

# ARTS AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

This study discusses the art is part of life of the community, as well as customs that tradition in society, which then has various functions, including as a medium of education. The objective of the research is to socialize back to the teachers of art, that traditional art can basically be used as the basis of character education through treatment such as, motivating children, developing pride, practicing expression, creativity, socializing, and practicing responsibility. The research procedure used qualitative method. Implications to be gained, among others, from the event of art can be seen when students learn dancing, learn to play music, learn to make batik, and various other traditional arts, children can feel the importance of patience, perseverance, serenity, what was done successfully became a work of art of performing or fine arts. Art is not just to present a 'beautiful spectacle' and fun, but art should also be a guide. In this case the role of art educator as a missionary is very important.

Keywords: Traditional Art, Character Development, Art Educator.

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas mengenai seni merupakan bagian kehidupan dari masyarakat, serta kebiasaan yang mentradisi di masyarakat, yang kemudian mempunyai berbagai fungsi, di antaranya sebagai media pendidikan. Tujuan Penelitian adalah, untuk mensosialisasikan kembali kepada para guru-guru seni, bahwa seni tradisional pada dasarnya dapat dijadikan sebagai dasar pendidikan karakter melalui perlakuan seperti, memotivasi anak, menumbuhkan rasa bangga, melatih berekspresi, berkeaktifitas, bersosialisasi, serta melatih bertanggung jawab. Prosedur penelitian menggunakan metoda kualitatif. Implikasi yang akan diperoleh, antara lain, dari peristiwa berkesenian dapat dilihat ketika anak didik melakukan proses belajar menari, belajar bermain musik, belajar membatik, dan berbagai macam seni tradisional lainnya, anak-anak dapat merasakan pentingnya arti kesabaran, ketekunan, kebersamaan, ketelitian hingga apa yang dilakukan berhasil menjadi karya seni pertunjukan atau seni rupa. Seni tidaklah hanya sekedar untuk menyajikan suatu 'tontonan yang indah' dan menyenangkan, melainkan seni juga harus menjadi tuntunan. Dalam hal ini peran pendidik seni sebagai penyampai misi sangatlah penting.

Kata Kunci: Seni Tradisional, Pengembangan Karakter, Pendidik Seni.

## INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, especially in Java, Bali, Padang, Palembang, Kutai, Riau, to Irian, and other regions in the archipelago, art can not be separated from everyday life. Art is exist in almost all aspects of human life. It begins from a pregnancy, birth, adolescence, adulthood, marriage, birthday celebration, welcoming a great guest, healing ritual events, rice harvesting, calling for rain, and also in education. Art has been a living part of the community which is known as the traditional art.

Traditional art, is part of the 'totality of life', which characterizes humans as special beings. It is an area of activity endlessly explores human values. In the development of history in Indonesia, particularly in Cirebon, Central Java, and West Java, traditional arts contribute a lot to society, mainly in developing the human character, attitude and language.

Traditional art has been a meritorious media or a tool in unifying humanity; proselytize Islam, as a method to apply the tenet of Islam. Islam was introduced by non-violent guardians. Islam entered the land of Java peacefully. In accordance with the basic meaning of Islam from the word *aslama*, which contains the meaning of peace, it turns out that the old banners of Islam were able to spread Islam in peace. The spread of Islam in Java, especially Indonesia runs smoothly and does not lead to confrontation with previous faiths.

The main reason behind the peaceful Islamic proselytism is because of the expertise of the preachers in choosing the media of encouragement (*da'wah*), such as socio-cultural, economic and political. Sunan Gunung Jati (Cirebon, West Java) for instance, he is able to attract the sympathy of the people of Cirebon and surrounding areas with the Mask Show. By applying philosophical approach implied in symbols of motion and the use of the mask with 5 colours and facial expression, he is able to describe the personification of human characters, with *sareat*, *tarekat*, *hakekat*, *marifat*, and the center of human desire "*mulhimah*" which is described in the figure *Klana*, *Tumenggung*, *Rumiang*, *Pamindo* and *Panji*. *Panji* Dance is a masterpiece of a series of five Mask Cirebon dances which is actually the climax of the show. *Panji* is capability to restraint emotion and lust. If a man could attain the '*Panji*' which is depicted by the rumble of the *gamelan* but still able to moves calmly, then he has reached the level of "*hidayah*" or perfect. Similarly, Sunan Kalijaga in Central & East Java introduced various human characters in form of puppets show acknowledged as *Wayang Kulit*. *Wayang Kulit* is a performance art that has been existed for more than half a millennium. Its emergence has its own story, related to the entry of Javanese Islam. One of the Wali Songo-Sunan Kalijaga members created it by adopting the *Wayang Beber* that is popular during the heyday of Hindu-Buddhism. *Wayang Kulit* was adopted it because it has been very well known to the Javanese so it was considered as the right media for Islam publicity. While Islam forbids the form of fine arts, it was created *Wayang Kulit* where people can only see the shadow. The puppeteer (Sunan Kalijaga) can enliven the various plays of human life which was a very wise *da'wah*.

In Kraton Yogyakarta (Yogyakarta Palace), *Bedaya* Dance choreographed by Hamengku Buwana I and performed by 9 female dancers is a perfect human symbol

(categorized as a perfect human for those who can cover the nine human hole). The *Serimpi* danced by 4 female dancers (war dance) represents the mighty 4 female dancers in defending *angkara murka*. Four dancers symbolises the four cardinal directions (north, south, east and west): so that people are always vigilant and look in various directions, and able to control the 4 properties of *amarah, laumah, muatmainah, sofiah* (Endang Caturwati: 2011, 183 ).

Furthermore, other areas including Aceh, Minang, Riau, West Java, Central Java, and East Java have its own performing arts. Notable examples including *Hadro, Saman, Solawat, and Genjringan*, use media of vocal and dance movement, and accompanied by musical instruments tambourines whose contents are a compliment to the Prophets, the message of virtue, and praise of Allah SWT, a method to believe in the teachings of Islam better. Art becomes an extension of norm and symbolic value expected by society. Art often also describes the values of nature that can be a good teacher, as the saying of "*Minang Alam bakeh tampek batanyo*", meaning nature is a great teacher. The values Art is loaded with the values of local wisdom that can be applied to the education that prevails throughout the ages.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research sets out to re-socialize art to art-teachers that traditional art can basically be a educational media of character development by providing guidance as the basis for fostering the confidence of students through such treatment: motivating the children to dare dancing, playing music, drawing batik, foster pride, responsibility, creativity, freedom of expression and human interaction.

The research procedure in capturing data and disseminating to art educators used qualitative method, which highlighted the sections and occurrences in the real world of schools and communities on an ongoing basis.

Ongoing basis means to promote art in the following ways:

1. Provide workshop to art-teachers.
2. Art-teachers trained the workshop result to their students.
3. The result of this training of students was being presented in events of art-contest or competition.
4. The winners of the competition has been presented in various art performance events.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Art education in the past was delivered naturally, taught personally at home, community (art groups), and at school, both as compulsory and extra course. Art education as aesthetic needs has an essential and unique function, so that these subjects cannot be replaced with other subjects. Based on various studies and research, both philosophically, psychologically and sociologically it is found that art education has unique role or strategic value in education according to the changes and dynamics in society.

Education is human endeavor to improve their personality by fostering their personal potential, both spiritual (think, intention, taste, creature and conscience), and physical (senses and skill). It is found in Dance, Music Art, Batik Art, and other type of art.

It contains symbolic values and local wisdom. For example in the local wisdom of Sundanese, such as *cageur*, *bageur*, *bener* and *pinter*, (healthy, kind, virtuous and smart) which of course becomes an extension of norms and values expected by society. The symbolic value of art confines local wisdom applicable to the education that prevails throughout the ages.

### 1. Traditional Music Foster Discipline and Cooperation

In West Java, various popular songs contain educational value like in the song of *Kliningan*, *Degung*, *Tembang*, *Pupuh*, *Kawih*, for example as follows:

*Kliningan: Kulu-kulu*

*Tong ka leuweung loba sireum  
mending ngala bubuahan  
Entong keueung entong ludeng  
Mun ngabela beubeuneuran*

*(Don't go to the wood or you'll find lot of ants  
It's better to grab some fruits  
Don't be afraid don't be scared  
If you defend the truth)*

Similarly in Central Java, in addition to the song of *Klenengan*, *Macapat* songs, and other types of songs, the most appropriate song for children is in the song of *Dolanan* as follows:

*Mentog mentog tak kandani  
Mung Solahmu angisin ngisini  
Ojo tansah demprok ono kandang bae  
Enak-enak ngorok ora nyambut gawe  
Mentog mentog mung sulahmu  
Megal megol gawe ngguyu*

(The lyric of the song depicts that we should not be lazy and sleep all day because it might make our body get fat like a goose)

### 2. The Art of Dance: Exercising Motoric Skill and Improving Sensibility

In the past, the dance that was being developed in Indonesia particularly dances taught in the royal palace, districts, schools, categorized as classical style in which contains rules and symbolic values to be abided by the students whilst they learn. Gesture, pose, sequence of movements are containing symbolic values and meaning to realize well and properly.

Empirically, the art of dance is good enough as a media of learning that provides benefits in developing students mentally either in person, social, culture and creativity. It may give joy and happiness to the dancer. The movements made by the body intellectually, emotionally and physically is an ideal means to build self awareness and

improvement to be an independence, self-confidence, outgoing and tolerance person. So it is reasonable for parents in Central Java to require their daughter to learn dancing because it has lot of good values in it. It teaches the gestures of ethic, embrace, sitting down in worship as a sign of gratitude and worship so the dance could be performed gracefully and also as a respect gesture to the audience at the beginning and an end of a show.

In West Java at the earlier stage, boys were being taught otherwise. They were being taught to be masculine, tough and strong both mentally and physically through the artistic movement of '*Penca Silat*' or '*Maempo*' together while discovering Qur'an and singing ('*Ngawih*' or '*Tembang*'). It's beneficial to help them to discover themselves and their own feeling (*ngaji rasa* and *ngaji diri*). In the region of Minang, boys even have to stay in '*Surau*' to learn Qur'an and *Pencak Silat*. In region of Java, aside from *Pencak Silat* boys also exercise playing *Gamelan* ensemble and play puppeteer.

The art of dance is a complete learning process, a process to put the art into the boundary of culture. Students will get the feeling during comprehensive learning of dancing. The dance movement, the accompanying gamelan music, the set of costume, and other properties enliven the performance. When someone learning or doing dancing performance, he/she is actually learning a lot of symbolic values. Because student is not only synchronizing the body movement with the music, but also with the rehearsal schedule, compliance to the rules, and teamwork.

### **3. Art as an Educational Media of Character Development**

Many performing arts in Indonesia, in fact was growing as communicative and interactive form of a society expression, especially in folk art like the traditional dramatic art. Almost in various regions of Indonesia have their own traditional dramatic art performances such as puppet show, and drama performed by humans, like *Sandiwara*, *Longser*, *Wayang Golek* in West Java; *Ketoprak*, *Wayang Wong*, *Wayang Kulit* in Central Java, *Ludruk* in East Java. *Makyong* in Minang and Riau as well as the art of speech, like *Pantun* in Malay society; *Beluk*, *Calung*, *Reog*.

In the Arts educational curriculum, it is mentioned that art subjects is utilitarian for the personality development of students to have good balance in the logical thinking, aesthetic, artistic, and ethical sense to achieve human intelligence, ie EQ, IQ, and SQ (Ari Ginanjar, 2001: 13). Art education is also beneficial in fostering creativity, sensitivity, and artistic ability through a learning approach with art, through art and about art. Art education aims to foster an attitude of tolerance, democracy, adaptation, and being able to live in harmony in a diverse society, developing intellectual and imaginative abilities through art, developing sensitivity of taste, skill, and the ability to apply technology in artistic creation, exhibiting and performing.

Art as an educational media could be seen when a student learn *Sendra Tari* (*Opera Dance*). The learning process contains educational values like being patience, determined and highly committed to perform a tedious, graceful yet attractive dance, vocal, musical instrument with musical accompaniment customized to the context or role of the players.

By imitating other characters who are not in accordance with the student's personality, or waiting for others to play the instrument or body movement correctly, it may exercise patience. It will make student unnoticeably to understand other people, to know what is bad and what is good, is a positive character education. In the Sundanese language is called '*surti*'. Character education is made up of three interrelated parts of moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral behavior (Thomas Lickona, 2013: 72).

### **The Recent Development of Art**

The current problem nowadays is a many parents only see the art as just a matter of aesthetic and prestige. They prefer their children to learn Western art, such as piano, Ballet dance, compared to traditional Indonesian arts. It's not bad at all, but it would be better as an addition to their own art. They do not see the 'art' holistically in relation to the community system. In fact, by doing or appreciating local arts, their own art, will imply social values as well as education.

Many parents interfere to the technical problem, which ultimately does not educate. For example, in a dramatic dance performances, not all of the students get a glamorously dressed role. But the parents of students insist their children should wear glamorous clothing, despite it's a role of a deprived poor girl, and so forth. Therefore, the role of art educators becomes very important to make various strategies in applying the traditional art material so that it can arouse the interest of the students to enjoy traditional art in appropriate ways.

### **CONCLUSION**

The implications obtained from observations and sustainable art activities could be seen when students do the process of learning; learn to dance, learn to play gamelan, learn to draw batik, and various other traditional arts. Through the process of art, students could feel the importance of being patience, perseverance, serenity and thoroughness until it becomes a work of art or artistic performances.

The students who attended the art training and participated in the art competition that the writers held felt much more confidence for the next event and competitions. They have also got a first prize both in the regional and national level. For instance: SMPN 20 Bandung got the First Winner at National Level in Dance Group category (result of Workshop); Cantika Dance Studio won first place in West Java; Regina, a junior high school students won a champion of National Batik Design; Akbar, a junior high school students won the champion for National vocal art competition.

For 'Further Research', there is still a lot of Art material that is able to develop as a media for developing character, such as Angklung musical learning process, Dramatic Arts, *Gamelan* Art and traditional music in various regions in Indonesia including Painting, Carving Art, Sculpture, Art Weaving, and many other traditional arts.

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