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## EMPOWERING KARANGTARUNA OF NGASEMLEMAHBANG VILLAGE THROUGH GAMELAN TRAINING TO PRESERVE LOCAL CULTURE

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### Article History:

Receive: July 16<sup>th</sup> 2024

Revised: July 29<sup>th</sup> 2024

Accepted: August 1<sup>th</sup> 2024

**Keywords:** Training, Gamelan, Ngasemlemahbang

**Abstract:** Music is believed to have the power to represent the culture of a person or group at a certain time. He is considered to have a basic understanding of ideas, determining methods and actions in every note produced. The color of sound, range of notes and musical production in each region have many differences. Because in essence, music is a work of art which contains aesthetic symbols from every culture in different societies. Gamelan is a musical instrument that represents or depicts the culture of Javanese society. Some Javanese gamelan in the Surakarta, Yogyakarta and Cirebon palaces include Kyai Guntur Madu, Kyai Guntur Sari, Kyai Naga Wilaga and Gong Sekati. This orchestra has a pentatonic scale in the slendro scale system and pelog scale system. Each gamelan has an honorary name befitting a sacred heirloom. slendro on the gamelan used as the research sample. Meanwhile, the independent variables are the frequency and color of the sound for each area.

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### Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity. The culture of the Indonesian people is spread from Sabang to Merauke. The cultural diversity of each region is the pride of the Indonesian nation and its existence needs to be maintained. Culture itself is created through a difficult process, namely it is created from seven cultural elements such as living equipment and supplies, livelihoods, social systems, language, livelihood systems, religious systems and arts (Soekanto, 2017, p. 152).

One of the seven elements of culture that is popular with society is art. Basically, art cannot be separated from society. Art is the result of the mind and expression of the human spirit which has aesthetic value and beauty so that it can be enjoyed by the five senses. With art, it can be used as a life value in society. These values need to be preserved as a form of concern for art. When talking about art, it certainly cannot be separated from traditional art. Traditional art is everything that is passed down from ancestors from generation to generation. This means that traditional art is a legacy that comes from previous generations and is passed on to subsequent generations. It can be said that traditional art was born and developed without having a creator but the community itself.

One of the many traditional arts owned by the Indonesian people is Javanese Gamelan art. Javanese gamelan itself is thought to have existed in Indonesia since 404 AD. Clear evidence that gamelan has existed since before Hinduism came is the depiction of gamelan on the reliefs of Borobudur Temple and Prambanan Temple. Usually Gamelan is played at certain events such as religious ceremonies, wayang performances, and other sacred events. Gamelan is played accompanied by traditional songs or Javanese songs (Wisdiantoro, 2014). Gamelan can actually be played alone in *uyon-uyon* (Karapawitan) however, the function of gamelan has unique characteristics in relation to dance and drama which unite to become a characteristic of Javanese art (Yudhoyono, 1984: 15). This gamelan has a deep and important meaning for Javanese musical life (Yudhoyono, 1984).

In the current era of globalization, the existence of traditional arts is increasingly being eroded. Currently, many young people are more interested in foreign arts such as western or Korean pop and so on. The current young generation is more skilled and understands foreign arts more than the arts of their own people, especially Javanese Gamelan arts. Culture and art from outside dominate, making traditional arts, especially Javanese Gamelan, increasingly faded. The current younger generation is not interested or interested in Javanese Gamelan because it is considered an ancient cultural art and does not keep up with the times, coupled with the increasingly rare public interest in playing traditional musical arts such as Javanese Gamelan.

The young generation of Indonesia has great potential, which is expected to be able to preserve and develop Indonesian culture which is part of the national identity of the Indonesian nation. Based on data obtained through the official website of the Ministry of Education and Culture, gamelan as an Indonesian art, on December 15 2021 was recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage (Ministry & Culture, 2021). This is an achievement and reminder for the Indonesian people to continue to move simultaneously to preserve gamelan.

In the current conditions of the high flow of modern music, the Gamelan Community of Ngasemtengahbang Ngimbang Village continues to maintain the quality in playing Javanese Gamelan so that people, especially the younger generation, are interested in joining the community to help preserve Javanese Gamelan. The high interest

of the younger generation in preserving Javanese Gamelan in the Gamelan Community of Ngasemtengahbang Ngimbang Village as a forum that can channel the interest of the younger generation in preserving Javanese gamelan. With the enthusiasm of the members of the Gamelan Community of Ngasemtengahbang Ngimbang Village who want Javanese gamelan to still exist and not fade in this modern era.

## Method

This musical game training program was carried out in Ngasemtengahbang Village, Ngimbang District, Lamongan Regency. This program was carried out over a period of 25 days, at the Ngasemtengahbang Karawitan Studio. This training program is intended for teenagers in Ngasemtengahbang Village. The training is specifically for teenagers as an effort to empower the young generation of Ngasemtengahbang Village in preserving Javanese arts and developing skills in playing the gamelan so that it can be used for village activities. The participants were guided directly by musical practitioners and students who carried out community service in Ngasemtengahbang Village. The material taught is general knowledge of musical instruments, songs at an easy and medium level, namely fluency.

The method used is a service method with a Community Development and Participatory approach. The Community Development approach is oriented towards efforts to develop empowerment by making the community both the subject and the object of development and involving them directly in various activities. The participatory approach is oriented towards efforts to increase direct community participation in various processes and implementation of service. The stages used in this research are (1) Problem Identification, (2) Goal Determination, (3) Activity Socialization, (4) Activity Implementation, and (5) Evaluation of Activity Results.

## Result

Gamelan training is located in Ngasem hamlet, Ngasemtengahbang village, Ngimbang sub-district, Lamongan district. East Java. The beginning of empowering the Nyadran Community was in 2008/2009 by Mr. Pitoyo, with a budget of 60 million. Gamelang Padang Mbulan (made of iron and brass) Laras Slendro. However, as time went by, it became more developed with the addition of various kinds of traditional musical instruments, namely gong, drum, kenong, demung, saron, bonang, gender and xylophone.

The activities carried out in Ngasemtengahbang Village were guided directly by Mr. Pitoyo as a gamelan trainer. Practices were carried out at the Ngasemtengahbang village hall. Practices are held every Sunday night. Trainees from various groups are free to take part in Gamelan Practice. From our observations, the average number of people attending the training are people aged 20 years and above and all of them are men. There are also women who sing or are called sinden.

For routine activities, Saturday night practice is only for gamelan practice. Of all the gamelan in the village hall, 20 are used. Every night of the week it is only for gamelan practice where all the participants are men. With sinden, training is usually held at night from 8 pm to 1 am. Every practice there is a practice break for rest. Usually at 10pm for drinking tea and chatting until half past 11pm. Then continued training again until 1 in the morning. Ubarampe or gamelan equipment in Ngasemtengahbang is as follows:

## 1. Kendhang

Made from animal skin (cow or goat), the kendhang's main function is to regulate the rhythm. This drum is played by hand, without tools. The small type of drum is called ketipung, the medium one is called ciblon/kebar drum. There is another pair of ketipung called kendang gedhe, usually called kendang kalih. It can also be played quickly at the opening of a song of the smooth type, ladrang with a responsible rhythm. To play kendhang, you need someone who is very knowledgeable about Javanese culture, and it is played with the player's instincts, of course with the existing rules.

## 2. Bonang

Bonang is divided into two types, namely bonang barung and bonang panerus. The difference is only in big and small, and also in how to play the ramanya. Bonang barung is large. In the bonang type of piece, the bonang barung plays the opening piece and guides the flow of the piece. In the imbal-imbal percussion technique, the bonang barung does not function as a guiding song, it forms intertwining song patterns with the bonang panerus, and in important accents the bonang can make sekaran (ornamental songs), usually at the end of the song sentence.

## 3. Kenong

Kenong is a set of gong-like instruments in a horizontal position, mounted on strings tensioned on a wooden frame. In defining the structure of a piece, the kenong is the second most important instrument after the gong. Kenong divides gongan into two or four kenong sentences.

## 4. Gender

The gender consists of metal blades tensioned by ropes over resonator tubes. This gender is played with a round drum (encircled by a layer of cloth) with a short stem.

## 5. Xylophone

The instrument is made from wooden slats framed in a gerobogan which also functions as a resonator. Seventeen to twenty bladed, the xylophone range covers two or more octaves. The xylophone is played with a percussion shaped Socio-Cultural Dynamics, round with a long stem usually made of horns/sungu. Most xylophones

play gembyangan (octave) in the style of song patterns with a steady beat. The xylophone can also play several types of song and rhythm ornamentation, such as playing two notes separated by two bars, or playing two notes separated by six bars.

## 6. Demung

The demung is blade-shaped with six or seven blades (one octave) superimposed on a wooden frame which also functions as a resonator. This instrument is played with a percussion made of wood.

## 7. Gongs

Gong is a waditra instrument made of bronze or brass metal. Gong has a diameter of 69 cm to 105 cm. Gongs are played by hitting them with a special bat that is soft and has a low sound. The gong is usually struck at the end of the song

## 8. Sharon

Saron is included in the Balungan family of musical instruments. In gamelan, there are usually 4 saron, and all of them have pelog and slendro versions. Saron produces a tone one octave higher than demung. In playing saron, the right hand hits the wilahan or sheet of metal with a percussion, then the left hand presses the wilahan that was hit previously to eliminate the hum remaining from hitting the previous note. This technique is called methet.

When playing gamelan, you have to be in tune to create a harmony that is pleasing to the ear, as well as the sinden who sings, you have to match the pitch of the pitch. For this reason, a high level of enthusiasm is needed in playing gamelan music so that sound harmony arises. Cohesion in the group must always be maintained. Where in everyday life when carrying out activities you must always be enthusiastic.



*Figure 1. Training with Karangtaruna*

Apart from that, the cultural value of mutual cooperation is that all members and trainers must always play gamelan music together to create harmony in the sound because if one is not present it will make the sound less harmonious. For this reason, in everyday life, mutual cooperation in everyday life will make the work finished quickly and the more people who participate, the better it will be. Furthermore, the cultural value contained is that the gamelan music is calm and smooth, which reflects the Javanese people whose disposition in life is calm and smooth in speech and behavior.

There is a lot of educational value contained in this gamelan art. This art is a valuable cultural heritage asset that must always be preserved. The aim of gamelan music education in public (non-arts) schools is not intended to produce students into performers/artists who have high virtuosity as musicians and it is not intended to become reviewers, researchers, analysts of gamelan music works, and composers. However, students are more directed to recognize, appreciate, train sensitivity, stimulate creativity, have the ability to enjoy musical aesthetics, and within certain limits are able to experience it.

How to understand various basic knowledge of gamelan music and recognize the musical elements of gamelan music is probably not enough just to do it by reading books. Students need to be invited to recognize a number of musical phenomena by listening to concrete examples, in order to develop musical sensitivity. In this regard, special books about gamelan music knowledge are needed which are able to quickly lead students to understand its contents. Of course, these books must be presented in language that is easy to digest, straightforward, and accompanied by audio/audio visual examples that can help to understand musical issues in gamelan music.

## Conclusion

Javanese gamelan is an Indonesian cultural musical instrument inherited from our ancestors and it is not known exactly when and how it was created. Javanese gamelan is a traditional musical instrument which is now known internationally as an ancestral cultural heritage inherent in the Javanese people. Most Javanese people often use gamelan at every celebration or event they are holding.

The beginning of empowering the Nyadran Community was in 2008/2009 by Mr. Pitoyo, with a budget of 60 million. Gamelang Padang Mbulan (made of iron and brass) Laras Slendro. However, as time went by, it increasingly developed with the addition of various types of traditional musical instruments, namely gong, drum, kenong, demung, saron, bonang, gender and xylophone.

There are regular activities for practicing gamelan, namely on Saturday evenings and there is a thanksgiving event every year with gamelan performances accompanied by dancers and sinden singing. When playing gamelan, you have to be in tune to create a



harmony that is pleasing to the ear, as well as the sinden who sings, you have to match the pitch of the pitch. For this reason, a high level of enthusiasm is needed in playing gamelan music so that sound harmony arises. Cohesion in the group must always be maintained. Where in everyday life when carrying out activities you must always be enthusiastic

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to Universitas Islam Darul `Ulum for carrying out Real Work Lectures in Ngasemtengahbang Village. Thank you also to all parties who have supported KKN activities from start to finish, thank you to the PKK mothers who have also supported the activities, and thank you to all Ngasemtengahbang residents, especially those who have given a warm welcome.

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