

The Preservation of Yogyakarta's Cultural Heritage Through a Training Program in The Appropriate Utilization of Traditional Javanese Attire

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ABSTRACT

Gagrak Yogyakarta is a traditional Javanese attire in the Yogyakarta style that is rich in meaning in each of its components. It is imperative for the younger generation to acquire knowledge of the various components and meanings of traditional culture to ensure its preservation in the face of the increasingly massive cultural shifts that are occurring. The study was carried out in Yogyakarta, and it involved cultural experts. It utilized a qualitative research method with a case study design. Non-formal education is important in preserving culture, especially through training program that pass on local values, skills and traditions. The training program prioritizes skills based on local resources, in this case related to the provisions of the use of regional traditional attire called Gagrak Yogyakarta. The implementation of this training program furnishes the community with a comprehensive learning platform that meticulously examines the semantics and utilization of each component in Gagrak Yogyakarta. This training program was implemented as a component of the broader initiative aimed at safeguarding the cultural heritage of Yogyakarta, with a particular focus on the proper utilization of Yogyakarta's traditional attire.

Keywords: Yogyakarta's cultural heritage; training; traditional attire.

INTRODUCTION

Yogyakarta, a region within the Republic of Indonesia, is widely recognized as a pivotal center for the preservation and promotion of Javanese culture. The region is subject to a stringent regulatory framework that governs all facets of Javanese culture, thereby contributing to the formation of Yogyakarta's distinct cultural identity. This is due to the Sultan's decision to uphold the pure Javanese culture that existed during the Mataram Sultanate. The Giyanti Agreement of 1755 divided the Mataram Kingdom into two parts: Kasultanan Yogyakarta and Kasunanan Surakarta Sultanate (Aprilia et al., 2021). Each part has its own territory and rules. Furthermore, the Jatisari Agreement, which took place in the same year, had a significant impact on the cultural arrangements of the two kingdoms. As Sultan of Yogyakarta, Sultan Hamengku Buwono I chose to maintain many aspects of traditional Mataram culture, such as dress, customs, and traditional arts. In contrast, Sunan Pakubuwono

III, who reigned in Surakarta, was more open to cultural changes and modifications, creating new forms that differed from old traditions.

Non-formal education is an educational domain that meets the community's learning needs through various activities (Ruhayat et al., 2022). One such activity is training. Training program's design is predicated on the needs and issues experienced by the target group (Darmawan et al., 2025). Training program is meticulously designed to enhance the competencies of its participants, encompassing the cultivation of a growth mindset, professional competencies, and the acquisition of essential skills. Training is a short-term learning process with specific objectives (Putri et al., 2024). Training programs tend to be shorter because they focus on material that participants can immediately apply effectively. Training programs play an important role in developing the knowledge and skills necessary for career advancement and professional growth (Esilvita, 2023). Education and training are considered essential for gaining the experience and competence necessary for work and organizations (Nur Isnaini et al., 2021). Consequently, training programs are systematically designed in terms of curriculum, learning, time, and evaluation to achieve previously formulated objectives.

Yogyakarta has a *gagrak*, a traditional Javanese attire which is still worn today. Given the diversity of traditional Javanese attire, Yogyakarta *gagrak* has characteristics that distinguish it from traditional attire in other Javanese regions. These distinctions are shown through the basic color of the *jarik*, the style of the *blangkon*, and the shape of the *keris*. Since Yogyakarta *gagrak* consists of various components, such as *jarik*, cloth, hairdos, and *surjans*, that are rich in meaning, the younger generation needs to understand the sacred meanings contained in each component (Jamali et al., 2013). Additionally, the preservation of cultural traditions is a matter of considerable concern, particularly in regard to the substantial cultural transformation that is currently unfolding. The preservation and sustainability of traditional culture serve as a reflection of the nation's identity, emphasizing the continuity of cultural heritage from generation to generation. Consequently, non-formal educational activities, such as training sessions, are implemented to instruct individuals in the appropriate use and interpretation of traditional attire in accordance with prevailing regulations.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative research method with a case study design. This research was conducted in the Special Region of Yogyakarta as the center of Javanese cultural preservation by involving cultural experts both in the observation and interview stages. The main informant in this study is the Chairman of the Yogyakarta Pranatacara Association who understands the meaning and use of each component in Yogyakarta *Gagrak* attire. The technique of determining informants in this case uses purposive sampling method, where the technique of determining informants is carried out according to research needs, while secondary data is obtained from informants who play a direct role in the implementation of training, namely members of the Yogyakarta Pranatacara Association education and training section.

DISCUSSION

The Preservation of Yogyakarta's Cultural Heritage through a Training Program in The Appropriate Utilization of Traditional Javanese Attire

Culture is a characteristic attached to a group of people so that it is seen as a community identity that cannot be ignored. Culture is an aggregate of the number of patterns of behavior, attitudes and values that are shared and transferred by members of the culture-giving society (Roszi, 2018). Indonesia is known as the land of a thousand and one cultures because of its rich cultural heritage. Every culture has values that need to be interpreted, implemented and passed down to the next generation. Societal changes that go hand in hand with modernization cannot release values, especially moral values from a culture.

Culture is one of the provisions and tools for a person to survive and develop in their environment (Djaya, 2020). A culture will always be passed on to its successors in order to stay alive in society, so what is passed on and learned from the culture is called social heritage. Value is one of the social-heritage where the definition of value is the standard and behavior that can be accepted by society in the process of social interaction. Cultural inheritance (transmission of culture) is the process of transmitting cultural elements from one generation to the next generation of people or society through the process of acculturation (Putri et al., 2024). Culture that has developed in society will continue to be preserved to maintain the legacy of our ancestors.

Gagrak Yogyakarta is one of the Javanese cultural styles that is very distinctive and rich in deep philosophical and aesthetic meanings. As a manifestation of the noble values of the Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace, Gagrak Yogyakarta has become an integrated cultural system, covering manners, fine arts, and the mindset of its people packed in one traditional dress. Gagrak Yogyakarta symbolizes cultural pride and local identity derived from the heritage of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, which made Yogyakarta the center of government and civilization (Hartono & Prasetyo, 2023). Gagrak Yogyakarta is full of philosophical meanings that teach the value of simplicity, manners, and local wisdom typical of the people of Yogyakarta. For example, men wear surjan and women wear kebaya with strict rules to avoid using certain fabric motifs that can only be worn by the palace family. These rules show respect for tradition and social hierarchy. This emphasizes the depth of cultural values and manners that characterize Yogyakarta.

Each component in Gagrak Yogyakarta has a special meaning embedded in its use (Setiadi et al., 2023). Gagrak Yogyakarta worn by men consists of blangkon, surjan, jarik, stagen, timang and slippers, while Gagrak Yogyakarta worn by women consists of kebaya, jarik, sanggul and jewelry. The meanings contained in Gagrak Yogyakarta are (1) *blangkon*, which is a head covering with a protrusion at the back which is a reminder that humans are always humble and uphold religious rules; (2) *surjan* is a long-sleeved top with striped motifs or commonly called *lurik* which means the separator between good and bad things. Surjan has six buttons on the neck as a symbol of the pillars of faith, three hidden buttons on the chest symbolizing three types of human lust that must be controlled and five buttons on the sleeves symbolizing the pillars of islam; (3) *jarik*, a long batik-patterned cloth used as a subordinate to traditional clothing, teaches humans to increase gratitude and avoid envy for the success of others. *Jarik* has a variety of batik motifs that certainly have their own meaning in each motif,

such as the *kawung* motif as a meaning of the occurrence of life, the *katsubo* motif as a symbol of beauty and usefulness, the *parang* motif as a symbol of courage and strength, and so on; (4) *stagen*, a long cloth tied around the stomach as a binding for the jarik which symbolizes a self-control of lust and maintaining self-respect; (5) *timbang*, a decoration on the stagen that means the importance of consideration before acting; (6) *selop*, a simple footwear that means the foundation of life that needs to be held firmly by every human being; (7) *kebaya*, a woman's upper garment that symbolizes the elegance, honor and modesty of Javanese women; (8) *sanggul*, a hairdo with decoration that signifies the status of women and symbolizes neatness, maturity of women; (9) jewelry and accessories in the form of a stacked necklace that symbolizes the journey of life, an endless bracelet that symbolizes eternity, and hair ornaments that are symbols of the Trimurti concept.

The youth generation has difficulty in acquiring knowledge related to the terms of use of Gagrak Yogyakarta and the meaning contained in each of its components. This is a concern for the community in the midst of the government's efforts to preserve the traditional culture of Yogyakarta (Sugiyanto, 2021). One of the effective strategies in maintaining the continuity of this culture is through non-formal education, which is education that takes place outside the formal school system and emphasizes experiential learning, practice, and direct social interaction, especially through training programs specifically designed to study the terms of use of Gagrak Yogyakarta.

Non-formal education has a strategic role in cultural preservation, especially through training programs designed to instill, develop and pass on local values, skills and traditions to communities across generations. Training programs prepare people to gain self-confidence, develop a strong work ethic, and improve problem-solving skills (Redjeki et al., 2024). In addition, training programs can open doors for further career advancement as one can continuously improve their skills. provide a foundation on which people can build and enable them to develop experience and competencies relevant to their profession. Training programs also encourage personal and professional growth, opening the gates for further career advancement (Darmawan et al., 2025).

Interactive and participatory training programs can create a sense of ownership and responsibility in maintaining and preserving cultural heritage (Suryadi et al., 2023). Activities like art performances, craft exhibitions or cultural festivals can increase the love and recognition of local heritage. Non-formal education provides opportunities for communities to acquire new skills that remain connected to tradition, such as developing innovations in handicrafts or managing culturally-based tourism villages. This all contributes to local culture remaining adaptable and competitive in modern society (Mustangin et al., 2021). Training programs in non-formal education have proven to be an efficient way to preserve culture. Through a flexible, participatory and community-based approach, non-formal education can instill good values, hone traditional skills and strengthen people's cultural identity despite the challenges of globalization and technological advancement (Anwika et al., 2021). The training program prioritizes skills that are based on local resources (Sari et al., 2024). This case related to the provisions of the use of regional traditional clothing called Gagrak Yogyakarta. The program seeks to ensure that cultural knowledge and techniques are delivered directly to participants who not only learn the theory, but also apply the skills, so that the meaning in the components of Gagrak Yogyakarta can be continuously lived and developed in people's lives.

The training on the use of Yogyakarta traditional clothing was held offline with participants from all over the Special Region of Yogyakarta. It was held in four meetings consisting of 2 theoretical meetings and 2 practical meetings. The material presented in the first meeting was "Introduction to Gagrak Yogyakarta" which contains the delivery of material about what are the components in Gagrak Yogyakarta and each meaning contained in it. In the second meeting, the participants were also introduced to Surakarta-style Javanese traditional clothing and its rules of use through the material entitled "The Difference between Yogyakarta and Surakarta Style". The participants began to learn the practice of using Gagrak Yogyakarta in the third meeting. Furthermore, in the fourth meeting, an evaluation of the participants' understanding of the material that had been delivered through a written test and practice using all components of the Gagrak Yogyakarta was carried out. In addition to measuring the participants' understanding, the evaluation was also carried out to assess the performance of the tutors and training organizers.

The evaluation results showed that the participants felt helped by the training. The significant changes have been felt by the participants from initially not understanding the special provisions in the use of Gagrak Yogyakarta to understanding and being able to use Gagrak Yogyakarta in accordance with the applicable provisions. This training is a valuable strategy for preserving indigenous culture through lifelong education. The objective of this training is to ensure that participants develop a comprehensive understanding of the utilization of Yogyakarta Gagrak traditional attire. The materials presented in this training encouraged participants to become more independent and to develop confidence in their ability to wear Yogyakarta Gagrak. This is supported by the interactive teaching model used by the tutors so that participants can more easily understand the material presented.

CONCLUSION

The training program on the appropriate use of traditional Javanese clothing is one of the cultural preservation efforts open to the people of Yogyakarta. The purpose of this training is twofold: first, to provide the younger generation with material on the use of Gagrak Yogyakarta; and second, to deepen their understanding of the meaning inherent in traditional clothing. Training with this cultural theme is imperative for organizational responses to the impact of massive cultural shifts. This phenomenon has the potential to offer insights into the cultural fabric of the community and to cultivate a profound appreciation for the nation's cultural heritage.

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