



Dedicated:
Journal of Community Services
(Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat)
<https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/dedicated/>



Mask Dance training's effect on children's confidence

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ABSTRACT

Self-Confidence is an attitude in every individual who feels confident in his ability to act and is not easily influenced by others. People with self-confidence are optimistic, able to make their own decisions, and desire to achieve more. This program aimed to determine how to increase students' self-confidence through Mask Dance training at UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon because self-confidence is a character value that students must have, especially in dancing. Data was collected using class action research, observation, and documentation methods. The students' confidence can be seen when students do not feel embarrassed when dancing in front of a crowd. This program aims to train children's mentality through Mask Dance activities for students in grades three to five. This program describes that students' self-confidence increases through memorizing dance moves and giving encouragement or motivation from the coach.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: 6 Apr 2023

Revised: 17 Jun 2023

Accepted: 27 Jun 2023

Available online: 3 Aug 2023

Publish: 8 Dec 2023

Keyword:

Dance; mentality; self-confidence; students

Open access

Dedicated: Journal of Community Services (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal.

ABSTRAK

Kepercayaan diri (self-confidence) merupakan sikap pada setiap individu yang merasa percaya diri akan kemampuannya dalam melakukan suatu tindakan dan tidak mudah dipengaruhi oleh orang lain. Orang yang memiliki kepercayaan diri optimis, mampu membuat keputusan sendiri, dan keinginan untuk mencapai lebih banyak. Tujuan dari pengabdian ini adalah meningkatkan rasa percaya diri siswa melalui kegiatan menari Tari Topeng di UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon karena kepercayaan diri merupakan nilai karakter yang perlu dimiliki oleh seorang siswa, terutama dalam menampilkan seni tari. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan metode tindakan kelas, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Rasa percaya diri siswa terlihat ketika siswa tidak merasa malu saat menari di depan orang banyak. Kegiatan yang dilakukan adalah melatih mental anak melalui kegiatan ekstrakurikuler Tari Topeng untuk siswa kelas tiga sampai kelas lima. Pengabdian ini memperlihatkan bahwa kepercayaan diri siswa meningkat melalui hafalan gerak tari dan pemberian dorongan atau motivasi dari pelatih.

Kata Kunci: Kepercayaan diri; menari; mentalitas; siswa

How to cite (APA 7)

Apriliyani, D. (2023). Mask Dance training's effect on children's confidence. *Dedicated: Journal of Community Services (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat)*, 1(2), 143-152.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-blind peer review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.



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INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is one of the character values that plays a crucial role in human life and should be instilled from an early age. Self-confidence is the belief in and the ability of an individual to demonstrate their best with all the capabilities they possess to achieve the desired outcomes (Kamaruddin *et al.*, 2022; Mamlu'ah, 2019). Self-confidence needs to be instilled in and possessed by a child. In his article, Mollah (2019) explains several causes of a child's lack of self-confidence, including poor study habits, low motivation, and inadequate teacher-student relationships, among others. Self-confidence can be instilled in a child through education in schools by teachers. However, not all schools or teachers are able to cultivate this particular character value in their students.

Education plays a crucial role in instilling self-confidence in children. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System states that education is a conscious effort to prepare learners through guidance, teaching, and/or training activities for their future roles. Setiaji (2022) states that "Education is a structured activity in which educators and learners participate with the aim of developing good character." Schools can carry out various activities to support students' self-confidence. However, not all of these activities are capable of effectively fostering students' self-confidence. One suitable activity to support students' self-confidence is art education. Art education is an educational approach that utilizes art as a medium to equip learners in creating and appreciating works of art. Art education in schools is divided into several branches, namely visual arts, music, and dance. In art education, there are three activities related to the aspects of art education itself: activities to express oneself, activities to observe, and activities to appreciate a work of art, which can enhance individual, social, and cultural abilities (Adawiyah & Nurbaeti, 2023; Setiaji, 2022; Sinaga *et al.*, 2021). As cited from Lansing, art education aims to develop a child's knowledge, character, and artistic abilities, which are influenced by their environment and surrounding culture. Art education also plays a role in nurturing children's potential from all perspectives, in every language, and every culture found within the various branches of art (Sustiawati *et al.*, 2018).

One form of art education that can help cultivate self-confidence is dance. As previously explained, art education can be considered an effective medium to foster students' self-confidence, including that of elementary school students. Dance education aims to serve as a platform for the development of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, thereby nurturing character values, one of which is self-confidence (Wahyudi *et al.*, 2022). Dance is related to the training of the body and the cultivation of sensitivity to bring forth ethical values connected to personal character, such as self-confidence and discipline. Additionally, it also brings out aesthetic values related to the beauty of bodily movements (Wahyudi & Gunawan, 2020). Yulianti *et al.* (2022) state that traditional dance learning is highly important to be applied to elementary school students because it benefits physical health, teaches concentration, restores mood, increases self-confidence, and carries meaning related to practicing discipline through dance movement skills, building strong mental character, increasing students' confidence, teaching patience, fostering a love for beauty through dance movements, and appreciating and preserving culture. Dance is not merely about movement skills, but can also foster character values that are important for children. In their article, Wulan *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that dance can shape the value of friendliness among children. Additionally, various learning techniques can be employed to increase the effectiveness of online learning (Ghifari, Amanda, & Hadiapurwa, 2022).

From the explanations above, it can be understood that dance can serve as a platform for students to express themselves and support their self-confidence while simultaneously preserving their traditional culture. Utomo *et al.* (2020) introduced traditional culture to early childhood through dance in Sukaharjo, aiming to familiarize children with Indonesian culture from an early age while developing their motor skills and self-confidence. Resi *et al.* (2019) examined character development conducted at Sanggar Seni Sarwi Retno Budaya Surakarta through dance education. In addition to developing physical skills, the studio

successfully cultivated character values in its learners, including spiritual values, honesty, politeness, cooperation, tolerance, discipline, creativity, and responsibility. [Lestari dan Gunada \(2021\)](#) conducted a community service program in the form of dance training during the COVID-19 pandemic for students of Pasraman Amerta Sanjiwani, where they practiced the dance knowledge they had previously acquired. Furthermore, [Adawiyah and Nurbaeti \(2023\)](#) conducted creative dance training at SD Negeri Parereja 03 to foster an appreciation for dance, preserve cultural values and Indonesia's diversity, and develop character values among the learners. In their article, [Hapsoh et al. \(2023\)](#) introduced the Mask Dance (Tari Topeng) through a history learning approach at SD Negeri 1 Ujungsemi, utilizing blended learning. The students participating in the dance training were introduced to the history of the Cirebon Mask Dance and were taught its basic dance movements. From the learning activities conducted, there was an improvement in the students' ability to memorize the dance movements they practiced.

This sense of self-confidence can be fostered through activities outside of school, such as dance and extracurricular pursuits. Extracurricular activities can be defined as supporting or additional (extra) activities conducted outside of instructional (curricular) hours to realize the objectives of the curriculum, including character education, and serving as a platform to develop students' potentials, which are implemented through various activities aligned with the students' interests and talents ([Abidin, 2019](#); [Arifudin, 2020](#); [Shilviana & Hamami, 2020](#)). Through extracurricular dance activities, personal values rooted in local cultural values need to be fostered from the elementary school level, one of which is self-confidence alongside social responsibility, as a result of positive personal formation ([Putri & Suriadi, 2022](#); [Wulan et al., 2019](#)).

There are various types of traditional dances that can be taught to students, one of which is the Cirebon Mask Dance (Tari Topeng Cirebon). The Cirebon Mask Dance is characterized by its gentle movements, yet it has a level of difficulty that is not easy to master. It is performed by several dancers accompanied by one sinden (female vocalist) and ten musicians. Sunan Kalijaga created the Mask Dance performance to spread Islam, with meanings embedded within the dance that convey messages from the Qur'an while preserving the original cultural heritage. Over time, the Mask Dance has become a regional identity that needs to be preserved ([Kurniadi, 2021](#); [Wardani et al., 2021](#); [Yuhanda, 2019](#)).

Kampus Mengajar is a program organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology as part of the Kampus Merdeka initiative. Kampus Mengajar aims to provide opportunities for university students to learn and develop their potential through activities outside of classroom lectures for one semester by assisting schools that still lack sufficient human resources in the teaching workforce. The Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka policy also aims to encourage students to acquire knowledge and skills that will be useful in entering the workforce and for their future. Additionally, the Kampus Mengajar program also provides students with experience in serving education in Indonesia ([Komara & Hadiapurwa, 2023](#)). The Kampus Mengajar Batch 5 Program was implemented from February 20 to June 16, 2023, at UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon. As part of the school activities conducted under the Kampus Mengajar 5 program, the student team designed work programs aligned with the problems and conditions at the school. The student team then attempted to design a program to enhance the students' self-confidence through Mask Dance (Tari Topeng) training activities at UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon.

METHODS

This community service activity was conducted at UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon. The types of data collection techniques employed in this activity were classroom action, observation, and documentation. Classroom action research is a type of research involving the systematic collection of data aimed at improving the quality of learning and enhancing teacher competencies by identifying problems within existing situations and addressing those problems ([Prihantoro & Hidayat, 2019](#); [Saptadi, 2021](#)).

Meanwhile, observation is a data collection technique conducted by observing an object, condition, or event under study (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Aspers & Corte, 2019). The data in this activity were sourced from learning activities conducted outside the classroom, which were still related to the Art and Culture subject. The classroom action conducted took the form of dance extracurricular activities as additional learning material outside of regular instructional hours, implemented during break time. Observation was utilized in the analysis to assess the students' affinity for their culture and to enhance their confidence in public performances. Documentation is one of the qualitative data collection techniques that is relatively straightforward, involving the examination, analysis, and review of documents that have been created in a significant and accurate manner. The collected data were then analyzed descriptively. The approach used in this activity was the peer approach. The stages of this research included conducting extracurricular activities for students from grades 3 to 5, group dance training, a test process through group performances (with each group consisting of children) aimed at assessing the students' memorization and confidence levels, selection for performances in an art stage event held alongside the graduation ceremony for grade 6 students at the school, and finally performing on stage in front of all students, teachers, and external parties such as parents, the school committee, and the village head.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mimi Rasinah Dance Studio is a dance studio located in Pekandangan Village, Indramayu, West Java. This studio was established by the renowned dancer Mimi Rasinah, a maestro of the Mask Dance (Tari Topeng). She was born into an artistic family that has practiced this dance for generations. The Mask Dance is an art form originating from Cirebon, characterized by dancers wearing masks during their performances. The Mask Dance has various types and has developed over time in terms of movements and the stories it conveys. There are five types of Mask Dance, namely: Topeng Panji, which tells the story of the purity of a newborn baby; Topeng Samba, which narrates the journey of a child searching for their identity as they transition toward adulthood; Topeng Tumenggung, which depicts a person at the peak of their glory; and Topeng Klana, which tells the story of a furious Ravana (Ma'sum *et al.*, 2019).

Implementation of Dance Extracurricular Activities

The first meeting of the dance extracurricular class was held on March 3, 2023. This initial class was attended by 40 female students from grades 3, 4, 5, and 6. Grade 6 students were included as they were not yet occupied with examination activities. In this first meeting, the materials taught included basic dance movements, such as adeg-adeg, gedig, how to wear the mask, and an introduction to the music used in the Mask Dance. In addition to the Mask Dance, the Randu Ketir Dance was also taught. During the implementation of the extracurricular activities, there were still instances where some students verbally mocked or bullied their peers. Such verbal bullying or mockery can undoubtedly hinder a student's development of self-confidence. For instance, a student who is mocked may feel embarrassed to perform their dance movements due to the fear of being ridiculed again. Zulqurnain & Thoha (2022) in their article indicate that students who experience mockery or bullying tend to have low self-confidence, which prevents them from expressing themselves effectively. Therefore, an appropriate action that the dance instructor can take is to call the student who mocked their peer and inquire about their behavior. Following this, the instructor should advise the student that mocking others is not appropriate behavior and instruct the student to apologize to their peer and promise not to repeat such actions in the future.

On May 5, 2023, grade 6 students ceased participating in the dance extracurricular activities as they were focusing on their school examinations. Meanwhile, the material delivered in this meeting involved dividing the students into groups to identify their individual interests in participating in either the Mask Dance (Tari

Topeng) or the Randu Kentir Dance. Additionally, this meeting was used to observe the development of each student's dance movement skills and to select students who would participate in the FLS2N competition.

This dance extracurricular activity was conducted over six meetings, as it was temporarily delayed due to the fasting month and other school activities related to religious observances. Fortunately, the students remained highly enthusiastic about participating in this dance extracurricular activity. However, a challenge was encountered, namely the shortage of dance instructors to teach students from grades 3 to 6, which affected the performance and continuity of the extracurricular activity.

Preparation for the Art Performance

On May 17, 2023, a selection process was held for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 to become performers for the art performance event, which also served as the graduation ceremony for grade 6 students. The implementation test for selecting performers for the art performance event was conducted on May 25. This test was conducted to assess the students' level of self-confidence, their ability to memorize dance movements, and their ability to perform them. The test was attended by 25 female students from grades 3 to 5. Grade 6 students did not participate in this selection test as they were focusing on their examinations. Due to the limited availability of costumes and property accessories, only two students from grade 5 were selected to be the Mask Dance performers. To avoid feelings of disappointment among the students who were not selected, we created new dance compositions or dance groups, such as the Saman Dance, which consisted of seven female students, and the Genjring Party Dance, consisting of four female students. The Saman Dance performers were also selected from grade 5 students, while the Genjring Party Dance performers were selected from students in grades 3 and 4.

On the days leading up to the performance, the students received daily training to enhance their self-confidence, memorization, and dance movements. [Setiawan \(2019\)](#) also states that self-confidence grows through dance when students memorize dance movements and perform them expressively as a complete dance. In their article, [Irani et al. \(2021\)](#) investigated the self-confidence of children participating in dance extracurricular activities. They explained the factors that influence a child's self-confidence, namely recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, so that they are willing to accept criticism from instructors and ready to improve their shortcomings, as well as having experience in performing dance activities. The lack of education provided to children deepens their understanding of the meaning of dance. Moreover, [Solihin \(2021\)](#) states that stress also affects students' self-confidence when performing dance movements. These factors are supported by research from [Septiani et al. \(2019\)](#), which revealed that the lack of self-confidence among students is due to insufficient direct guidance from teachers and a lack of motivation.

Based on these phenomena, the approach taken with the students involved using a peer-like approach, providing encouragement, and training the students to perform as themselves so that their self-confidence could grow. This aligns with the research conducted by [Putri & Suriadi \(2022\)](#), which states that a child's learning spirit is influenced by the motivation and appreciation they receive. Unfortunately, only one month remained for the dancers to practice before the art performance event. Challenges encountered during practice included insufficient memorization of dance movements and a lack of stamina during dance performances. Therefore, opportunities for practice were taken during the students' free periods, recess, and after-school hours to improve the students' memorization of dance movements, thereby enhancing their self-confidence. [Hidayatunnisa and Indrayuda \(2023\)](#) conducted research on the impact of dance training on students' self-confidence, showing that students participating in dance extracurricular activities appeared to be more confident, as indicated by several indicators, including confidence, optimism, objectivity, and responsibility. This was realized on the day of the art performance. Prior to the performance, the students expressed significant nervousness and stage fright. However, as the

performance progressed, they were able to take command of the stage and set aside their nervousness and stage fright, resulting in a captivating performance. They were able to perform the dances with the movements they had previously memorized fluently and without any nervousness (see **Figures 1, 2, 3**).



Figure 1. Training Process
Source: Author's Documentation 2023



Figure 2. Mask Dance Performance
Source: Author's Documentation 2023



Figure 3. Documentation with the Dancers
Source: Author's Documentation 2023

CONCLUSION

Self-confidence is an important aspect for students to possess, particularly when performing on stage. There are various ways to enhance students' self-confidence, one of which is through dance training conducted in dance extracurricular activities. The community service activity involving Mask Dance training at UPTD SD Negeri 2 Cantigi Kulon successfully increased the students' self-confidence. The students were trained to improve their confidence, memorization, and dance movements. With motivation, the students were able to convince themselves of their capabilities in practicing dance. Additionally, it is necessary to remind other students not to mock their peers when they have not yet mastered the dance movements. On the day of the performance, the students were able to overcome stage fright and perform with confidence.

Based on the results of this community service activity, several recommendations can be made. First, dance instructors or teachers should continuously provide encouragement, motivation, and appreciation to students participating in dance extracurricular activities during their practice so that students can develop confidence in performing dance movements. Schools should also consider adding dance instructors for the dance extracurricular program to prevent shortages of dance teachers. Furthermore, parents need to provide support to their children in developing their interests and talents in the field of dance.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article. The author affirms that the data and content of this article are free from plagiarism.

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