

Gamelan as a Reflection of the Cultural Identity of the Javanese Community in South Lampung

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ABSTRACT

Gamelan has a strong social and spiritual function, strengthening solidarity and reflecting the traditional values of society. The purpose of this study is to determine the function of gamelan as a cultural identity of the Javanese community in Palas Subdistrict, South Lampung Regency. The research used descriptive qualitative, with data collection using in-depth interviews, observation and documentation techniques. Data were analyzed qualitatively using stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study illustrate that gamelan acts as a social medium that connects generations and strengthens community social bonds. Gamelan also functions as a spiritual symbol in various traditional ceremonies and religious rituals, creating harmony and balance in the cultural identity of its owners. The local community in the Palas area plays a role through art associations by continuing to strive to preserve the gamelan tradition in a sustainable manner. In addition, efforts to preserve and pass on traditional arts and culture can be carried out in various ways, such as integrating gamelan as part of performing arts into the education curriculum through cultural arts lessons and local content, as well as holding festivals or regional cultural events so that gamelan continues to have a stage in accompanying traditional music and other performances.

Keywords: Gamelan, Culture, Identity, Tradition, Preservation

INTRODUCTION

The people of Lampung are a complex reflection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity found in this province. The Lampung community consists of the indigenous Lampung tribe and various immigrant tribes such as Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, Minangkabau and Chinese, who arrived mainly through government transmigration programs since the 1960s. Today, the Javanese dominate the population (62%), followed by the Lampung

(25%) and other ethnic groups (Pahrudin & Hidayat, 2007). The native languages of Lampung consist of the Nyo and Sai dialects, but in everyday life, Indonesian is used as the language of interethnic communication (Ayuhda & Karsiwan, 2020). The majority of the population is Muslim (93.55%), with the remainder belonging to other faiths.

This diversity reflects a rich and varied cultural plurality, forming a strong national identity under the motto 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika', which means 'Unity in Diversity'

(Karsiwan et al., 2021; Koentjaraningrat, 2020). The cultural products of Indonesian society are not only objects, artefacts, and art, but also include kinship systems, local knowledge, values, and social norms such as tolerance, collaboration, and mutual assistance (Keesing, 2018; Pandor et al., 2025). This highly respected local wisdom has become a unifying force for the nation amid increasingly complex and multifaceted diversity (Karsiwan, Sari, & Azzahra, 2022). Although modernization and globalization pose challenges to local cultural identity among the younger generation, cultural preservation efforts are underway through education, intercultural dialogue, and the active role of families and communities (Kamil, 2022; Yunus, 2014).

This cultural diversity also has a broad social impact. Interethnic interaction encourages acculturation and the formation of an inclusive national identity, but at the same time requires efforts to maintain harmony in order to prevent conflict (Pahrudin & Hidayat, 2007). The Indonesian government and various stakeholders emphasize the importance of strengthening national values and integrating them with local culture through the use of technological advancements. Performing arts can be used as a medium for cultural literacy and a means of preventing conflict early on (Karsiwan et al., 2023; Parameswara et al., 2021). The presence of performing arts that employ diverse musical instruments outside their original cultural contexts—such as gamelan performances in Lampung—can contribute to reducing tensions and enabling early detection of potential conflicts.

Many regions in Indonesia have been

successful in developing and possessing their own traditional musical instruments, such as *serune kalee* in Aceh, *saluang* in West Sumatra, *calung* in West Java, *gamelan* in Central Java and Bali, *kolintang* in North Sulawesi, *tifa* in Papua, *gamolan* in Lampung, etc. (Koentjaraningrat, 2015; Sumaryono & Suanda, 2006). These types of musical instruments represent the diversity and local wisdom that differ in each region of Indonesia. Each musical instrument has a unique form, sound, and cultural function that corresponds to the characteristics of the community that owns it.

In its dynamics and development, Javanese culture is highly open and adaptive to various traditions, ideas, and concepts, including religious and spiritual traditions, which contributes to its growing diversity (Supardi et al., 2016). Lampung is known as a multi-ethnic region, where the Javanese community mixes with other ethnic groups such as the Lampung and Balinese. The Javanese community is one of the largest ethnic groups in South Lampung (93.84%), including the Palas District (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). The Javanese community in South Lampung continues to preserve its cultural traditions, such as ritual ceremonies, performing arts, and social customs, which are passed down across generations through artistic and religious practices.

Many studies indicate that Javanese communities employ strategies to safeguard and preserve their cultural identity amidst diversity in multi-ethnic regions such as South Lampung (Muslim, 2013). The Javanese community in Palas Subdistrict generally

exhibits socio-cultural diversity, with several migrant communities from other regions, including Java. The culture of the community has been assimilated and developed in line with the accompanying social developments and dynamics (Karsiwan, Sari, & Tusriyanto, 2022; Minandar, 2018). They are known to be friendly, open, and highly cooperative in community life, which supports their adaptation to local ethnic groups and other migrants in the region (Geertz, 2016).

Gamelan, as a form of traditional Indonesian music, not only presents beautiful sounds, but also serves as a reflection of a rich and diverse cultural identity. Sumaryono, in his book entitled 'Tari Tontonan: Buku Pelajaran Kesenian Nusantara' (Spectator Dance: A Textbook on the Arts of the Archipelago), states that gamelan is an art form that gives a clear identity and spirit to Indonesian society (Sumaryono & Suanda, 2006). In the cultural context of Javanese, Balinese, and other communities, gamelan is an integral symbol that reflects the values, norms, customs, and religious social practices passed down from one generation to the next. Through ensembles comprising instruments such as drums, gongs, and metallophones, gamelan expresses diverse aspects of life, ranging from religious rituals to the celebration of cultural values (Koentjaraningrat, 2018). The connection between gamelan and cultural identity can be seen in the way this music functions as a medium of communication, community strengthening, and self-expression (Keesing, 2018).

Gamelan is not just a performance, but also creates social bonds between the players

and the audience. In many traditions, gamelan performances are often held in the context of traditional ceremonies, which affirms the position of this music as part of the local cultural identity (Setiawan, 2022). Gamelan is an important subject of study because it embodies a significant cultural tradition with high artistic value, requiring sustained attention and preservation through diverse cultural strategies.

The culture of the Javanese community in South Lampung, including in Palas, is still strong and plays an important role in maintaining identity and social solidarity as a form of local wisdom of the local community (Ariyanti, 2017). For example, artistic traditions, traditional ceremonies, and religious rituals are still preserved as a form of cultural preservation (Karsiwan & Sari, 2024; Nottingham, 2017). Traditions such as the Kuda Lumping dance and the Nyadran ceremony are part of the cultural wealth preserved by the Javanese community in the region (Mumuh & Bambang, 2014). Gamelan, an important part of Javanese cultural tradition, is a set of musical instruments inherited from the ancestors of Indonesia, especially the Javanese people. In Javanese society, gamelan is referred to as *karawitan*, which means complex, subtle, and small. Gamelan accompanies various performing arts, creating a unique atmosphere and aesthetic value according to the context and region.

Javanese gamelan serves as a medium for spreading Islam, as a form of cultural acculturation in conveying religious teachings without altering the essence of religion and culture (Alfien et al., 2025; Wibowo et al., 2024)

. Technological developments and globalization often threaten traditional values and local culture, yet gamelan remains relevant as a means to celebrate the uniqueness and richness of culture in every traditional performance and ceremony (Ballengee, 2022). Javanese gamelan in Lampung is known as Talo Balak, which complements traditional ceremonies, demonstrating the strong relationship between this musical instrument and traditional Lampung culture (Barnawi, 2013). By exploring the role of gamelan in Javanese society in Lampung, we can understand how this art contributes to the formation of a community's collective identity and how local cultural values are preserved and remain relevant amid the tide of modernization (Alfien et al., 2025; Ramantika et al., 2014).

Several previous studies, including Iswara's research on the dynamics of gamelan art in the Singhasari Cultural Center, show that gamelan continues to be performed, preserved, and developed as an accompaniment for karawitan and wayang performances, as well as through the jamanan gamelan cleansing tradition (Iswara, 2015). In addition, a study entitled *Javanese Gamelan as Sacred Manifestation: Exploring Its Role in Catholic Liturgical Inculturation and Spiritual Dialogue* by Pandor et al. shows that gamelan has very rich cultural and philosophical values, even though its frequency of use has declined due to the shift towards contemporary music. Gamelan as a musical instrument also has an impact on cultural practices, including cultural inculturation and acculturation, thereby encouraging interdisciplinary research in the

future (Pandor et al., 2025).

Furthermore, a study entitled *Javanese Gamelan Traditional Music as Indonesia's Cultural Wealth* shows that gamelan, as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage, was designated as a world cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2014 (Iswantoro, 2018). Although numerous studies have examined gamelan, research specifically addressing its role as a marker of communal cultural identity remains limited (Hermiasih, 2016; Setiawan, 2022). In addition, as a cultural identity, gamelan continues to be performed even outside its birthplace in Java, namely in Lampung, part of the island of Sumatra.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of gamelan as a form of cultural identity that strengthens social interaction and to analyze the cultural values embedded in this tradition. Furthermore, this research is important to provide new knowledge and understanding about the importance of preserving the tradition of gamelan art in the midst of modernization and globalization, as well as to identify efforts that can be made to maintain the uniqueness and sustainability of this musical tradition in the future.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to reveal the role of gamelan in reflecting and strengthening cultural identity. This approach was chosen because it is relevant in understanding cultural phenomena holistically, where the social, historical, and symbolic aspects of gamelan can be analyzed based on the perceptions and experiences of

the communities directly involved (Maryaeni, 2005; Sugiono, 2022). Descriptive qualitative research also allows researchers to interpret collected data while taking into account local nuances within complex socio-cultural contexts.

One of the advantages of the descriptive qualitative approach is its ability to describe social reality in depth, taking into account the cultural context and values that influence people's behavior (A. F. Nasution, 2023). This method allows researchers to understand the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities that cannot be measured or revealed through quantitative data.

The data collection techniques in this study consisted of participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and a literature review (A. F. Nasution, 2023; Sibarani, 2018). Participatory observation was carried out by going directly into the community to observe how gamelan is played and used in various social activities, such as traditional ceremonies and community meetings.

The observation activities were conducted from October 2024 to March 2025 in Sukabakti Village, Palas District, South Lampung Regency. The researchers sought to capture important aspects of the social interactions that occur around gamelan, such as the dynamics between the players, the audience, and the social community as a whole. In addition, the researchers sought to observe and identify the atmosphere, symbolism and messages accompanying gamelan performances, including the layout of the instruments, the traditional clothing worn, and the body language of the players, which

reflect local cultural values and philosophy.

In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain first-hand information from practitioners who have expertise, knowledge, and extensive experience with gamelan (Sugiono, 2022). The three main informants in this study were Wito (65 years old), Darsono (56 years old), and Sukadi (58 years old), who are known as the most senior gamelan players and preservers of this musical tradition in Suka Bakti Village, Palas Subdistrict, South Lampung Regency.

After the data was collected through observation and interviews, the next step was to analyze the data descriptively (Miles et al., 2014). The data were analyzed using an interactive analysis technique consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis focused on identifying key elements within gamelan compositions. The analysis was carried out by organizing the data into main themes that emerged from interactions and interviews with informants. These themes included the social role of gamelan in strengthening community identity, the symbolism of gamelan instruments, and the process of adapting gamelan traditions amid the influence of modern culture. To ensure validity, the study employed data triangulation, enabling information from various sources to be compared, contrasted, and analyzed critically and in depth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Origins of Gamelan Musical Instruments

Gamelan comes from the Javanese word 'gamel,' which means to strike or beat, with the suffix '-an' referring to a noun, so gamelan means a set of musical instruments played by striking them. This musical instrument has been known in Java since the 5th century AD, as evidenced by depictions of gamelan on the reliefs of Borobudur and Prambanan temples (Wijaya & Pujihartati, 2018). The community knows gamelan from Javanese mythology, where it was created by Sang Hyang Guru Era Saka, the god who ruled Java (Iswantoro, 2018). The gong was the first musical instrument created as a means of summoning the gods, followed by other instruments until a complete gamelan was formed.

Javanese gamelan flourished during the Majapahit Kingdom and spread to other regions such as Bali and Sunda (Hermiasih, 2016; Kristanto, 2020). Javanese gamelan has a soft tone when compared to gamelan from other regions, such as Bali, which is livelier, and Sundanese gamelan, which has a melodious rhythm. Lampung gamelan (Talo Balak) also has a similar tone and rhythm. Gamelan usually accompanies wayang kulit performances, traditional dances, and other art performances (Becker, 2019). In addition to accompanying performing arts, gamelan is also used in traditional ceremonies and official events at the palace, such as wedding receptions, royal coronations, and banquets for distinguished guests.

An extensive interview with Wito, a gamelan player who has been playing this musical instrument for over thirty years,



Figure 1. Javanese gamelan
(Source: Research Team Documentation, 2024)

provides deep insight into the history of gamelan in the village. He explains how gamelan has been passed down from generation to generation and how this art form has become an important element in the life of the community (Wito, 2025). Several changes have occurred in the practice of gamelan, mainly in the context of modernization and the influence of globalization.

Javanese gamelan is not just a musical instrument, but an integral part of the cultural heritage that expresses the identity and philosophy of life of the Javanese people (Koentjaraningrat, 2018; Nottingham, 2017). Efforts to preserve and develop contemporary gamelan music continue to be made so that these cultural values remain alive and relevant in the future (Sidjabat & Krishnanandayani, 2024).

Gamelan as a Spiritual Symbol

Gamelan is used in religious traditions such as the Sekaten tradition, which serves as a means of preaching and a medium for spiritual learning by the Walisongo (Iswara, 2015; Wibowo et al., 2024). Gamelan is used to bring a spiritual atmosphere and blessings to

religious events and rituals such as weddings and circumcisions. In addition, Javanese gamelan is closely related to aesthetic values that involve spiritual, moral, and social values (Hananto, 2020; Kristanto, 2020). Gamelan music is considered to have spiritual power and not only serves to entertain but also provides a sense of religious meaning (Becker, 2019; Setiawan, 2022). Gamelan is not merely a musical instrument; it also carries social and cultural function as a medium for preserving traditions and even as an aesthetic symbol that represents the beliefs and philosophy of life of the Javanese people wherever they are.

Gamelan as a musical instrument is not just entertainment, but also a medium that binds communities socially and spiritually. Gamelan is considered a cultural symbol that strengthens solidarity, togetherness, and collective identity among local communities (Clendinning, 2023). In a social context, gamelan is often played at various traditional events, such as village ceremonies, harvest celebrations, and religious events that emphasize the importance of harmony between humans, nature, and greater spiritual forces.

Darsono, in his interview, highlights the spiritual and symbolic aspects of gamelan. Each instrument has its own meaning, for example, the large gong symbolizes cosmic balance and the drum functions as a rhythm regulator (Darsono, 2025). This seems to convey a metaphorical message about the importance of moral guidance and balance in life (Intani & Sucipto, 2013; Nengah Duija, 2005). Gamelan is also used in religious rituals as a medium to bring people closer to the Almighty, creating

a sacred atmosphere that strengthens the spiritual bonds of the community (Sucitra & Wijayanto, 2024). Gamelan music in Suka Bakti Village is often regarded as a prayer in the form of melody, which plays a role in maintaining the balance between the universe and human life and the relationship between humans and their creator.

Gamelan as a Social Function

Gamelan serves as a means of building and developing social relationships in Javanese society (Iswara, 2015). Through gamelan performances, relationships between community members are strengthened and cemented through artistic communication, thereby fostering positive social ties. Gamelan functions as a medium for learning and social engagement that strengthens communal interaction. Wito states that gamelan is an intangible cultural heritage that is preserved, passed down and inherited from generation to generation, and serves as a link between generations (Wito, 2025).

Gamelan has a philosophy of life rooted in traditional values and is not just a musical instrument (Wijaya & Pujihartati, 2018). Gamelan music teaches harmony and cooperation, with each instrument playing a complementary role, creating harmony and order as a reflection of social life in the community (Sucitra & Wijayanto, 2024). The harmony in gamelan music is believed to be a reflection of the harmony that should exist in relationships between community members, which are becoming increasingly individualistic today. This is slightly different when compared to Talo Balak Lampung,

whose main function is as a complement to traditional rituals such as the Begawi Mepadun Munggahi Bumei ceremony (Sari & K Karsiwan, 2024). In addition to its main function, Talo Balak also serves as a medium of entertainment, communication, social institution validation, and a bond of solidarity for the Lampung community. In the context of traditional social communication, Talo Balak enables interaction and the transfer of cultural values through performances involving many people, strengthening community bonds and cultural identity.

Besides being music, gamelan has a vital social and spiritual role in Javanese society. Gamelan is integrally linked to ritual and ceremonial events, including royal events, weddings, religious ceremonies, and cultural festivals, strengthening social bonds and community identity. Gamelan ensembles express the values of harmony, balance, tolerance, and spiritual connection rooted in Javanese philosophy (Hananto, 2020).

The following interview with Darsono, who is also a leader of a local gamelan group, focuses on the spiritual and symbolic aspects of gamelan music. He explains how each instrument in gamelan has a specific philosophical meaning, such as the gong, which symbolizes cosmic balance, or the kendang, which is considered the regulator of the rhythm of life (Darsono, 2025). Various rituals involving gamelan, such as village ceremonies or harvest celebrations, use this music as a medium to strengthen the spiritual connection between humans, nature, and the Almighty.

Observations also show that gamelan

creates a space for inclusive social interaction. During performances, the community gathers and shares experiences, creating emotional bonds that strengthen solidarity. Gamelan music is not only played by experts, but also involves the general public, which shows how closely this art is related to their daily lives (Hermiasih, 2016). This interaction shows how gamelan facilitates intergenerational communication and strengthens a sense of belonging (Alfien et al., 2025). In addition, gamelan is also a medium for learning and preserving local culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. Gamelan is found in communities and is used as liturgical music to teach cultural values while maintaining Javanese identity in a religious context.

Gamelan as the Cultural Identity of the Javanese People

Gamelan, a traditional musical ensemble from Java, Indonesia, is an integral part of performing arts that is deeply rooted in Javanese culture and serves as a powerful symbol of community identity (Hananto, 2020). Gamelan is not merely a musical instrument, but a complex cultural artefact that reflects the social, spiritual, and aesthetic values of Javanese society.

Gamelan represents various aesthetic symbols that describe the core elements of Javanese culture, such as beliefs, language, philosophy, livelihoods, and social relations. Each gamelan set contains intrinsic and extrinsic symbols that are expressed through the tuning system (*laras*), melody (*gending*), playing technique, and rhythm (Iswantoro,

2018). These elements together convey messages and values that describe the way of life, heritage, and worldview of Javanese society in an artistic form even though they are outside their place of origin.

Gamelan is recognized as an authentic art form that predates Hindu-Buddhist influences in Indonesia and has been officially recognized by UNESCO as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage (Pandor et al., 2025). Its historical significance as an ancient Javanese discovery linked to mythological origins adds to its identity value, making gamelan a cultural treasure not only for the Javanese ethnic group but also for Indonesia as a nation (Hananto, 2020; Wibowo et al., 2024).

In summary, gamelan is a multifaceted marker of cultural identity for the Javanese people, combining artistic beauty, spirituality, social cohesion, and historical continuity (Becker, 2019; Jones et al., 2016). It stands as a living heritage that represents the worldview and unique values of the Javanese people. In its development in Sumatra, particularly in the Lampung region, gamelan evolved as Talo Bala, serving as an identity for the Lampung community that complements its cultural heritage and identity.

Efforts to Preserve Gamelan Music as the Cultural Identity of the Javanese People

Many places in the archipelago have seen gamelan change from entertainment to religious accompaniment, signifying socio-cultural dynamics and creativity in adapting local culture to remain relevant with the times (Clendinning, 2023; Wibowo et al., 2024). On the other hand, Sukadi shared his perspective on

the challenges faced by the gamelan tradition amid globalization and modernization.

The younger generation tends to be more interested in more modern music genres, so greater efforts are needed to attract their interest in gamelan (Iswara, 2015; Wibowo et al., 2024). Nevertheless, there is great potential in the process of adaptation and preservation of this traditional art, such as through efforts to combine contemporary musical elements with gamelan without changing its traditional essence. This innovation aims to keep gamelan relevant and appealing to young people, while striving to preserve the cultural values contained within it (Clendinning, 2023; Suciati & Salim, 2025).

Gamelan was initially only used in various religious ceremonies and palace activities, and developed into a performing art outside the palace (Kristanto, 2020). In ancient manuscripts and historical relics, it is recorded that gamelan played an important role in the spiritual and social life of the community, reflecting the strong connection between art and religious rituals (Hananto, 2020).

Furthermore, an interview with Sukadi, who has long been a gamelan teacher for the younger generation in Suka Bakti Village, provides a perspective on the challenges and hopes for the future of gamelan (Sukadi, 2025). Although many young people are increasingly drawn to modern music, local art associations in the Palas region continue to make sustained efforts to preserve the gamelan tradition. The aspects of adaptation and innovation need to be emphasized as important in preserving gamelan, such as blending and combining elements of contemporary music without



Figure 2. Involvement of the younger generation in playing gamelan
(Source: Research Team Documentation, 2024)

sacrificing the cultural essence that is deeply rooted in this art form (Pandor et al., 2025; Wibowo et al., 2024).

As a performing art, gamelan is not only considered a musical instrument, but also a sacred medium used to communicate with ancestral spirits or gods. The sound of gamelan is said to have magical powers that can create harmony and ward off negative energy. Over time, along with the spread of Islam in the archipelago, the use of gamelan expanded to the broader community and was no longer limited to royal court contexts (Erni, 2022; Fernanda & Samsuri, 2020). This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation, with each region in the archipelago having its own distinctive gamelan style and composition, reflecting the uniqueness of the local culture and customs.

The development of gamelan continued into the colonial period, with this art form being preserved as a cultural identity despite various social and political changes (Alinda et al., 2025). Dutch colonialism, which sought to influence various aspects of Indonesian society, was unable to eliminate the tradition

of gamelan in performing arts (Hart, 2018; Lestari et al., 2024). On the contrary, gamelan continued to develop and even began to attract the attention of researchers and ethnomusicologists from abroad (Saptono et al., 2019). Today, gamelan is in high demand and is studied by Westerners who are interested in the uniqueness of the music and the philosophy behind it. Ultimately, this has introduced gamelan to the world stage.

In the modern era, gamelan faces greater challenges, especially in the era of globalization and the strong influence of Western culture (Ballengee, 2022; R. D. Nasution, 2017). The younger generation has become more interested in popular music, causing a shift in interest from traditional arts to more modern forms of entertainment (Anggrani & Karsiwan, 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2025). Nevertheless, communities and traditional artists in various regions, including Suka Bakti Village, continue to preserve and promote gamelan despite these challenges.

In addition, efforts to preserve and transmit traditional arts and culture can be undertaken in various ways. These include integrating gamelan into the performing arts curriculum through cultural arts and local content subjects, as well as organizing festivals or regional cultural events to ensure that gamelan continues to have a platform in traditional performances. In modern times, gamelan is not only performed in traditional events, but also as a medium for education, social identity, and a means of cultural preservation (Iswara, 2015; Sidjabat & Krishnanandayani, 2024). The practice of playing gamelan among the younger

generation and the wider community can be encouraged for the development and appreciation of traditional music and to strengthen the local cultural values of the Javanese community in Lampung.

The development of gamelan as a cultural identity of the Javanese community to date shows its adaptation and evolution. On the one hand, the essence and traditional values of gamelan are well preserved, as demonstrated in traditional ceremonies and religious celebrations (Wijaya & Pujihartati, 2018). On the other hand, gamelan also faces challenges amid the tide of modernization and globalization that has begun to enter the realm of contemporary music. This has encouraged adaptation and collaboration between gamelan and modern musical genres, such as jazz and electronic music, creating new nuances that still maintain the uniqueness of traditional music (Pandor et al., 2025). This adaptation signifies that gamelan is not a static art form, but rather a dynamic one, capable of adapting without losing its cultural roots.

Although modern shifts challenge the popularity of gamelan, efforts to integrate it into contemporary cultural, educational, and religious contexts demonstrate its continued relevance in fostering cultural identity and spiritual expression. Gamelan serves as a medium for cultural inheritance, preservation, and adaptation in an increasingly dynamic society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it is evident that gamelan is not merely a

traditional musical heritage, but has become a symbol of cultural identity that accompanies the development of Javanese society outside its place of origin. Gamelan functions as a social glue that strengthens solidarity and harmony within Javanese communities living outside Java. This musical instrument plays an important role in various aspects of life, from traditional ceremonies to religious rituals, reflecting the philosophy and values passed down from generation to generation. As a cultural heritage instrument, gamelan serves as a medium of intergenerational communication in Javanese society, connecting people spiritually, socially, and culturally.

The local community in the Palas region plays a role through art associations by continuing to strive to preserve the gamelan tradition in a sustainable manner. In addition, efforts to preserve and transmit traditional arts and culture can be implemented in several ways. These include integrating gamelan into the performing arts curriculum through cultural arts and local content courses, as well as organizing festivals or regional cultural events. Such initiatives ensure that gamelan continues to have a platform to accompany traditional music and other forms of performance.

Gamelan plays a vital role in shaping and maintaining the cultural identity of a community. Efforts to preserve gamelan are increasingly important in safeguarding cultural heritage, but also in strengthening social bonds and maintaining harmony within society. Therefore, continuous attention and support from various parties is needed so that the gamelan tradition remains sustainable

and can be passed on to future generations. It is important to maintain a balance between cultural preservation and adaptation to the times, ensuring that gamelan remains a living part of Indonesia's cultural identity in the future through its younger generation.

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