



## Empowering Cultural Identity through Non-Formal Education: A Qualitative Study of *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* Dance

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - This study aims to investigate the role of non-formal education in strengthening cultural heritage through learning the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance in the local community of Riau. As an essential part of the Malay cultural tradition, this dance faces the threat of fading due to modernization and a lack of structured preservation efforts.

**Methodology** - This research used a qualitative case study design method. Data was collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with participants from community leaders. This research focused on the dance studio community's active involvement in the Zapin dance.

**Findings** - The study results show that non-formal education is important in preserving local cultural heritage. This fishing process provides special skills to the dancers in moving and gathering a deep understanding of the meaning of values and cultural identity contained in the Zapin tradition. This learning process provides opportunities and encourages community involvement that strengthens the sustainability of culture among young generations in the future.

**Contribution** - The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on a holistic, non-formal educational approach that integrates both the technical and cultural dimensions of traditional dance. It contributes to developing educational strategies that reinforce cultural identity and heritage through community-based learning initiatives.

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### INTRODUCTION

Traditional arts play a vital role in maintaining cultural identity by enabling communities to preserve, share, and revitalize their shared history. However, growing industrialization and globalization challenge the preservation of cultural assets such as traditional dances. Therefore, efforts to protect and preserve these cultural practices are becoming increasingly important in the face of rapid development. The Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance, a traditional Malay performance from the *Peralawan* Kingdom, is experiencing a decline in

popularity in Indonesia, particularly in Riau Province. This decline is primarily due to a lack of awareness among the younger generation of regional cultural traditions. This trend reflects a broader global pattern in which traditional cultural expressions adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing social and cultural environment.

Despite its significant artistic, intellectual, and spiritual value, the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance is threatened with extinction. Access to cultural education, particularly through non-formal channels such as community art studios and local training centers, has diminished the cultural awareness of young people (Alamsyah et al., 2020). The formal education system often prioritizes the national curriculum and modern competencies over cultural awareness, thus diminishing opportunities to preserve local traditions that should be preserved. The result is irrevocably losing a crucial element of Riau's cultural character.

This study promotes the revival of the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* Dance via non-formal education, highlighting focused, community-oriented educational strategies that involve youngsters with their cultural heritage. Research shows that non-formal education, structured learning outside conventional school environments, effectively conveys culture when implemented in culturally significant manners and engages all participants (Salavera et al., 2022). This study investigates alternatives for preserving the dance tradition by analyzing its teaching in non-formal contexts and assessing the roles of communities, educators, and local institutions.

The study is significant because it shows that traditional arts such as the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* Dance are dying out in Riau Province, and the gap in cultural involvement among young people is getting bigger. Interviews with local artists and community leaders have shown that fewer and fewer young people are participating in cultural activities, which means this important heritage is becoming less connected to the next generation. Furthermore, local cultural events observations show there are not enough places for younger people to learn about this art form, particularly outside of school. It is a big problem, not merely for the people of Riau, but also for Indonesia's efforts to protect its culture in general.

Previous studies have investigated the function of non-formal education in the dissemination of classical dances, including Angguk in Java (Sihaloho & Heniwaty, 2021) and Yogyakarta palace dances (Pramutomo, 2023); however, studies concentrating specifically on *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* within the framework of Malay culture remain scarce. This research fills the empty gap through case study research that discusses in depth the protection of local cultural heritage in the Riau community for cultural education actors, especially in areas where cultural arts or traditional arts are located, so that it is hoped that the results can help make breakthroughs related to cultural preservation.

Enhancing the participation of individuals in the community through non-formal educational programs designed to meet the needs of the local population is a crucial approach to addressing this significant issue.. Practical case studies from other areas, like the preservation of Javanese Angguk and Yogyakarta palace dances through similar non-formal education efforts in Java (Sihaloho & Heniwaty, 2021) (Pramutomo, 2023), show that using culturally relevant and participatory methods can be a key way to bring back traditional practices. This study aims to provide helpful insight into how these methods might be changed and utilised in Riau Province.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study uses a qualitative case study design to explore the role of non-formal education in preserving and strengthening cultural heritage through the teaching of *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* Dance. The case study design was chosen because of its capacity to provide in-depth and context-rich insights into real-life practices in a particular cultural environment. As explained by Endraswara (2012), qualitative research in a cultural context relies heavily on the researcher's sensitivity in capturing dynamic and culturally nuanced phenomena. Zapin dance is a cultural heritage with ancestral values, historical meaning, and profound

philosophy. The preservation of this dance aims to maintain the region's cultural identity, which aims to explore in depth through cases collected through direct interaction with participants and the cultural environment in the region.

### **Participants**

The participants involved in this study had in-depth insight and understanding of the Zapin dance in the context of formal education. They consist of instructors directly responsible for the learning process in the art studio as a community center. They are experienced in the pedagogical field and have the technical knowledge required for traditional dance. Secondly, the participants actively involved in the process of leaving are members of the young community aged 12 to 25. Community leaders and cultural figures, including local traditional leaders and cultural guardians, possess experience and historical knowledge of the area, Buddhist gardens, and preservation efforts. The sample processing technique in this study uses a sampling procedure to select participants. The focus is on participants from Zapin who have extensive experience and knowledge related to the Zapin dance.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection through three participant observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Participatory observation, researchers are directly involved in non-formal education sessions where *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance* is taught. The focus of observation included teaching strategies, student participation, cultural expression in the dance, and the dynamics of interaction between instructors and learners. During this process, the researcher recorded various behaviors, language, and symbols related to cultural transmission. In addition, in-depth semi-structured interviews with instructors, learners, and community leaders were conducted to explore their thoughts, ideas, and experiences about how non-formal education can help keep the dance going. We recorded each interview with permission to transcribe it and study it more. The interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. The last method was document analysis, which meant looking at relevant documents like curriculum syllabi (if available), training materials, historical archives, and photos and videos of performances. This document analysis was conducted to strengthen the interview and observation data so that the overall data obtained was better regarding education and cultural preservation in the context of the Zapin Dance.

### **Instruments**

The instruments used several key tools to ensure the accuracy and depth of the data collected. Observations used checklists based on cultural learning indicators. The indicators are movements, music, symbols, and values of dancing. In addition, interview guidelines with open-ended questions were designed to encourage detailed narratives and in-depth reflections from participants regarding their experiences in cultural learning. For documentation purposes, tools such as audio recorders and field notebooks were used to record observations and interviews more systematically. In addition, consent forms were used to ensure adherence to the ethical standards of the research as well as agreement from the participants before data was collected. With this combination of instruments, the research gained richer and deeper insights into cultural learning in the context of non-formal education.

## **FINDINGS**

### **The Role of *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance* as a Medium of Cultural Transmission**

Based on the interview results and field observations, it was found that the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance* plays an important role as a medium for transmitting cultural heritage values to the younger generation. This transmission is through movement and the meaning, music, and traditions embedded in the dance.

*"The Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance has existed since the Pelalawan Kingdom. In the past, it was only danced in the palace. However, after Indonesia's independence, this dance began to be taught outside the palace, especially in communities." (R1)*

This statement shows that the Zapin dance, which was initially intended for the royal environment, is now performed in the form of cultural education that is easily accessible to the public. The democratic process of this dance through non-formal education shows the community's commitment to preserving this cultural heritage by changing contemporary educational methods.

### **Character Values in the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance**

The research findings indicate that the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance has characteristics, namely religiosity, discipline, politeness, hard work, and nationalism. These values are reflected in dance movements, music, clothing, and performance etiquette.

*"...This dance teaches us to move gently and politely. We cannot show excessive movement, especially for women. That is the essence of Malay politeness." (Dance Instructor, R1)*

*"The students need time to master the steps.... The footwork must be precise. That requires patience and discipline..." (Dance Instructor, R4)*

The interview excerpts highlight how discipline and religious-based modesty are inherent in dance instruction. These values are not only taught as technical requirements but also as part of the cultural identity of the Riau Malay community.

### **Cultural Identity Through Music and Costumes**

The quote explains that religious discipline and politeness are inherent in dance learning. These values are taught technically and as part of the cultural identity of the Malay community.

*"When we hear the rhythm of zapin, it brings us back to our roots. The lyrics tell stories about our customs and life in Pelalawan." (Community Leader, R6)*

*"The clothes we wear – baju kurung, songket, teluk belanga – are the same as what our ancestors used to wear. That is how we teach the younger generation to love their heritage." (Dance Instructor, R3)*

These findings show that music and clothing serve as symbolic cultural markers. The traditional garments and musical rhythms used in the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance serve as tools of identity affirmation and cultural pride.

The study also found that the preservation of the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance is strongly supported by the local community and government institutions such as the Department of Tourism and Culture of Pekanbaru City.

*"We regularly hold zapin festivals, namely Riau Kenduri, Malay Culture Festival, and others. The goal is to ensure that the younger generation is involved and proud of their own culture." (Local Government Official, R8)*

It demonstrates how structured support for the cultural events has become a strategic effort to preserve and revitalize the traditional dance. These activities also serve to strengthen intergenerational transmission and community involvement.

### **The Function of Non-Formal Education in Cultural Heritage Teaching**

The role of non-formal education as a flexible and community-based learning method was also emphasized.

*"We teach zapin in art studios and cultural centers. It is not in the formal school curriculum, but the students are enthusiastic. It is more relaxed but effective." (Dance Instructor, R2)*

Non-formal education is a bridge between traditional values and modern lifestyles. This format allows cultural heritage to be taught in ways that are adaptive to contemporary youth interests while maintaining its core values.

### **Preserve Zapin Pecah Dua Belas through Non-Formal Education**

Preserving the Zapin dance through formal shots, research findings reveal that non-formal education plays an important role in passing on local cultural values and traditional dances such as the Zapin dance. Preservation is carried out through dance studios and community-based training for young people. Young people are introduced to the dance in a traditional form that is in-depth, easily accessible, and culturally based..

*"Not all children can learn this dance at school. We train them at the sanggar (studio) with instructors who know the history and movements. They feel more connected because they learn directly from cultural figures." (Dance Instructor, R2)*

*"We do not only teach the movements, but also the history, meaning, and values behind the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance. That makes them appreciate it more..." (Cultural Practitioner, R5)*

The results of the interview show that non-formal education is more than just about acquiring knowledge; even formal education can be underestimated as a means of transferring cultural skills, ranging from technical skills to philosophical and historical efforts, where this knowledge can be obtained through a holistic transfer of excellence that occurs in a non-formal environment characterized by personal relationships with culture.

### **Transmission of Cultural Knowledge Across Generations**

Non-formal educational activities like rehearsals, workshops, and performances. The elderly communicate their knowledge to the younger generation. This generational transmission between generations ensures that cultural traditions are not dissipated with time.

*We hold a zapin workshop every time the elders come to share stories of the dance's origins in the Pelalawan Kingdom. The young dancers listen to it when they practice. They learn about the culture, they are not only moving." (Community Leader, R6)*

The quote shows that the role of oral tradition and direct mentoring in preserving culture and presenting experienced artists in the dance space emphasizes the importance of community-based learning accompanied by experience as a viable method that can be carried out sustainably to pass it on to young people.

### **Building Cultural Identity and Social Cohesion through Dance**

Zapin dance educates individuals about cultural practices, strengthens collective identity, and fosters a sense of belonging and responsibility within the community.

*"When performing in a show, we feel proud to show our dance to the public. We also feel proud because we can make them confident about their identity." (Dance Coordinator, R3)*

Dance performances allow all students to celebrate and represent cultural values to the public. Young dancers' performances at regional festivals or local cultural events strengthen their cultural pride and connect them with the values of the broader community.

### **Integration of Cultural Values in the Learning Process**

Importantly, the learning process of the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance is embedded with moral, spiritual, and cultural values that guide behavior and strengthen character.

*"Zapin dance teaches students to be disciplined in manners and have religious values. That is why in the practical process of Zapin dance." (Dance Instructor, R4)*

Integrating non-formal environments into the learning process becomes a moral foundation, and culture can strengthen positive social behaviour while preserving local arts and cultural traditions.

### **Enhancing Cultural Continuity through Practice**

In an informal setting, Zapin Pecah Dua Belas, like the Bina Tasik studio, keeps dance alive as a living tradition, rather than a dead artifact. This allows teachers to pass on the knowledge contained in the dance directly to students, further fostering a sense of ownership and pride in local dance.

*"In this studio, we preserve it; students are taught the Zapin dance and invited to watch it. This activity is carried out so that the dance does not disappear." (Studio Leader, R11)*

This statement emphasizes that dance studios are important in preserving cultural heritage passed down through generations.

### **Cultural and Social Values in Dance Learning**

Participants do not merely learn choreography—they also absorb moral, spiritual, and social values through the educational experience.

*"The important values that can be taken from the practice of the Zapin dance are that children learn to respect each other and can cooperate." (Parent, R12)*

When Zapin Dance is embodied in everyday social life, these values strengthen social harmony and reinforce local community identity. This supports Rohidi's (2012) argument that traditional arts education is a mechanism for cultural transmission that instills societal norms and values.

### **The Role of the Studio as a Cultural Stronghold**

The Bina Tasik Studio exemplifies a cultural institution adjusting to contemporary conditions while preserving old methods. The studio enhances local cultural life and offers a venue for community innovation.

*"We also often perform at local festivals in the area. We perform at local Citra festivals to motivate ourselves to continue learning and take pride in our culture (Young Dancer, R13)*

Zapin dance performances can strengthen our sense of pride in our own culture. Such pride motivates Zapin to maintain the local cultural heritage in more detail. They also introduce the broader community to the importance and beauty of traditional dance.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Role of Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance as a Medium of Cultural Transmission**

The Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance is essential in cultural transmission, embodying a rich interplay of historical, social, and religious narratives in the Malay community. This traditional dance preserves ancestral values to adapt in contemporary contexts, ensuring its relevance across generations. Engaging youth in cultural events and implementing community-based education are two strategies to mitigate the disparity in cultural participation among young individuals. John et al. (2023) John supports this statement, asserting that community-based educational programs engage young people through collaborative techniques to explore pertinent cultural issues. This approach can foster self-confidence, a sense of belonging, and a greater understanding of one's culture through active participation in various activities. In addition, this approach can help young people build a sense of belonging to their own cultural identity when they explore and collaborate in maintaining local culture in the future.

Interviews with community leaders and artists during cultural performances showed that additional informal spaces are needed for young people to learn and practice traditional dances in groups. Organized non-formal educational activities, such as workshops or community training, can enable young individuals to conserve and preserve this cultural heritage actively. Organized activities involving young people in

cultural heritage conservation can foster a deeper understanding of culture, motivate participation, strengthen identity connections, and promote positive attitudes toward cultural preservation and intercultural interaction (Mieriņa, 2024). These activities can impart the local values inherent in the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance. Pall/minor. This will facilitate a stronger connection for the younger generation to their cultural heritage.

This study will significantly influence the future of scientific education. This study asserts that cultural education should be incorporated into a non-formal education system. This approach is more inclusive and accessible to all groups. It goes beyond conventional educational curricula, which often ignore the cultural diversity of a region. This plan is designed to guide the development of learning materials that focus on local culture and can be applied across Indonesia, particularly in culturally rich regions, where cultural heritage is at risk. These findings may influence higher education policy by promoting the preservation of culture through the development of modules or study programs centred on the diversity of local cultures.

There are many ways in which its cultural importance can be seen. The cultural legacy of *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* comes from the interactions between Arab traders and the Malay people in the past. It started as an Arab tradition and has become a respected Malay performance art (Shamsul, 2001). The dance also tells the story of Islam's history in Southeast Asia and how Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions have mixed (Nor, 2024). This helps keep cultural and religious identity alive. The dance brings people together socially and religiously, and it is often done at religious and social events to strengthen a sense of belonging and identity (Susanti, 2019). It has spiritual aspects, since it is a zikir form, meditative remembrance of God, which combines spiritual practice with cultural expression (Munsoor, 2018).

The Zapin Dance, a traditional dance, plays an important role in forming students. The dance does not serve as a means of instilling essential character values and artistic expression for the personal development of students. The students can develop a spirit of cooperation through involvement in this dance activity; the group nature of the dance requires collaboration and teamwork. Furthermore, when learning the complex movements of the dance, students must be disciplined, meaning they must be able to manage their time well and consistently to master the Zapin dance technique (Evadila et al., 2024).

This dance faces many challenges and obstacles in the era of globalization, which plays a vital role in transmitting local culture. One challenge is that traditional practices are at risk of being forgotten. This issue requires preservation efforts by cultural guardians to ensure the survival of this valuable tradition.

Furthermore, the increasing interest of the younger generation is evident in the dance's performances at community events, attracting many young people who may not have previously been interested in traditional culture. These performances involve young dancers wearing costumes and choreography that reflect current fashion trends. This presentation enhances the appeal and relevance of their cultural expression. Carefully adopting traditional cultural practices can keep pace with modernization, strengthening the connection between the younger generation and their heritage.

Although the Zapin Dance plays a vital role in cultural exploration, it faces significant challenges in the era of globalization, where traditions may be neglected or forgotten. Therefore, cultural preservers must balance preservation efforts with innovation to ensure the vitality and relevance of this valuable tradition.

### ***Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* Dance Character Values**

The Zapin dance, a traditional dance, plays an important role in forming students. The dance does not serve as a means of instilling essential character values and artistic expression for the personal development of students. The students can develop a spirit of cooperation through involvement in this dance activity; the group nature of the dance requires collaboration and teamwork.

A traditional dance plays an important role in forming students. The dance does not serve as a means of instilling essential character values and artistic expression for the personal development of students. The students can develop a spirit of cooperation through involvement in this dance activity; the group nature of the dance requires collaboration and teamwork. Learning complex movements and rhythms also trains

students' discipline; they must consistently dedicate time and practice mastering the dance techniques (Evadila et al., 2024).

In the context of creativity, Zapin provides unique self-expression, where each student can interpret the movements personally (Taher, 2023). Zapin dance has a creative value that offers a space for self-expression for students to express their movements by creating their own. Students can increase their self-confidence through this dance because they can perform in public. In addition, the dance also includes nonverbal communication between dancers that can develop practical communication skills between students. Furthermore, Zapin dance can develop character values acquired through the arts and culture in the dance. Integrating arts and culture in education can enrich the model of holistic character development for students, especially those who practice Zapin dance.

### **Cultural Identity Through Music and Costumes**

Cultural identity is designed to serve as an important expression of individual and collective identity through music and costume. For example, music is an appropriate medium for expressing cultural identity, shaping people's perceptions and social realities (Zhang & Wu, 2023). In traditional forms such as Suzhou Pingtan, musical elements convey local narratives and values, reinforcing cultural identity through storytelling activities (Y. K. Li et al., 2024). On the other hand, costumes also significantly contribute to identity construction. International festivals such as Tomorrowland show how costumes and symbols, such as flags, are utilized as tools of identity expression, allowing participants to explore a particular persona and build social connections (Masset & Decrop, 2024). Research on the Kadazandusun community in Malaysia has also shown that ownership of traditional costumes can enhance relational and collective identity orientations, emphasizing the importance of clothing in strengthening cultural ties. (Cosmas et al., 2019). However, it should be noted that the commercialization of cultural music and costumes can be challenging. When these elements are excessively commodified, there is a risk of losing the authentic meaning at the core of cultural expression, becoming mere consumer goods rather than a true reflection of traditional values.

### **The Function of Non-Formal Education in Cultural Heritage Teaching**

Non-formal education plays a crucial role in teaching and preserving cultural heritage by encouraging engagement, strengthening identity, and facilitating active participation among learners. Through a more flexible approach than formal education, non-formal education enables the integration of cultural heritage into experiential learning practices, connecting students emotionally and intellectually with their local history and traditions. One example is the "Journey through Wooden Podlasie" project in Poland, which emphasizes regional education to protect cultural landscapes and intangible heritage and encourages active community engagement from an early age (Sulima, 2022). In addition, the "Chisinau of the Great Union" project proved that non-formal education approaches can foster competence in preserving national history and strengthen learners' social and emotional connections to cultural values (Chirica, 2023). Furthermore, integrating cultural heritage into formal and non-formal education has been shown to contribute to youth identity formation and promote cultural sustainability, demonstrating the crucial role of cultural practices in education (Chirica, 2023). Furthermore, integrating cultural heritage into formal and non-formal education has been shown to contribute to youth identity formation and promote cultural sustainability, demonstrating the crucial role of cultural practices in education (Karlson & Pašane, 2021). It can be concluded that non-formal education enhances appreciation of cultural values and effectively shapes civic awareness and social engagement.

### **Preserving Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Through Non-Formal Education**

Non-formal education is important in preserving traditional arts such as the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance. This form of education, often facilitated through dance studios and community groups, provides a platform for cultural expression and heritage preservation outside the formal education system. As a dance



with rich historical and cultural significance, Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance benefits considerably from non-formal education as it can reach a wider audience and foster cultural appreciation among different groups.

Dance studios are one of the leading platforms in this process. For example, Balairung Sri Studio in Siak Regency managed to maintain and develop Zapin Istana Dance through structured conservation efforts (Fernandes & Idawati, 2024). In addition, non-formal education provides a significant cultural impact. Integrating the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance into higher education can help improve student character. Activities in the dance build cooperation, discipline, and creativity. Strengthen cultural values and local wisdom. This dance's philosophical and cultural elements, including its historical and religious aspects, must be communicated through it. In addition, future generations can understand and appreciate its meaning (Susanti et al., 2023).

Last but not least, Zapin dance, which has Arabic cultural roots, also contains ethical and religious values such as *akhlakul karimah*, which are very relevant in social life. These values are maintained and promoted through non-formal education. In line with the community's priorities in preserving this dance, which has been influenced by modernization, religiosity, and morality, continuous adaptation is essential to ensure this cultural practice remains relevant amidst changing times. Furthermore, balancing tradition with contemporary influences is key to preserving the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas Dance*.

### **Dance as a Tool for Building Cultural Identity and Social Cohesion**

Dance is an effective medium for building cultural identity and strengthening community social cohesion. As a form of cultural expression, dance reflects traditional values and societal beliefs. It promotes emotional well-being and strengthens interpersonal relationships, making it an important tool for cultural preservation and enhancing a sense of community. In the context of cultural identity, dance becomes a tangible manifestation of historical heritage and traditions passed down through generations. Movement and performance in dancing convey profound philosophical, religious, and historical meanings (Jiao & Zhao, 2024).

Additionally, traditional dances such as the Hanuman Dance from the Newar community also preserve local identity and strengthen community solidarity by being continuously performed as part of rituals and cultural celebrations (Sharma, 2024). On the other hand, dance also plays a significant role in building social cohesion. Group dancing activities have been proven to enhance a sense of belonging and cooperation, as seen in societies where communal dancing strengthens group bonds and pro-social behavior. Traditional dance education also serves as a means of social integration for migrant groups, helping them adapt through cultural exchange and cross-community acceptance (M. Li & Liu, 2022). As stated by Fernández (2025), dance is not just entertainment, but also a social mirror that reflects and shapes the collective aspirations of society.

However, dance can also cause conflict when cultural appropriation occurs or when a form of dance is sidelined without proper appreciation. Therefore, it is important to approach the art of dance with cultural awareness, sensitivity, and respect so that its positive function as a social glue and cultural preserver remains intact. With the right approach, dance will continue to be a unifying force for cultural identity and social harmony amidst diversity.

### **Integration of Cultural Values in the Learning Process**

Incorporating cultural values in the learning process can create an inclusive educational environment. It appreciates diversity and encourages students' character development. Studies show that incorporating multicultural and cultural values into the education system can enhance student participation and strengthen social cohesion. Strengthening cultural content in the curriculum is an effective strategy. For example, community and parental participation in education is crucial for instilling cultural values in schools (Andanti & Sutikyanto, 2024). Incorporating national cultural values into mathematics education helps students internalize them as they learn academic material (Dwi et al., 2023).

Using a multicultural approach in the curriculum, such as citizenship and religious education, can enhance appreciation for diversity and create an inclusive school environment (Alfarisi & Darmiyanti, 2023). It can even enhance tolerance and understanding among students from various backgrounds with programs that focus on multicultural values (Harahap & Sidharta, 2024). The integration of values from various cultures is also important to support the actualization of cultural identity and enhance students' learning motivation, especially in the era of globalization that demands openness to differences. However, efforts to integrate cultural values into education face many challenges. For example, educators and students may have different understandings of multiculturalism, so to ensure that cultural integration in education runs smoothly and positively impacts character formation and the strengthening of students' cultural identities, planned and collaborative strategies are essential.

### **Enhancing Cultural Continuity through Practice**

Enhancing cultural continuity is a strategy to preserve collective identity in an ever-changing society. Cultural practices carried out in the context of archaeology and education. The material culture provides important channels for preserving traditional values. In Middle Limpopo archaeology, for example, there is an emphasis on cultural continuity by contextualising archaeological findings within the social life of communities (Dmytriiev et al., 2021). According to Montón-Subías & Hernando Gonzalo (2022), cultural narratives endure across generations in reflecting the complexity of identity. The material cultural practices in traditional weaving in Guam serve as reservoirs of knowledge and preserve cultural heritage despite colonial pressures. In education, the efforts to balance modern methodologies can ensure teacher training with relevant local values. Traditional cultural practices open to adaptation are key to maintaining cultural continuity amid the dynamics of the times.

### **The Role of the Studio as a Cultural Stronghold**

Art studios function as important cultural bastions because they are not only places for artistic production but also spaces for community engagement. The studio serves two purposes: a public gathering space for sharing and discussion. Second, a workspace for artists. Artist studios are usually seen as creative places for artists. Studios have become cultural study centers to promote collaboration and public dialogue (Bos & Huss, 2022).

The studio's physical environment also affects the art's materiality and identity. For instance, studios like Permadani in Surakarta help keep local culture alive by combining traditional ways of doing things with modern ways of teaching (Sudarsana et al., 2023). In the context of education, design studios are places where people can learn together and interact with each other more. Recording studios are crucial for connecting local art with global culture. Digital technology has created new challenges for studios, transforming how they operate by adapting to new technologies to stay relevant to today's global culture.

It can be concluded that the traditional Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance serves as a form of artistic expression, a local cultural heritage, building character, and strengthening collective identity. Integrating cultural values into formal and non-formal education utilizes music and costumes as symbols of identity. Furthermore, art studios serve as centers for the sustainable preservation of cultural innovation. This process can preserve culture through local traditional practices amidst changing times. The challenges of globalization and modernization demand adaptive, collaborative, and locally-based preservation strategies. Therefore, it is important for all stakeholders—educators, artists, communities, and cultural institutions—to continue encouraging cross-sector collaboration to strengthen culture's primary foundation in building an inclusive, character-driven, and sustainable society.

## **CONCLUSION**

The learning of the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance through non-formal education in dance studios such as the Bina Tasik Studio plays a highly significant role in preserving and transmitting local cultural heritage.

Dance studios function as places for technical training and educational spaces that instill cultural, social, and spiritual values in the younger generation. The learning process—carried out in structured stages, from introducing history and movement meanings, basic techniques, traditional attire, to performance preparation—offers a comprehensive and in-depth learning experience. This allows learners not only to master dance movements physically but also to internalize the philosophy and cultural identity embodied in the dance. Active involvement of the local community, instructors, and learners in studio activities demonstrates that non-formal education has excellent flexibility and effectiveness in maintaining the continuity of traditions. The preservation of artistic forms, the Zapin Pecah Dua Belas dance learning becomes a means to foster cultural pride, strengthen collective identity, and instill positive values such as discipline, collaboration, and respect for ancestral heritage. Therefore, through non-formal education, dance studios contribute to keeping culture alive and relevant amid modernization. This strategic role must continue to be supported and developed in efforts to strengthen the nation's cultural resilience. Recognising and critically examining the challenges faced in revitalizing the *Zapin Pecah Dua Belas* dance is essential. One of the principal obstacles is the dependence on key figures, local community leaders, and skilled instructors who are vital for imparting the knowledge and skills necessary for the dance. Should these pivotal individuals not be succeeded by a new cohort of competent educators, or if there is insufficient institutional backing for their development, there exists a peril that this dependence could mean the end of the tradition. Another worry is that the fast pace of modernization could cause the dance's cultural values and spiritual meanings to be lost or misunderstood in modern entertainment or consumerism. Changing the dance for future generations is hard while keeping its spiritual meaning and sacredness. This study adds to the academic conversation about ways to protect culture in communities worldwide. It presents a structure to the larger conversation about how community-driven projects can help protect cultural heritage. It presents valuable information about how non-formal education could be a beneficial way to protect traditional arts. This study adds to the growing body of research on character education through traditional arts by stressing how important it is to include cultural values in school curricula to help young people develop discipline, respect, and a sense of belonging. In a global context, these methods can help provide examples for other countries or regions facing similar problems in protecting their intangible cultural heritage.

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