

THE BEDANA DANCE OF OLOK GADING AS A MEDIUM FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION IN CULTURAL PRESERVATION

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Abstract

The Bedana Negeri Olok Gading dance is a traditional art form from Lampung that functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a medium for character education. However, in contemporary practice, the Bedana dance is often positioned solely as a ceremonial performance, while its potential as a character education medium remains underutilized. This study aims to identify character education values embedded in the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading dance, analyze its function as a character education medium, and examine its role in preserving local culture. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews with artists and traditional leaders, and performance documentation. Data analysis involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, grounded in character education and arts education theories. The findings indicate that the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading dance embodies values such as religiosity, discipline, responsibility, togetherness, and politeness, internalized through movement structures, musical accompaniment, and social performance contexts. This study emphasizes the role of Bedana dance as a contextual and sustainable medium for character education in local cultural preservation.

Keywords: *Bedana dance; character education; local culture; arts education*

INTRODUCTION

Character education is an important foundation in the formation of a complete individual personality, encompassing the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in an integrated manner. Lickona (1991) emphasized that character education cannot be delivered normatively but must be internalized through real-life experiences so that moral values are truly embedded in the individual. However, modern educational practices tend to separate character learning from the social and cultural context of students, so that the values taught are often abstract and less grounded (Tilaar, 2012). In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, traditional arts hold a strategic position as a medium for character education because they contain local values that are alive and passed down from generation to generation. Dance, in particular, not only represents aesthetic expression but also reflects the value systems, social norms, and worldviews of the supporting community (Sedyawati, 2006; Hadi, 2007). Thus, traditional dance has the potential to become a contextual and meaningful vehicle for character education.

The Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance is a traditional Lampung art form that is still practiced in various traditional and social activities. Based on initial field observations, the Bedana Dance is currently positioned more as a ceremonial and entertainment performance art. Meanwhile, the character education values contained in the movement structure, musical accompaniment, and social etiquette of the dancers have not been optimally utilized as a medium for learning values. This condition indicates a gap between the potential cultural values of the Bedana Dance and the preservation practices that take place in society, as also found in various studies of traditional arts in Indonesia (Rustiyanti, 2014; Kuswarsantyo, 2012). Historically, the Bedana Dance developed as a social dance that is rich in religious values, social ethics, and togetherness of the Lampung community. The simple movement patterns, Islamic musical accompaniment, and the relationship between the dancers reflect the norms and cultural values of the supporting community

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(Koentjaraningrat, 2009; Soedarsono, 1999). Over time, the Bedana Dance has undergone various adjustments in form and performance context. However, if it is not accompanied by the meaning of values, this adaptation has the potential to reduce the meaning of dance culture to merely an entertainment commodity (Barker, 2011). Based on the explanation, this research focuses on the following problems: (1) what character education values are contained in the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance, (2) how the dance functions as a medium for character education, and (3) what is its role in preserving local culture. This research aims to uncover and analyze the character education values in the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance and strengthen its meaning as a medium for character education based on local culture.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the meaning, symbols, and cultural values contained in artistic practices in depth and contextually (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The descriptive-analytical method is used to systematically describe the phenomenon of the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance while analyzing the character education values internalized within it. The theoretical framework of this study is based on character education theory (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005) and an aesthetic experience-based arts education approach (Dewey, 1934). In addition, an anthropological perspective of art is used to understand dance as a cultural practice that lives and develops in its supporting community (Soedarsono, 1999; Kaeppler, 2000).

The research was conducted in the Negeri Olok Gading region of Lampung. Primary data sources were obtained from dance artists, traditional figures, trainers, and cultural practitioners directly involved in the Bedana Dance practice. Secondary data included written documents, cultural archives, photographs, performance videos, and related literature. Data collection techniques were carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, as is commonly used in performing arts research (Hadi, 2007; Ratna, 2010). Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques. The entire writing process of this article refers to the rules of APA 7th edition and the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Character Education Values in the Bedana Dance of Negeri Olok Gading

The results of the study indicate that the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance contains structured and internalized character education values inherently in its performance practices. These values are not present as abstract concepts, but are manifested through dance elements, such as movement, musical accompaniment, costume design, and social etiquette between dancers. This finding confirms that traditional dance cannot be separated from the value system of its supporting community, as stated by Sedyawati (2006) that traditional art is a reflection of social and cultural values that live within a community. Religious values are a dominant feature of the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance. This is reflected in the use of tambourine music and Islamic-tinged poetry, as well as the dancers' postures, which display serenity, politeness, and respect. These religious values are not conveyed verbally, but rather through symbolic gestures and a performance atmosphere that emphasizes manners and ethics. This pattern aligns with Koentjaraningrat's (2009) view that religious values in traditional culture are often expressed symbolically through performing arts.

Beyond religiosity, the value of discipline is evident in the structure of the Bedana Dance. Each dancer is required to consistently follow the movement patterns, tempo, and rhythm. Small errors in movement accuracy or accompaniment can affect the overall harmony of the performance. The repetitive and structured practice process serves as a means of fostering discipline and personal responsibility. Eisner (2002) states that arts education contributes to character development through demands for precision, consistency, and awareness of the process. The value of responsibility is also identified in the division of roles between dancers and musicians. Each individual has interrelated tasks and cannot function independently. Dancers are responsible for their respective roles, while musicians maintain the continuity of the accompaniment. This relationship creates a collective awareness that the success of the performance is the result of collaborative effort. This value reflects the concept of social responsibility, which is an essential part of character education (Lickona, 1991).

The values of togetherness and cooperation are prominent characteristics of the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance. The floor plan and interaction between dancers demand harmony and coordination. No individual dancer stands out; instead, all dancers move in harmonious unity. This demonstrates that togetherness is a key principle in dance

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practice, aligning with Hadi's (2007) view that traditional dance reflects the social structure of its society. Furthermore, the values of politeness and social etiquette are reflected in the controlled and non-aggressive movements of the Bedana Dance. The distance between dancers, facial expressions, and body postures demonstrate respect for local social norms and customs. These values are relevant to the Bedana Dance's original function as a social dance that upholds the ethics of social interaction. Soedarsono (1999) emphasized that traditional Indonesian dance generally functions as a social control through meaningful movement symbols. These findings demonstrate that the character education values in the Bedana Dance of Negeri Olok Gading do not exist in isolation, but rather are interconnected, forming a unified whole. Religious values, discipline, responsibility, togetherness, and courtesy are interwoven into a living system of cultural practices. Thus, the Bedana Dance can be understood as a holistic and contextual medium for character education.

Bedana Dance as a Medium for Character Education

The discussion of the Bedana Dance from Negeri Olok Gading as a medium for character education positions dance not merely as an aesthetic object, but as a naturally occurring process of learning values. Character education in this context occurs through direct experience, not through normative instruction. This approach aligns with the concept of learning by doing proposed by Dewey (1934), where meaningful learning occurs through the individual's active involvement in a practice. In the practice of the Bedana Dance, the process of internalizing values begins during the rehearsal stage. Dancers learn to be punctual, follow the instructor's directions, and respect the roles of others. This situation creates a social learning environment that allows character values to grow organically. Berkowitz and Bier (2005) emphasize that effective character education occurs when values are practiced in real and repeated contexts.

As a non-formal educational medium, the Bedana Dance serves as an alternative learning space outside of formal educational institutions. The process of passing on values occurs through intergenerational interactions, where senior dancers, trainers, and traditional leaders serve as role models. This role model plays a crucial role in character formation, as Lickona (1991) argues, stating that moral knowing must be accompanied by moral modeling. The Bedana Dance also provides an aesthetic experience that strengthens the internalization of values. Aesthetic experiences involve not only visual and auditory aspects, but also emotions and body awareness. Eisner (2002) states that aesthetic experiences in art enable individuals to develop sensitivity, empathy, and self-reflection. In the context of the Bedana Dance, these experiences strengthen the understanding of the values of togetherness, discipline, and responsibility.

Furthermore, the Bedana Dance serves as a contextual learning medium because the values taught are inseparable from the social reality of Lampung society. The values of politeness, social etiquette, and religiosity contained in the dance are relevant to the daily lives of its supporters. This aligns with Tilaar's (2012) view that character education will be effective if rooted in local culture. However, research results also indicate that the function of the Bedana Dance as a medium for character education is not yet fully recognized by all participants. Some young participants view dance more as an artistic or entertainment activity, without understanding the values contained within. This condition indicates the need for reflective efforts and mentoring so that dance practices do not lose their educational meaning. This confirms that the Bedana Dance of Negeri Olok Gading has great potential as a medium for character education that is participatory, contextual, and sustainable. This interpretation expands the function of dance from merely a performing art to a means of culturally based character formation.

The Role of Bedana Dance in Preserving Local Culture

In the context of local cultural preservation, the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance serves as a medium for transmitting the cultural values and identity of the Lampung people. Cultural preservation is not only interpreted as an effort to maintain the art form, but also to safeguard the continuity of its meaning and values. This view aligns with the concept of preserving intangible culture proposed by UNESCO (2003). The Bedana Dance practice allows for the direct transmission of culture from older generations to younger ones. Through practice and performances, the younger generation not only learns dance movements but also understands the norms, ethics, and social values that underpin Lampung culture. This process strengthens cultural identity and fosters a sense of ownership of the local heritage.

The research results show that when the Bedana Dance is interpreted as a medium for character education, the process of cultural preservation becomes more meaningful. Preservation goes beyond symbolic or ceremonial aspects, but also encompasses dimensions of social value and function. This aligns with Sedyawati's (2006) view that cultural sustainability depends on its ability to remain relevant to the lives of its people. However, the main challenge in preserving the Bedana Dance is the influence of globalization and the commodification of art. Dance tends to be packaged

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for entertainment and tourism, potentially shifting its inherent cultural values. Barker (2011) describes this phenomenon as part of a global cultural logic that often diminishes local meaning. This study found that strengthening the educational function of the Bedana Dance could be a strategy to address these challenges. By positioning dance as a medium for character education, cultural preservation depends not only on the frequency of performances but also on the quality of understanding of values by the performers and the community. This approach aligns with Tilaar's (2012) view on the importance of culture-based education in facing the currents of globalization.

Furthermore, preserving the Bedana Dance through character education opens up opportunities for integration with both formal and non-formal education. Dance can be utilized as a learning resource in arts and character education, ensuring its sustainability. This approach expands the Bedana Dance's reach within a broader social context. Thus, the Bedana Dance of Negeri Olok Gading serves not only as a cultural heritage that must be preserved, but also as a strategic tool for building character and cultural identity within the community. Cultural preservation through a character education approach makes the Bedana Dance relevant, functional, and sustainable.

Research Novelty

This discussion confirms that the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance functions as a contextual and experience-based character education medium. Through direct involvement in the training and performance process, dancers experience a natural internalization of values, not through mere verbal instruction. This process aligns with Dewey's (1934) concept of learning by doing, where learning occurs through direct experience and reflection. As a non-formal educational medium, the Bedana Dance provides a social learning space that allows for intergenerational interaction and the continuous transmission of values. Character values are not taught explicitly, but rather practiced and experienced in a real cultural context. Berkowitz and Bier (2005) emphasize that character education will be more effective when values are practiced in authentic situations, as occurs in the practice of the Bedana Dance.

CONCLUSION

The Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance not only functions as a traditional performing art, but also plays an important role as a contextual and meaningful character education medium. Character education values such as religiosity, discipline, responsibility, togetherness, and courtesy are internalized through movement structures, musical accompaniment, and the social context of the Bedana Dance practice. The dance practice and performance process become an aesthetic experience space that allows for natural and continuous value learning. As a non-formal educational medium, the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance contributes to the inheritance of local cultural values and identity to the younger generation. The meaning of dance as a character education medium strengthens efforts to preserve local culture, not only in maintaining the continuity of the art form, but also in maintaining the cultural values inherent in it. Thus, the Bedana Dance has significant relevance in addressing the challenges of cultural preservation amidst social dynamics and globalization. This study emphasizes the importance of integrating traditional arts in local culture-based character education efforts. In the future, the Bedana Negeri Olok Gading Dance has the potential to be developed as a more structured learning medium in the context of formal and non-formal education, so that cultural preservation is not only symbolic, but also functional and sustainable.

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