

## **STRENGTHENING THE TRADITIONAL DANCE GROUP & PLACE (SANGGAR TARI) TO STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL CULTURE OF MEDAN IN MEDAN AMPLAS SUBDISTRICT (Penguatan Sanggar Tari untuk Memperkuat Kebudayaan Lokal Kota Medan di Kecamatan Medan Amplas)**

Budi Agustono<sup>1</sup>, Heristina Dewi<sup>2</sup>, dan Mhd. Pujiono<sup>3</sup>

[agustono\\_budi@yahoo.com](mailto:agustono_budi@yahoo.com)<sup>1\*</sup>

[heristina.dewi@gmail.com](mailto:heristina.dewi@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

[mhd.pujiono@usu.ac.id](mailto:mhd.pujiono@usu.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, University of Sumatera Utara, Medan.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

### **ABSTRAK**

Mayoritas generasi muda mengabaikan kebudayaan bangsa seperti tarian tradisional dan lebih senang dengan tarian modern. Ini menjadikan pentingnya penguatan sanggar tari sebagai wadah pengembangan kreativitas dalam kebudayaan tradisional di Kota Medan. Oleh karena itu, dalam kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini dilakukan upaya penguatan sanggar tari untuk memperkuat kebudayaan lokal kota Medan. Kegiatan ini berupa Focus Group Discussion (FGD) dan pelatihan tari pada 30 orang pemuda/pemudi anggota sanggar tari kecamatan Medan Amplas yang dilakukan selama dua bulan. Selain memberikan pelatihan tim pengabdian kepada masyarakat memfasilitasi peralatan pendukung dalam kegiatan penampilan tari tradisional untuk anggota, berupa pakaian, aksesoris dan media pelatihan lainnya. Dalam pelaksanaannya digunakan pendekatan metode ceramah, tanya jawab, demonstrasi dan drill. Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat ini telah menghasilkan luaran berupa jasa menumbuhkan kepedulian masyarakat pada kebudayaan tarian lokal Sumatera Utara, khususnya kota Medan dengan pendampingan pelatihan untuk meningkatkan kreativitas, inovasi, serta kemampuan anggota sanggar dalam bidang seni budaya tari, yaitu tari tradisional.

***Kata kunci: tari tradisional, sanggar tari, FGD, Medan Amplas.***

### **ABSTRACT**

*The majority of the younger generation ignore national culture, such as traditional dances, and prefer modern dances. This makes the importance of strengthening traditional dance groups & place (sanggar tari) as a forum for developing creativity in traditional culture in Medan. Therefore, in this community service, efforts to strengthen the sanggar tari to strengthen Medan's local culture were carried out. This activity consisted of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and dance training for 30 young men and women members of the Medan Amplas sub-district sanggar tari held for two months. Besides providing training, the community service team facilitates supporting equipment in traditional dance performance activities for members, such as clothing, accessories, and other training media. The lecture, Q&A, demonstration, and drill methods are used in its implementation. This community*

*service has resulted in the form of services to raise public awareness of the local dance culture of North Sumatera, especially in Medan, with training assistance to increase creativity, innovation, and the ability of the sanggar members in the field of traditional dance and culture.*

**Keywords:** *traditional dance, sanggar tari, FGD, Medan Amplas*

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is one of a country's identities because it is human knowledge as a social being, containing tools or models of experience that are collectively used to understand the environment at hand as a reference for action. Medan is one of the big cities in Indonesia. It has people with diverse ethnic backgrounds, such as the Malays, with various icons, symbols, and cultural indexes in Medan's city (Takari 2010:1). There are also other tribes such as Batak, Javanese, Aceh, and so on. Of course, it makes there are also various kinds of cultures from each tribe in Medan. One of them is a unique culture owned, such as dances, performing arts/folk theater, traditional ceremonies, and many more.

However, today's development is that most people have started to ignore and even forget about national cultures, such as traditional dances. Not a few teenagers prefer to dance modern dances than traditional dances. Over time, traditional dances have begun to be covered by the existence of modern dances. However, not all of them, traditional dances are now no longer glimpsed, even children and young people are now more familiar with modern dances than traditional dances. If observed, these traditional dances have an attraction for foreign tourists. Not a few other countries want to claim the dances that we have. For example, some time ago, Bali's *pendet* dance claimed by the Malaysian state shows that the dance culture has a

considerable influence.

The lack of public awareness of their love for traditional dances has made the existence of traditional dances gradually diminished or even extinct, not to be enjoyed anymore. Moreover, developing our country recently is experiencing a relatively strong current of globalization affecting all young generations, such as the emergence of modern dances such as K-Pop dance, making them more interested in learning them. Not a few people made videos about the dance and uploaded them on social media such as YouTube, Instagram, etc. It is unfortunate to see society's condition, especially the younger generation, who perform this dance compared to Indonesian special dances. As the next generation, the younger generation must filter the culture that has entered our culture, not even enjoy the dance, even enjoy the culture that they may not know the origin of the dance.

If examined from a historical perspective, of course, this dance is not following our country's philosophy, namely Pancasila and the values of our nation's morality. When viewed from a religious perspective, this phenomenal dance does not have any essence, even just for fun, and the worse it contains movements that contain pornographic elements of action that can cause lust, which should be able to be more scrutinized by all levels of this nation's generation, especially Muslims. With

today's modern dance, if we cannot filter it first, our nation's traditional dances and culture will become more and more covered and may even become extinct over time.

Seeing this phenomenon, it is true that people cannot blame people who prefer to dance modern dances than traditional dances in Indonesia. There is a need for a strategy of strengthening and early cultivation of love for Indonesian culture, especially art in Medan, such as introducing traditional dances. After they get to know them, they are interested in learning. For this reason, the role of a *sanggar tari* (traditional dance group & place) is significant as a place for traditional arts to take shelter. In this place, the art performers gather, practice, and discuss the skills. This *sanggar* can also function as a place to prepare and organize strategies. (Purnama 2015:462)

In Medan, precisely in Medan Amplas Sub-District, there is a *sanggar tari* managed by Karang Taruna (youth

organization), Medan Amplas Sub-District. This *sanggar* is quite active as a forum for sub-district residents to know and practice traditional dances. On several occasions in a local scale event, the dance team from this *sanggar* danced as a dance offering in events or entertainment. However, as with the global phenomenon of the lack of youth interest in traditional culture, it also affected the *sanggar tari*. Regeneration problems, such as at least young people interested in joining and programs that are felt ineffective in attracting youth groups to join.

For this reason, in this community service activity, the service team wants to provide support in formulating strategies to strengthen *sanggar tari* to enhance local culture in the city of Medan. So that through *sanggar tari*, young people, especially teenagers in the city of Medan, are more interested in getting to know their nation's arts and culture and have a sense of love for preserving our nation's culture.

## METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

To strengthen the city of Medan's local culture in Medan Amplas sub-district for members of the *sanggar* managed by Karang Taruna Kec. Medan Amplas, the community service team, has conducted FGD and traditional dance training activities for new members of *sanggar tari*. The training was conducted for two months and involved 30 members aged 13 to 30 years. Determination of participants using interviews conducted in collaboration with community service partners Karang Taruna Kec. Sandpaper Field. The methods used in this training activity approach are the lecture method, the question, and answer method, discussion, demonstration, and drill as the

leading training guide.

### FGD

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a method and technique of collecting qualitative data by conducting group interviews. To obtain a more accurate understanding, FGD can be defined as a method and technique of collecting qualitative data. A facilitator or moderator guides a group of people discussing a particular problem or topic. (Indrizal 2017:75)

FGD is a method and technique of collecting data or information that was initially developed in marketing research. At that time, FGD was used to determine a

particular product's image, what things would attract potential buyers or consumers, product design, size choices, color choices, packaging design, what things needed to be improved, etc. By using FGD, in a relatively short time (quickly) can be explored about perceptions, opinions, attitudes, motivation, knowledge, problems, and expectations of change related to specific problems.

In its later development, the use of FGD quickly expanded its use in the social sciences and medicine. FGD principles are also commonly applied through group interviews and group discussions, which characterize most of the techniques and tools in participatory rural assessment activities and goal-oriented project planning activities to develop community empowerment.

### **FGD implementation**

The implementation of the FGD consisted of preparation before the activity, opening, and closing.

In the preparation stage (1) the team of facilitators (invitees) must arrive on time before the participants (invitees) arrive. The facilitating team should initiate informal communication with the participants to build trust and approach the community. (2) The facilitating team must prepare the room in such a way so that participants can participate optimally in the FGD. The participants should sit in a circle together with the facilitator who guides the discussion. The disabled usually sit outside the circle but still around the circle. The facilitator must ensure no outside interruptions and ensure that all participating participants are seated in a circle.

At the opening, the discussion guide

should start by warming up and explaining several things, such as remarks, meeting objectives, meeting procedures, and introductions. (2) In delivering the opening remarks, thank you for the presence of the informant (participant).

Introduce yourself (names of facilitators) and their respective roles. Then ask the participants to introduce themselves. The guide must quickly remember the participant's name, which is useful when leading the discussion. Explain the meeting procedures, such as: explaining the use of recording devices, confidentiality is maintained, and for this study only, participants do not need to wait to be asked for their opinions, please speak one by one so that they can be recorded and other rules for the smooth running of the meeting. Explain that the meeting is not intended to listen to lecture participants and emphasize that the facilitator wants to learn from the participants. Also, emphasize that all participants' opinion is critical, so it is hoped that all participants can express their opinions. State that the facilitator asked several questions that had been prepared in advance because of this.

Start the meeting by asking general questions that are not related to the problem or topic of discussion. After that, the process is passed, then start guiding the statement using the reference guidelines that have been provided. Do not forget! The discussion guide must master the questions and present them systematically without always having to read out the question guide rigidly.

At the close of the FGD, it was explained to the participants that our discussion program about problems and / or topics will be finished soon. If the guideline already has some general conclusions that are considered strong

enough, state the key points briefly. For that, ask each participant if there are any more opinions. The exact words can be explored more deeply.

As the meeting closes completely, thank the participants for their participation and state that their views have been beneficial. After the FGD is finished, the facilitators' team must immediately gather to complete the field notes on the results and process of the FGD.

### **Lecture method**

The lecture method explains the basic knowledge of various traditional medieval dances and the basic concepts of traditional dance movements in the city of Medan, such as the Malay dance. This method also emphasizes efforts to motivate the participants to have the will and increase understanding.

### **Discussion and Q&A Methods**

The discussion method and question and the answer were carried out because it was very important for the participants to know their ability to receive explanations about traditional dance. This method allows participants to gain as much knowledge as possible about traditional dance.

### **Training Implementation Methods**

In the implementation of dance training, demonstration and drill methods are used.

### **Demonstration Method**

The Demonstration method is a way of presenting learning material by demonstrating or demonstrating to participants a process, situation, or particular object being studied, either actual or imitation, accompanied by an explanation (Suryani, 2012: 60). The

demonstration method is a way of presenting lessons by demonstrating or demonstrating to participants a process, situation, or object being studied either in actual form or in imitation form shown by teachers or other learning resources experts in the discussion (Roetiyah, 2001: 82). Another opinion states that the demonstration method is a way of teaching in which an instructor or a team of teachers shows or shows a process (Sudjana, 2002: 289). From some of the opinions above, it can be seen that the demonstration method is a way of presenting learning by directly demonstrating the process of learning accompanied by oral explanations.

The psychological benefits of the demonstration method are that participants' attention can be more focused/focused. The learning process of participants is more concentrated on the material being studied, the experience, and the impression that the learning outcomes are more inherent in the participants (Suprijanto, 2005:143).

### **Drill Method**

In learning dance, the teacher uses the drill method in implementing the dance learning process. Exercise or drill is a technique that can be interpreted as a way of teaching. Participants carry out training activities so that participants have higher dexterity or skills than what has been learned. The drill/training method aims to measure motor skills and intellectual abilities (Roestiyah, 2008: 125).

The team thinks that the drill/training method is very effective in learning dance because, with this method, the participants can dance the dance that is taught by doing repeated exercises. The dance material given is a local traditional dance from North Sumatera.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The team to strengthen *sanggar tari* to strengthen the local culture of the city of Medan in the Medan Amplas sub-district has carried out socialization and discussions with community service partners, namely the Medan Amplas sub-district Karang Taruna. The socialization was held on July 17, 2020. Through the FGD (Focus Group Discussion) results, the team understood more about the partners' conditions and problems, so that it became a further consideration regarding the contribution the team made to service partners.



**Figure 1.** The arrival of the Community Service Team was welcomed by the Head of Karang Taruna, Amplas  
Resource: personal documentation

### Socialization and remarks from the team

Following the schedule agreed with the community service partner, the community service team came and was welcomed by the partners. The community service team met directly with Karang Taruna and members of the *sanggar tari* in the Medan Amplas sub-district. Even though in the Covid-19 pandemic situation, activities are still carried out by following applicable health protocols.

The activity was officially opened with remarks from the Chairperson of the

Karang Taruna, Mr. Haris Muda P. Lubis, S.S., M.Sos., and continued with remarks from the chairman of the USU Community Service team Dr. Budi Agustono, M.S. as well as carrying out socialization to explain the aims and objectives of the community service program being carried out. After the socialization was carried out, it was continued with the implementation of the FGD.



**Figure 2.** Speech by the Chairman of Karang Taruna  
Resource: personal documentation



**Figure 3.** Remarks and outreach from the Community Service Team Leader  
Resource: personal documentation

### FGD (*Focus Group Discussion*)

The FGD was facilitated by a community service team member, namely Dra. Heristina Dewi, M.Pd., teaching staff at the Ethnomusicology Department at Faculty of Cultural Sciences USU, is an

expert in traditional dances. The topic of the FGD is related to how to increase the spirit of activity, creativity, and innovation of members in *sanggar tari* and strategies for recruiting new members and strengthening *sanggar tari* to enhance the local culture of Medan in the Medan Amplas sub-district. The implementation of the FGD, which methodically should be done sitting in a circle and close together, must be changed because it is adjusted to the Covid-19 physical distancing protocol.



**Figure 4.** FGD was facilitated by Dra. Heristina Dewi, M.Pd.  
Resource: personal documentation



**Figure 5.** FGD Participants  
Resource: personal documentation

In the FGD, participants actively asked and discussed the various problems and obstacles the *sanggar tari* in Amplas in developing local culture, especially local dances in the North Sumatera region.

There were three crucial points

discussed in the discussion, first the managerial of the *sanggar tari*, the existence of regular programs and meetings to explore creativity in traditional dance, and a forum for group members to apply their training results.

There need to be managerial improvements such as clear and committed management in the development of *sanggar tari*, including recruiting new members by utilizing the potential of social media and the internet. Furthermore, the management formulates work programs that will be carried out, divided into routine activities and special activities, not only in a minimal and limited frequency, such as practicing modestly and only preparing for an event. The community service team also provides input and direction regarding art events that the *sanggar* can participate in.

The discussion also discussed the sustainability of local arts in the hands of future generations. Traditional arts are a form of their predecessors' creativity who channeled their hobbies, talents and wanted to make others happy. Initially, traditional arts were intended for entertainment, education, and sacred needs, especially at ceremonies. In subsequent developments in the era of highly sophisticated technology, traditional arts' existence was increasingly marginalized. Therefore, the *sanggar* plays a very important role in continuous coaching and training.

It was conveyed to the participants that the existence of the *sanggar* is very crucial and important as an effort to save traditional arts such as regional dances. The presence of the *sanggar* is very supportive and supports the progress of the arts and culture in it. The more complete and adequate the facilities in it will impact

the preservation of arts and culture, progress, and the welfare of the performers of these arts. One of the inhibiting factors is that adequate economic factors do not support traditional arts supporters engaged in and engaged in traditional arts.

The discussions that were carried out have opened the participants' insights and knowledge about the importance of preserving local culture, especially dance, and the opportunities generated in its development, such as from the economic and business aspects.

At the end of the activity, the service team gave a certificate of appreciation to Karang Taruna Medan Amplas to facilitate and be a partner in community service activities carried out. On the other hand, partners also provide certificates to the service team. Furthermore, the installation of signposts was carried out to mark community service implementation at the University of Sumatera Utara.

Furthermore, the team assisted dance accessories and provided regular training and mentoring to the *sanggar tari*.



**Figure 6.** Providing certificates and installing signs of community service.

Resource: personal documentation

## CONCLUSIONS

The Community Service Activity (PKM) strategy of strengthening *sanggar tari* to enhance the local culture of Medan city in the Medan Amplas sub-district carried out by the team has positively impacted the spirit of activity, creativity, and innovation of the members.

During its development, several strategies were carried out to strengthen Medan's local culture in the Medan Amplas sub-district by improving the

management structure, drafting a more focused and routine program, recruiting more massive members, and assisting in the inventory of supporting equipment for dance performances. Furthermore, the team's assistance will also be carried out in keeping the objectives of the strategies that have been formed implemented so that the productivity of the *sanggar tari* continues to grow.

## SUGGESTION

The existence of a *sanggar tari* is very supportive of the progress of cultural arts in Medan. The completer and more

adequate the facilities in it will impact the preservation of arts and culture, progress, and the welfare of the performers of these



arts. Therefore, it is necessary to intervene from other parties, including the government, business people, activists, and

supporters of this art, to carry out programs oriented towards financial assistance and guidance.

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