includes weapon artifacts and reliefs at iconic sites like Prambanan Temple and Borobudur Temple, which depict the stances and positions of silat. In his book entitled "Weapons and Fighting Arts of Indonesia," Draeger further emphasizes that for the ancestors of Indonesia, martial arts and weapons held spiritual significance within the country's culture. This profound connection to spirituality underscores the profound cultural roots of pencak silat, making it not just a physical discipline but a practice intertwined with the soul of the Indonesian people.
As the nation fought for its independence, pencak silat played a crucial role in the resistance against the invaders. It became a powerful tool to defend and preserve the nation's sovereignty. The spirit of pencak silat embodied the determination and courage of the Indonesian people, illustrating their unwavering commitment to protect their homeland. As the art of pencak silat continues to thrive in modern times, its legacy endures as an essential part of Indonesian identity, reflecting the harmonious blend of tradition, spirituality, and martial prowess. This enduring tradition serves as a reminder of the strength and resilience of the Indonesian people, inspiring future generations to uphold their heritage and values. The preservation and practice of pencak silat remain a testament to the indomitable spirit of a nation deeply rooted in its culture and traditions.

b. Pencak Silat as a Pillar of Character Education

The significance of pencak silat as a pillar in character education cannot be overstated. The essence of character education is deeply ingrained in the fabric of national education, although defining it precisely has proven to be a challenging task. Since Indonesia's independence, the elements of character education have been integral to the objectives of national education. This is evident in Law No. 2/1989, Article 4, which seeks to cultivate a well-rounded Indonesian individual characterized by faith and reverence for God Almighty, possessing both physical and spiritual knowledge and skills, a strong and independent personality, and a sense of social and national responsibility. The importance of character education is further emphasized in Article 15 of the same law. Similarly, the goals of national education outlined in Law No. 20 of 2003 echo the significance of character education. The potential mentioned in these laws serves as the foundation for instilling character education. Pencak silat, with its rich philosophy and moral teachings, aligns seamlessly with the objectives of character education. The martial art goes beyond mere physical training; it encompasses spiritual and ethical values that contribute to the holistic development of individuals.

In the pursuit of character education, pencak silat provides a powerful means to nurture individuals with strong moral foundations and a sense of self-discipline. The art fosters virtues such as respect, perseverance, and self-control, which are essential for the development of an upright and responsible individual. Through the practice of pencak silat, learners acquire combat skills and internalize the ethical principles that guide their conduct both in and outside the martial arts arena. Moreover, pencak silat's emphasis on camaraderie and mutual respect within the martial arts community promotes the cultivation of positive social behaviors. The art encourages practitioners to collaborate, support one another, and build a sense of unity. These values extend beyond the training environment and become ingrained in the character of the individuals who practice pencak silat.

By integrating pencak silat into the educational system, Indonesia can reinforce the significance of character education and its positive impact on society. The holistic approach of pencak silat in nurturing physical, mental, and spiritual aspects aligns perfectly with the multifaceted goals of character education. As a pillar of character education, pencak silat serves as a dynamic tool for shaping the moral compass of the younger generation, ensuring that they grow into responsible and principled members of society. In conclusion, pencak silat's role as a pillar in character education is well-founded and plays a pivotal role in shaping the values and principles of Indonesian society. The martial art embodies the essence of character education, fostering physical prowess and a strong sense of ethics and social responsibility. As Indonesia continues its pursuit of comprehensive education, the integration of pencak silat provides a promising avenue for instilling character and molding the nation's future leaders.

Human wholeness is achieved through developing the mind, feelings, psychomotor skills, and, most importantly, the heart, which serves as the wellspring of spirit that animates all these aspects. As articulated by Ki Hajar Dewantara, these dimensions—thought, taste, exercise, and heart—are encompassed in the practice of pencak silat, imbuing it with noble values that define its character education. The thought domain encompasses qualities such as intelligence, critical thinking, creativity, innovation, curiosity, openness, productivity, and a focus on science and technology. On the other hand, the heart domain embraces traits such as faithfulness, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, responsibility, empathy, courage, risk-taking, resilience, self-sacrifice, and patriotism.

Moreover, the physical domain of pencak silat cultivates virtues like cleanliness, health, discipline, athleticism, toughness, reliability, endurance, friendliness, cooperation, determination, competitiveness, cheerfulness, and perseverance. Lastly, the domain of taste in pencak silat emphasizes traits such as friendliness, respectfulness, tolerance, care, mutual cooperation, nationalism, inclusivity, prioritization of the public interest, pride in using Indonesian language and products, dynamism, hard work, and a strong work ethic. The integration of these four pillars—thought, feeling, exercise, and heart—makes pencak silat an exemplary medium for character education. By fostering mental acuity, emotional intelligence, physical
prowess, and moral integrity, pencak silat shapes individuals into well-rounded human beings who are competent in their skills and possess a strong sense of ethics, compassion, and social responsibility. Through the practice of pencak silat, learners are encouraged to engage in critical thinking, explore their creativity, and develop an innovative mindset. The art instills the value of curiosity, openness to new ideas, and a drive for productivity while fostering a science and technology-oriented approach to problem-solving.

Additionally, pencak silat greatly emphasizes the heart domain, fostering qualities such as faithfulness, honesty, and trustworthiness. Practitioners are encouraged to be fair, responsible, and empathetic, cultivating courage and a willingness to take risks. The art instills in its participants an unwavering spirit, a readiness to make sacrifices for a greater cause, and a deep love and loyalty to their nation. The physical domain of pencak silat goes hand in hand with character formation, promoting discipline, cleanliness, and athleticism. Practitioners are trained to be reliable, enduring, friendly, and cooperative, instilling in them a sense of determination, competitiveness, and cheerfulness in facing challenges. Lastly, the domain of taste in pencak silat fosters a culture of friendliness, respect, tolerance, care, and mutual cooperation. The art instills a sense of nationalism, encouraging individuals to prioritize the public interest, take pride in their Indonesian identity, and exhibit dynamism, hard work, and a strong work ethic.

In conclusion, pencak silat stands as a powerful pillar of character education, encompassing the essential elements of thought, feeling, exercise, and heart. Its holistic approach to human development—integrating mental acuity, emotional intelligence, physical prowess, and moral integrity—positions it as an exemplary medium for nurturing well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of ethics and social responsibility. Through the practice of pencak silat, participants develop martial skills and embody the noble values that define the Indonesian character. As a result, pencak silat plays a vital role in shaping the character of the younger generation, ensuring that they become competent, compassionate, and principled leaders who contribute positively to society.

Character can be defined as the composite of an individual's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors that shape their way of living and interacting with others. It encompasses the entire spectrum of human activities, including one's relationships with God, oneself, and the surrounding environment. This complex web of thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions is underpinned by religious norms, legal principles, ethical manners, cultural values, and societal customs. The values associated with good character are embedded within these general behaviors, serving as guiding principles for individuals in their daily lives. The foundation of good character lies in the adherence to religious principles and norms, which form the bedrock of ethical conduct in various societies. By adhering to these religious values, individuals develop a moral compass that steers them towards righteous actions and decisions. Such adherence enables individuals to cultivate qualities of honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness, fostering a sense of responsibility and accountability for their actions.

Furthermore, the cultivation of good character is closely linked to an individual's relationship with themselves. Self-awareness and self-reflection are crucial in recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses, thereby facilitating personal growth and development. The process of self-improvement is guided by an inner drive to be better versions of oneself and to contribute positively to the world. Moreover, good character values extend beyond the individual level to encompass interactions with others and the environment. The notion of respect for others and their dignity forms the basis of compassionate and empathetic behavior. By recognizing the inherent worth and humanity of others, individuals foster a sense of mutual respect, cooperation, and harmony in their social interactions.

The integration of cultural values and customs further enriches the tapestry of good character. These cultural norms provide individuals with guidelines for appropriate behavior in various contexts, fostering a sense of belonging and identity within their communities. As individuals adhere to cultural norms and traditions, they contribute to preserving their cultural heritage and enriching their society's collective tapestry. In essence, good character serves as a unifying force that transcends religious, cultural, and societal boundaries, forming a common ethical foundation for individuals to live harmoniously and ethically in society. It embodies virtues such as kindness, compassion, honesty, and respect, fostering a sense of moral responsibility towards oneself and others. By nurturing good character, individuals become agents of positive change, promoting ethical behavior, and contributing to the greater well-being of society as a whole.

The elements encompassed within a superior character are closely aligned with the principles of Life Skills Education, a program initiated by the Ministry of National Education in 2002 as part of Broad-Based Education (Ministry of National Education, 2011). Atmawarni's research corroborates this, highlighting that the primary objective of life skills education is to foster cognitive abilities, eradicate negative behavioral patterns, enhance individual potential, and cultivate innovation and creativity (Atmawarni, 2020). The application of life skills education to the youth emphasizes the integration of practical skills in addition to
formal vocational knowledge, encompassing physical, mental, and attitudinal dimensions, thus creating a comprehensive and realistic education system (Wahyuni & Indrasari, 2017). The concept of character development through life skills education encompasses several fundamental aspects. Firstly, it emphasizes self-awareness with a foundation in faith in God Almighty, the practice of virtuous character, and a sense of responsibility towards the environment. Such self-awareness nurtures an appreciation of one's strengths and potential for growth. Secondly, life skills education cultivates self-confidence, empowering the youth to believe in their abilities and pursue their aspirations with determination. Thirdly, the program imparts essential social skills, including empathy and cooperation, promoting harmonious and empathetic interactions with others (Zaman, 2019).

In the context of "Character-Based Holistic Education," the proper development of youth character is delineated within the framework of nine pillars, each representing vital Higher Order Thinking Skills (Megawagi, 2004). These pillars serve as a blueprint for character-building initiatives, guiding educators, parents, and communities in nurturing well-rounded individuals. This framework encourages young individuals to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, empowering them to make informed and responsible choices. Moreover, cultivating creativity, innovation, and adaptability equips the youth to face challenges and confidently embrace change.

Integral to character-based education is the emphasis on cultivating emotional intelligence and resilience, nurturing qualities such as empathy, compassion, and emotional self-regulation. These attributes enable the youth to forge meaningful connections with others and respond to life's challenges with grace and determination. Furthermore, character-based education places significant importance on fostering a sense of social responsibility and ethical behavior. By instilling values such as integrity, honesty, and accountability, the program shapes the youth into responsible and ethical citizens who contribute positively to society.

In conclusion, the integration of life skills education and character-based holistic education provides a comprehensive approach to developing the character of youth. By nurturing cognitive, emotional, and social skills, these programs create a well-rounded and resilient generation equipped to face the complexities of life with integrity, compassion, and determination. Emphasizing the development of Higher Order Thinking Skills and instilling ethical values, character-based education lays the foundation for a future generation that embodies superior character and contributes positively to the betterment of society, namely:

1. Love for God Almighty and all His creations
2. Independence and responsibility
3. Honesty/trustworthy and wise
4. Respect and courtesy
5. Generous, like to help, and cooperation
6. Confident, creative, and hardworking
7. Leadership and Justice
8. Kind and humble, Tolerance, peace and unity

The concept of the eight pillars of character education seeks to foster the holistic development of youth, encompassing various dimensions beyond just academic excellence. The aim is to nurture individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also physically, emotionally, and spiritually well-rounded. By embracing a pluralistic approach, this concept emphasizes the importance of balancing different aspects of a person's life, creating a harmonious and integrated character. At its core, the eight pillars of character education endeavor to instill noble virtues within the youth, ensuring that their thoughts, emotions, and actions are aligned consistently and virtuously. By nurturing a sense of integrity, empathy, and moral responsibility, this education framework aims to produce individuals who uphold high ethical standards in every aspect of their lives.

Furthermore, character education recognizes the significance of nurturing creativity and critical thinking among the youth. By encouraging innovative and imaginative thinking, the program empowers young individuals to approach challenges with a fresh perspective, seeking solutions that positively impact themselves and society at large. Beyond academic achievements, character education places equal importance on physical well-being. By promoting physical health and an active lifestyle, the program ensures that the youth develop habits that foster overall well-being. The emotional dimension is also a central focus of character education. The program aims to equip young individuals with emotional intelligence, allowing them to effectively understand and manage their emotions. This enables the youth to develop meaningful and empathetic connections with others, thus fostering a harmonious and compassionate society.

In addition to nurturing the intellectual and emotional dimensions, character education also emphasizes spiritual growth. By providing opportunities for self-reflection, introspection, and connection with one's inner values, the program supports the development of a strong spiritual foundation. In summary, the 8 pillars of character education are designed to cultivate well-rounded and balanced individuals who possess intellectual
prowess and physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. By instilling noble virtues and ethical values, character education ensures that the youth consistently exhibit positive character traits in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Emphasizing creativity and critical thinking, the program prepares young individuals to address challenges with innovative solutions. By nurturing emotional intelligence and empathy, character education fosters a sense of understanding and compassion towards others. Moreover, the program supports spiritual growth and inner reflection, guiding the youth towards a meaningful and purpose-driven life. In this way, character education plays a pivotal role in shaping a generation of individuals who can positively impact society and the world.

Pencak silat martial arts is the result of the culture of the Indonesian people to defend, maintain their existence (independence) and integrity (unity) towards the environment/surrounding nature to achieve harmony in life. This is used to increase faith and piety to God Almighty (Kumaidah, 2012). Values in pencak silat are closely related to social ideals and individual moral ideals among Malay people. Pencak is a self-defense system that has 4 values as a unit (Notosoejitno, 1997), namely:

1. Ethical values implicitly contain religious, socio-cultural, and moral values that are upheld by society.
2. Technical value is seen logically as a need for human self-defense when encountering a dangerous situation and a means of self-confidence.
3. Aesthetic value contains beauty & art based on aesthetic packaging.
4. Athlete/sport scores based on athletic principles (discipline/sport rules). Every move conforms to the sport's basis for health and skill.

The essence of pencak silat lies in the harmonious integration of various elements, including brotherhood, martial arts, sports, and mental-spiritual aspects. In Javanese culture, pencak silat embodies its teachings through symbols, movements, and techniques. It serves as a martial art and a form of self-exercise, symbolizing the pursuit of safety and protection. Pencak silat's effectiveness lies in the meticulous self-exercise process, where the practitioner follows the right methods and techniques. This rigorous training cultivates extraordinary physical strength and prowess. The accumulated power within a practitioner is known as "kanuragan," an outward manifestation of strength that is characteristic of pencak silat.

Beyond physical strength, pencak silat also emphasizes the cultivation of inner power. This inner strength, known as "kawaskitan," is harnessed through mental discipline and self-awareness. It involves tapping into one's innate potential and elevating it to its highest level. Moreover, pencak silat recognizes the significance of spiritual power. The practice aims to align the fighter's spirit with their physical and mental faculties, resulting in a state of perfection. This spiritual power enables practitioners to connect with a higher purpose and elevate their consciousness. In the Javanese cultural context, the ultimate pursuit of knowledge is the attainment of "safe science." This refers to the deep understanding and mastery of self-defense and protection in pencak silat. By achieving this level of expertise, a fighter enhances their physical abilities and strengthens their piety and connection to the divine. Through the three powers of outward strength, inner resilience, and spiritual awakening, pencak silat aims to cultivate individuals who embody both physical prowess and spiritual piety. This holistic approach to martial arts fosters a sense of balance and harmony within the practitioner, preparing them to face life's challenges with courage and wisdom.

In conclusion, pencak silat is more than just a martial art; it represents a fusion of brotherhood, martial arts, sports, and mental-spiritual elements. With a strong foundation in Javanese culture, this traditional practice imparts its teachings through symbols and movements. The rigorous self-exercise process brings forth extraordinary physical strength, known as "kanuragan." Moreover, pencak silat emphasizes the development of inner strength ("kawaskitan") through mental discipline and self-awareness. The practice also recognizes the importance of spiritual power, leading to a sense of perfection in the practitioner. Ultimately, integrating outward, inner, and spiritual strengths in pencak silat fosters a deep connection with piety and elevates the pursuit of knowledge to the realm of "safe science."

The essence and purpose of pencak silat are intertwined, aligning with the principles upheld by the Executive Board of the Indonesian Pencak Silat Association in 1975. According to this institution, pencak silat serves as a powerful tool to preserve the nation's culture and ensure its continued existence. It goes beyond being just a martial art, as its teachings extend to shaping individuals' character and fostering harmony in the community. At its core, pencak silat emphasizes the preservation of cultural heritage, making it an invaluable medium for safeguarding Indonesia's rich traditions. By immersing themselves in the practice of pencak silat, individuals become skilled fighters and custodians of their nation's identity and heritage.

Furthermore, pencak silat nurtures the values of living in harmony within the community. Practitioners of this martial art learn to respect and uphold the principles of mutual understanding, cooperation, and empathy. These attributes enable them to build meaningful relationships with others, fostering unity and a sense of
togetherness. In addition to promoting harmonious living, pencak silat is deeply rooted in spirituality. The practice encourages individuals to increase their piety to God. As students of pencak silat delve into its teachings, they learn to integrate physical prowess with spiritual devotion. This union of physical and spiritual aspects equips practitioners with a profound sense of purpose and connection to the divine. Beyond the general essence of pencak silat, each specific style or form also has its unique purpose and philosophy. Whether it’s emphasizing fluidity in movements or emphasizing inner strength, each approach aims to shape the character of its followers. Pencak silat becomes a transformative journey, molding individuals into virtuous and disciplined individuals.

The shared goal of pencak silat, both in its general essence and its individual forms, lies in character development. It instills the values of respect, discipline, humility, and perseverance in those who embrace its teachings. As students progress in their practice, they evolve as skilled martial artists and well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities. In conclusion, the purpose of pencak silat aligns with its essence: to preserve Indonesia's cultural heritage and ensure the nation's continuity. Beyond being a martial art, pencak silat fosters harmonious living and a deep sense of spirituality. Its teachings encourage practitioners to develop strong character traits and become custodians of their nation's traditions. Pencak silat serves as a powerful vehicle for shaping individuals' character, preparing them to face life's challenges with dignity, courage, and virtue.

c. Pencak Silat as Strengthening Social Bonds in Society

Pencak silat as strengthening social bonds in society is considered not only to contain martial arts training, but teachers and pencak silat trainers diligently provide moral and ethical teachings to their students. The teachings aim to be ideal individuals, pious, responsive, tough, honest, virtuous, and have good self-control. The teachers diligently instill these qualities because they are characteristics that must be possessed by fighters/warriors who have been taught from generation to generation through the traditional martial arts training process (Utomo, 2017). The potential for character formation through pencak silat also agrees with Yulianiwan (2016) that there are very open opportunities for the development of character education through physical education and sports, especially the pencak silat sports branch. Because through sports activities, pencak silat is required to practice moral values such as cooperation, honesty, respect, responsibility, and other moral values. Pencak silat as strengthening social ties in society is as follows:

Brotherhood

The element of brotherhood in pencak silat plays a crucial role in shaping the character of young practitioners to exemplify morality and love in all aspects of life. This sense of brotherhood extends beyond the martial arts practice and becomes integral to the overall character development process. Pencak silat strongly emphasizes association, social relations, and interpersonal interactions, considering them vital components in the learning journey. From the outset of the training, even before students delve into the technical aspects of sports and martial arts, they are introduced to the concept of brotherly relationship with their peers. The term "leting" symbolizes this fraternal bond, which denotes fighting together as siblings in a unified process. By fostering a strong sense of unity and camaraderie, the training environment becomes one that promotes teamwork, empathy, and mutual support among the practitioners.

As the training progresses, the martial arts techniques related to self-defense are gradually introduced, aligned with the students' proficiency levels and the belts they have achieved. The physical aspect of the training is approached with a gradual and progressive method, allowing students to build their skills and confidence step by step. In parallel with the technical training, etiquette and decorum education are instilled right from the beginning and are continuously reinforced throughout the training process. The emphasis on proper manners and etiquette extends beyond mere external gestures, rooted in a deeper commitment to self-discipline and self-awareness. Through the practice of good manners and respectful conduct, students develop a strong sense of humility, patience, and courtesy, which are essential attributes in the art of pencak silat.

Combining brotherhood, technical training, and etiquette education creates a holistic approach to character development in pencak silat. The art aims to produce individuals who possess physical prowess and embody the virtues of compassion, respect, and self-discipline. By emphasizing the values of brotherhood and camaraderie, practitioners learn the importance of building strong and supportive relationships with others. This aspect extends beyond the training hall and becomes an essential part of their interactions in their daily lives and communities. In conclusion, the element of brotherhood in pencak silat serves as a foundation for the formation of a noble character in the young practitioners. It fosters a deep sense of unity, teamwork, and empathy, which are essential in developing moral behavior and love in all aspects of life. Through the practice of proper etiquette and self-discipline, pencak silat instills the values of humility, respect, and courtesy, further contributing to the holistic character development of the youth. As a result, the art not only
imparts self-defense skills but also nurtures individuals who can positively impact their communities and society at large.

The cultivation of good manners is an integral aspect of pencak silat practice, beginning with its familiarization in the training environment. A notable example of this is the use of respectful titles when addressing others. In the practice hall, students are encouraged to address their elders as "Mas" or "Mbak," demonstrating deep respect towards them. Similarly, the instructors affectionately refer to their students as "Adik," creating a sense of familial bond where students are regarded as younger siblings who are loved, cared for, and nurtured to become better individuals. This practice instills respect and fosters a sense of affection and camaraderie among practitioners. By instilling such habits within the training environment, students are expected to carry these values into their social interactions outside the practice hall. The culture of showing respect towards elders and caring for the younger ones becomes a natural part of their behavior, positively influencing their interactions with others in society. The practice of good manners is not confined to the physical training but permeates all aspects of life, contributing to the holistic character development of the practitioners.

The social relations that are fostered with an attitude of brotherhood in pencak silat act as a powerful magnet for many students to engage in the training. The strong sense of unity and camaraderie created within the training environment becomes an attractive factor for aspiring practitioners. The concept of brotherhood goes beyond mere physical training; it creates a supportive and encouraging atmosphere, where students learn and grow together. Within this environment, students develop a deep appreciation for the value of teamwork and empathy. They learn to support and uplift one another, and this spirit of cooperation extends far beyond the training hall. As they engage in their social circles and communities, students bring with them the ethos of brotherhood, fostering positive relationships based on mutual respect and support.

In conclusion, the cultivation of good manners and the practice of brotherhood in pencak silat play a vital role in shaping the character of its practitioners. By familiarizing students with respectful titles and instilling a sense of familial affection, the training environment becomes a nurturing space for character development. Good manners become an ingrained habit that extends into all aspects of the practitioners’ lives, influencing their interactions with others in society. Moreover, the atmosphere of brotherhood and camaraderie within the training environment creates a strong sense of unity and support, attracting students to engage in the practice and fostering the development of positive social relations. Ultimately, pencak silat imparts physical skills and serves as a platform for nurturing individuals with respect, empathy, and cooperation.

In addition, cultural acculturation in pencak silat can be a component of religious symbols in humans. Culture in pencak silat is able to contain ideas that conceptualize the most important values in social life which are rooted in the natural emotions of the human soul, such as mutual cooperation, solidarity and cooperation (Fauzan, 2012). The brotherhood in pencak silat upholds mutual respect, need, and trust (PSHT, 2006). Need mutual respect with others, compassion with each other because they need each other. When a good relationship strengthens trust, the closeness between students in particular must pay attention to and help each other. The habit of shaking hands is a typical etiquette that must be carried out by all students and those who study pencak silat wherever and whenever. It's not only done at the practice site, or only for fellow brothers and sisters, but for everyone when they interact with each other daily.

**Spirituality**

The spiritual element of pencak silat is able to form the character of obedience to parents and teachers, good manners, and increase spirituality. Each spiritual element is implemented in the subject matter given to students in stages according to belt level. The content of the material also consists of knowledge of the pencak silat organization, the cultural teachings of pencak silat, social etiquette, and everything about the philosophical meaning of the pencak silat material. Every material content of spiritual elements is conveyed in every routine practice between breaks and before closing home. However, some special materials are also given at certain times to increase the optimization and exclusivity of the situation.

The material for pencak silat that has been conveyed to students continuously will always be practiced in every routine exercise and its implementation will be monitored by trainers. Among the spiritual materials, namely 'Opens', procedures for praying while still holding on to their respective religions by containing elements of pencak silat culture using artistic movements to create harmony and stabilize the activities / actions to be carried out. Habitation of obedience to religion starting from something light (such as praying) is practiced by students every exercise. Habit that they finally out of practice, will also practice it. Besides monitoring about the practice of worship outside the practice is sometimes done by residents. It aims to see honesty and daily worship practices.
The results obtained by the students also experienced changes in attitudes towards parents. Several students admitted that before they had spoken, behaved, and some had even yelled at their parents when they were angry, since they had attended the exercise, they felt guilty. The habit of speaking politely, often emphasized in training, is brought to the house. The advantage with sports activities makes them also have more ability to help their parents' hard work. There are even parents who directly accompany their children to practice pencak silat. Pencak silat is one of the moral foundations firmly held by students of pencak silat where the concept is an attitude to create a prosperous, peaceful and safe world in the afterlife, with focus on noble values, morals or morals of al-Karim.

The habit of praying before and after starting pencak silat practice is intended so that students always remember God Almighty. Not only at these two times, at the start and end of the connection, even the activities before drinking during the training break. The habit of fulfilling religious guidance is always considered. Moral in religious education also contains elements of good habits, to be a good person. that as well as the teachings of pencak silat in all aspects, it is an attempt to make students and residents become human beings who are good in character, know good and bad, and foster devotion to God Almighty. The implementation of the spiritual element in building character follows Thohari's research (2017), that the spiritual material of pencak silat includes religious education, manners, polite etiquette, as well as knowledge and practice of obedience to God Almighty.

4. Discussion

Interest in pencak silat has experienced a decline in recent times, particularly among the current generation, who tend to favor other martial arts such as kempo, karate, and taekwondo. However, it is crucial to recognize that pencak silat holds immense social significance within Indonesian society, promoting a heightened sense of concern and empathy towards others. As an integral part of Indonesia's cultural heritage, pencak silat must be preserved and safeguarded as it serves as a cornerstone of character education, encompassing the nine core values inherent in this martial art. Pencak silat, being deeply rooted in the traditions of the Indonesian ancestors, imparts essential values that contribute to the holistic development of an individual's character. These values encompass physical skills and moral and ethical teachings that shape a person's behavior and attitude towards others. By embracing these values, practitioners of pencak silat become individuals with a strong sense of responsibility, empathy, and consideration for others, ultimately strengthening social bonds within the community.

Pencak silat, a traditional martial art with deep-rooted cultural significance, is a powerful medium for fostering social ties and community cohesion. One of its prominent features in achieving this is the cultivation of brotherhood among its practitioners. This fundamental value is instilled within the training environment, where students are encouraged to treat each other as siblings, engendering a profound sense of familial affection and camaraderie. As the students progress through their journey in pencak silat, this sense of brotherhood extends beyond the confines of the practice hall, creating a tightly-knit and supportive network that transcends age, background, and social status.

The spirit of brotherhood nurtured in pencak silat goes beyond mere physical training and techniques. It encompasses a shared mindset of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation. Practitioners learn to see each other not as adversaries but as allies, collectively working towards personal growth and the group's betterment. This supportive environment fosters a strong sense of belonging, reinforcing the idea that every member of the community is valued and appreciated. As a result, practitioners develop a profound camaraderie that binds them together, making them more than just training partners but true friends and confidants. Moreover, the cultivation of brotherhood in pencak silat has significant implications for social cohesion and conflict resolution. By promoting a culture of respect and cooperation, practitioners are better equipped to handle disagreements and differences constructively. This reduces the likelihood of conflicts escalating and promotes a peaceful and harmonious community. The strong sense of brotherhood instills a responsibility to look after one another's well-being, ensuring that no one is left behind or feels isolated. In times of adversity, this supportive network becomes a source of strength and resilience, allowing the community to face challenges together as a united front.

In addition to brotherhood, pencak silat strongly emphasizes spirituality, another essential element that contributes to the cultivation of social ties. Beyond being a physical martial art, pencak silat is deeply rooted in the spiritual realm. The practice encourages students to cultivate inner strength and balance through spiritual development. This connection to spirituality fosters a deeper understanding of oneself and others, leading to greater empathy and compassion. The heightened spirituality in pencak silat practitioners enables them to see beyond individual differences and connect more profoundly. This spiritual aspect promotes a sense of unity and interconnectedness, recognizing that all community members are part of a larger whole. As a result,
practitioners develop a strong sense of empathy and are more attuned to the needs and emotions of others. This heightened sense of compassion further solidifies social bonds and promotes a sense of unity within the community.

In conclusion, pencak silat, through its emphasis on brotherhood and spirituality, becomes more than just a martial art; it becomes a powerful force for building strong, caring, and united communities. The cultivation of brotherhood creates a close-knit and harmonious community where individuals feel valued and connected. Simultaneously, the focus on spirituality enhances practitioners' empathy and compassion, further strengthening social bonds and promoting a sense of unity. As a result, pencak silat serves as a powerful medium for fostering social ties, bringing people together, and nurturing a sense of collective identity and belongingness. While interest in pencak silat may have waned among the current generation, its societal significance and the values it imparts remain essential for character education and social cohesion. The preservation of pencak silat as a cultural heritage not only perpetuates the martial art itself but also nurtures individuals with strong moral character and social responsibility. Through the cultivation of brotherhood and the promotion of spiritual well-being, pencak silat plays a vital role in strengthening social ties and fostering a united and caring community. As Indonesia looks to the future, preserving and revitalizing interest in pencak silat can contribute to the development of a socially conscious and harmonious society.

5. Conclusion

As the treasured heritage of Indonesia's ancestors, Pencak silat holds profound significance as a pillar of character education. Its essence lies in the nine character values it encompasses, which are considered fundamental for the development of individuals and society as a whole. These nine characters are deeply embedded in the practice of pencak silat and serve as guiding principles for its practitioners:

1. Love for God Almighty and all His creations: Pencak silat fosters a deep sense of spirituality, encouraging practitioners to recognize and appreciate the divine presence in all aspects of life. This love for God is reflected in their actions and interactions with others, promoting respect and kindness.
2. Independence and responsibility: Pencak silat instills a sense of independence and self-reliance in its practitioners, empowering them to take responsibility for their actions and decisions. This spirit of accountability contributes to the development of responsible and reliable individuals.
3. Honesty/trustworthy and wise: Honesty and wisdom are highly valued traits in pencak silat. Practitioners learn to be truthful and trustworthy in their dealings with others, making decisions based on thoughtful and wise considerations.
4. Respect and courtesy: Respect and courtesy are at the core of pencak silat's teachings. Practitioners are taught to show respect and courtesy towards their fellow students and instructors and to people in their wider social circles.
5. Generous, like to help, and mutual cooperation: Pencak silat fosters a spirit of generosity and willingness to help others. The emphasis on mutual cooperation promotes a supportive and collaborative community where individuals uplift each other.
6. Confident, creative, and hardworking: Pencak silat cultivates confidence in its practitioners, encouraging them to be creative problem solvers and dedicated hard workers. These qualities contribute to personal growth and success in various aspects of life.
7. Leadership and justice: Leadership and justice are integral components of pencak silat's character values. Practitioners are encouraged to develop leadership skills and uphold principles of justice and fairness in their interactions with others.
8. Kind and humble, tolerance, peace, and unity: Practitioners of pencak silat are taught to be kind and humble, promoting tolerance, peace, and unity within the community. These values contribute to a harmonious and inclusive social environment.

Through the practice of pencak silat, these character values are woven into the fabric of each practitioner's life, influencing their behavior and shaping their worldview. As a result, the strengthening of social bonds is observed as practitioners embody these values in their interactions with others. The spirit of brotherhood is particularly prominent, as students are encouraged to treat each other as siblings, fostering a close-knit and supportive community. Additionally, the emphasis on spirituality in pencak silat deepens practitioners' sense of inner strength and balance. This heightened spiritual connection enhances their ability to empathize with others and act with compassion, further solidifying the social bonds within the community. Thus, pencak silat serves as a powerful platform for nurturing character development and fostering strong,
caring, and united communities. Its significance extends beyond physical training, making it an invaluable asset in shaping individuals with virtuous and principled qualities.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest
The author of carrying out this research has nothing to do with the interests of any matter whatsoever with this writing.

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