



THE EFFECT OF LELE DANCE MOVEMENT TRAINING ON THE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF LAMONGAN LOCAL CULTURAL WISDOM AMONG INDONESIAN IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

Wasia Lauda^a Diana Dwi Jayanti^b

^{a b}*Universitas Islam Lamongan, Indonesia*

correspondence: yellowa487@gmail.com

Abstract

This research was motivated by the lack of understanding among Indonesian immigrant children in Malaysia regarding their regional culture, especially the local cultural wisdom of Lamongan. One effort that can be made is through Lele Dance movement training as a medium for introducing local culture. This study aims to determine the effect of Lele Dance movement training on the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun, Selangor, Malaysia. This research used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design using the one group pretest-posttest method. The research subjects consisted of 9 children. Data collection techniques used questionnaires and observation rubrics. Data analysis used descriptive statistics, normality tests, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, and N-Gain. The results showed that the significance value of the Wilcoxon test was $0.007 < 0.05$, therefore H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. The N-Gain result of 0.8661 was categorized as high. The conclusion of this study indicates that Lele Dance movement training had a significant effect on improving the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children.

Keywords: Lele Dance, Local Wisdom, Indonesian Immigrant Children

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has influenced many aspects of social and cultural life, including the preservation of local cultural identity among Indonesian immigrant children living abroad. Children who grow up outside Indonesia are at risk of experiencing a decrease in understanding and recognition of their regional culture because they are more exposed to foreign cultural environments. This condition may gradually reduce children's awareness of their cultural identity and local wisdom values from their area of origin. According to Indonesia Kebudayaan (2025), globalization can create challenges to national and regional cultural identity among younger generations. Therefore, efforts to preserve and introduce local culture from an early age are important, especially for Indonesian immigrant children living outside Indonesia.

Early childhood is an important stage for introducing cultural values because children learn through direct experience, movement, play, and interaction with their environment. Cultural-based learning activities can help children recognize, understand, and maintain their cultural identity. Daniah (2016) explains that local wisdom can become the basis for character education because cultural values contain moral, social, and identity values that are important for children's development. One form of cultural-based learning that is suitable for early childhood is dance learning activities.

Dance learning does not only focus on movement skills, but also functions as a medium for introducing cultural identity, symbols, traditions, and regional values. According to Dedi Rosala and Agus Budiman (2020), local wisdom-based dance learning can help children understand cultural values through movement experiences. Children tend to learn more effectively when involved in active and enjoyable learning activities. Therefore, dance activities are considered appropriate for introducing local culture to early childhood.

One of the local cultural arts from Lamongan Regency is Lele Dance. This dance was inspired by the catfish symbol, which is closely associated with Lamongan identity. Lele Dance contains cultural

meanings, movement symbols, and regional characteristics that can be introduced to children through movement training activities. Through repeated movement practice, imitation, and group activities, children can more easily understand cultural elements in a fun and interactive way.

Several previous studies have discussed dance learning as an effort to preserve local culture. Amanda, Widyaningrum, and Wakhyudin (2019) explained that dance activities can become a medium for preserving local culture in schools. In addition, Kadek et al. (2023) stated that introducing local culture through art activities can improve children's cultural understanding from an early age. However, previous studies have not specifically discussed the use of Lele Dance movement training to improve the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children in Malaysia.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to determine the effect of Lele Dance movement training on the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun. This study is expected to contribute to cultural-based learning for early childhood and become an alternative effort to preserve Indonesian local culture among immigrant children living abroad.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative research design with a pre-experimental approach using the one group pretest-posttest design. Quantitative research is a research method used to examine the effect of a treatment on certain variables through numerical data analysis. This study also used a non-parametric approach because the data were not normally distributed and the sample size was relatively small. According to Sugiyono (2006), non-parametric research does not require normal distribution assumptions and can be used for data with non-normal distribution patterns.

This research was conducted at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun. The subjects of this study were Indonesian immigrant children in group 1 consisting of 9 children. The study aimed to determine the effect of Lele Dance movement training on the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children.

The research procedures consisted of three stages, namely pretest, treatment, and posttest. The pretest was conducted on October 24, 2025, to determine the children's initial knowledge and understanding of Lamongan culture. After the pretest, the treatment was carried out in three meetings. During the treatment activities, children were introduced to Lamongan local culture, traditional foods, Lele Dance elements, cultural symbols, and movement meanings. Children also practiced basic Lele Dance movements through imitation activities, repetition, group practice, and play-based learning activities. The posttest was conducted on November 4, 2025, to determine changes in children's knowledge and understanding after the treatment was completed.

The data collection techniques used in this study were questionnaires and observation rubrics. The questionnaire was used to measure children's knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local culture, while the observation rubric was used to observe children's understanding during learning activities. The assessment indicators included Lamongan cultural identity, traditional foods, Lele Dance elements, cultural functions, and traditional clothing and symbols.

The data analysis techniques used in this study included descriptive statistics, normality tests, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, and N-Gain analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the pretest and posttest results. The normality test was conducted to determine the data distribution. Because the data were not normally distributed, hypothesis testing used the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. In addition, the N-Gain test was used to determine the level of improvement in children's understanding after participating in Lele Dance movement training.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The results of this study were obtained from questionnaires and observation rubrics conducted before and after the Lele Dance movement training. The data were presented descriptively to determine the improvement in children's knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom. Table 1 shows the questionnaire pretest and posttest results of Indonesian immigrant children at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun.

A. Questionnaires

This questionnaire was administered to nine respondents to assess the children's level of knowledge and understanding of Lamongan's local cultural wisdom before and after participating in the Catfish Dance movement training. The following table shows the scores of each respondent and their respective scores.

Each correct answer was scored 1 and 0 for an incorrect answer. This technique was chosen because it suited the characteristics of the research variables and was effective in measuring changes in understanding before and after training.

Table 1 Pre-test of children's level of knowledge and understanding regarding Lamongan Cultural Wisdom

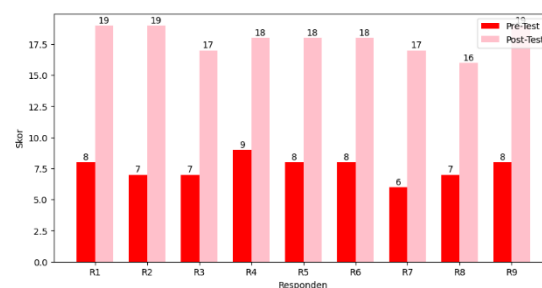
No	Kode	Question																				Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
1	R1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	8
2	R2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	7
3	R3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	7
4	R4	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	9
5	R5	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	8
6	R6	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	8
7	R7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
8	R8	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7
9	R9	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	8

Table 2 Pos-test of children's level of knowledge and understanding regarding Lamongan Cultural Wisdom

No	Kode	Question																				Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
1	R1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19
2	R2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	19
3	R3	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	17
4	R4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	18
5	R5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	18
6	R6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	18
7	R7	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	17
8	R8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	16
9	R9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	19

Based on Table 1, the questionnaire pretest and posttest results showed an increase in scores among all respondents after participating in Lele Dance movement training. The pretest scores ranged from 6–9, while the posttest scores increased to 16–19.

Figure Graph of the results of the Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire



B. Observation Rubrics Conducted

The assessment rubric was used to observe and assess the children's understanding of Lamongan's local cultural wisdom before and after the Lele Dance movement training. The rubric included five assessment indicators: understanding Lamongan's cultural identity, traditional foods, elements of the Lele Dance, cultural context and function, and traditional clothing and regional cultural symbols. The

assessment process was conducted on a scale of 1 to 4, adjusted to the children's level of ability, participation, and involvement in each aspect observed during the activity.

The following are the assessment rubric scores for each respondent:

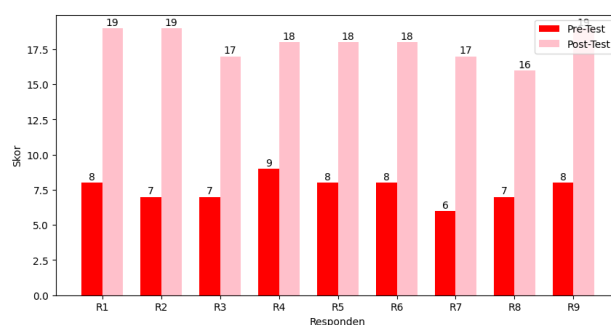
No	Kode	Observation Indicators					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	R1	1	1	2	1	1	6
2	R2	1	1	2	1	1	6
3	R3	1	1	2	1	1	6
4	R4	1	1	2	1	1	6
5	R5	1	1	2	1	1	6
6	R6	1	1	1	1	1	5
7	R7	1	1	2	1	1	6
8	R8	1	1	2	1	1	6
9	R9	1	1	1	1	1	5

Description of the Pretest Implementation on October 24, 2025

The pretest results showed that most children had limited knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local culture. The strongest performance was observed in the indicator of Lele Dance art elements, particularly in imitating the basic dance movements demonstrated by the teacher. However, their abilities were still at a basic level and had not yet developed optimally. Most children experienced difficulties in recognizing Lamongan cultural identity, traditional foods, cultural contexts, traditional clothing, and cultural symbols. The pretest scores ranged from 5 to 6, indicating that the children's overall understanding of Lamongan culture was still relatively low and required further guidance, stimulation, and practice before the implementation of the Lele Dance movement training.

No	Kode	Indikator Observasi					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	R1	4	4	3	3	4	18
2	R2	4	4	3	3	4	18
3	R3	4	4	3	3	4	15
4	R4	4	4	3	3	4	18
5	R5	4	4	4	4	4	20
6	R6	4	4	2	2	4	18
7	R7	3	3	3	3	3	15
8	R8	4	4	4	4	4	20
9	R9	4	4	4	4	4	20

Figure Graph of the results of the Pre-test and Post-test Assessment Rubric Questionnaire



Description of the Posttest Implementation on November 4, 2025

The posttest results showed a noticeable improvement in all assessed indicators after the implementation of Lele Dance movement training. Most children demonstrated better knowledge of Lamongan cultural identity, traditional foods, cultural context and functions, traditional clothing, cultural symbols, and Lele Dance art elements. They became more capable of recognizing cultural

symbols, understanding traditional foods, and imitating the basic movements of Lele Dance. The posttest scores ranged from 15 to 20, indicating that the children's understanding of Lamongan local culture improved significantly compared to the pretest results. These findings suggest that Lele Dance movement training contributed positively to enhancing children's knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

The descriptive statistical analysis showed that the mean pretest score was 7.56, while the mean posttest score increased to 17.89. The N-Gain score was 0.8661, indicating a high level of improvement. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test revealed that the pretest data were not normally distributed (Sig. = 0.000), while the posttest data were normally distributed (Sig. = 0.106). Therefore, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used. The test results showed a significance value of 0.007 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. All participants showed score improvement (positive ranks = 9), with no negative ranks or ties.

B. Discussion

This study was conducted at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun with the research subjects consisting of Group 1/Class 1 children. In this study, Lele Dance movement training was used as a learning medium to help children recognize and understand Lamongan local cultural wisdom.

Based on the initial observations, cultural learning activities at the learning center were still limited. The activities mainly focused on dance performances without providing children with an understanding of the origins, meanings, and philosophy of the dance. As a result, the children's knowledge of culture, especially Lamongan culture, had not developed optimally.

This study began with a pretest to determine the children's initial abilities in recognizing Lamongan culture. The pretest results showed that several children were still not optimal in understanding the assessed aspects, such as recognizing cultural symbols, traditional foods, and dance art elements. Afterward, the researcher provided treatment in the form of Lele Dance movement training conducted over three meetings. The purpose of this treatment was to determine the effectiveness of Lele Dance as a learning medium in improving children's knowledge and understanding.

In its implementation, Lele Dance learning involved various activities that directly contributed to improving children's abilities. First, the children were invited to imitate the basic movements of Lele Dance inspired by catfish movements, helping them recognize cultural symbols concretely. The simple and repetitive movements made it easier for children to understand the meanings contained in the dance (Nurdianto, 2025). Second, before practicing, the children were introduced to the story and background of Lele Dance so that they understood the origins of Lamongan culture and did not merely perform the dance movements. Third, the learning process was carried out in groups, encouraging children to imitate one another, cooperate, and interact with peers, thereby strengthening understanding and increasing self-confidence (Education Corner, 2023). Fourth, repeated movement practice during training helped strengthen children's memory of the learning material (McLeod, 2025). Fifth, the use of a learning-through-play approach made the children feel happy and unburdened, making the learning process more effective and meaningful (The OT Toolbox, 2023).

After the treatment was completed, a posttest was conducted to determine the children's developmental progress. The posttest results showed significant and more optimal improvement compared to before the treatment. The children began to recognize Lamongan cultural symbols, understand traditional foods, and imitate Lele Dance movements better. This improvement occurred because the children were directly involved in active, enjoyable, and movement-based learning activities, making the material easier to understand and remember.

The improvement in children's abilities did not occur by coincidence but was influenced by several factors supported by learning theories. Based on behavioristic theory, improvement occurred because of repetition during training, which helped strengthen children's memory and learning habits (Nurdianto, 2025). From the perspective of Piaget's constructivist theory, children learn through direct experiences by constructing their own knowledge through activities (Education Corner, 2023). In addition, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory explains that social interaction with teachers and peers during group dance activities also helped optimize children's development (McLeod, 2025).

The use of Lele Dance as a learning medium is also in line with the concept of culture-based learning because it helps children recognize and understand local wisdom through enjoyable and meaningful activities. This finding is supported by previous studies stating that local culture-based learning as well as movement and play activities can significantly improve children's participation and learning outcomes (Amanda, Widyaningrum, & Wakhyudin, 2019).

Statistically, the results of this study were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test with the assistance of SPSS. The analysis showed a significance value of 0.007, which was smaller than 0.05 ($0.007 < 0.05$). Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. This indicates that Lele Dance movement training had a significant effect on improving the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children in Malaysia.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of Lele Dance as a learning medium is not only interesting and enjoyable but also effective in improving children's abilities through active involvement, direct experiences, and social interaction during the learning process.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that Lele Dance movement training had a significant effect on improving the knowledge and understanding of Lamongan local cultural wisdom among Indonesian immigrant children at Sanggar Bimbingan Jalan Kebun. Before the treatment, most children still had limited understanding of Lamongan cultural identity, traditional foods, cultural symbols, and the basic movements of Lele Dance. After participating in three training sessions, the children showed noticeable improvement in almost all assessed indicators.

The statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test showed a significance value of $0.007 < 0.05$, indicating that the treatment provided a significant influence on children's learning outcomes. In addition, the N-Gain score of 0.8661 was categorized as high, showing that the improvement in children's understanding occurred optimally and evenly among participants.

These findings demonstrate that culture-based learning through dance activities can become an effective and meaningful learning medium for early childhood education, especially for Indonesian immigrant children living abroad. Through direct experience, repetition, play activities, and social interaction, children were able to recognize and understand their local culture more easily and enjoyably. Therefore, Lele Dance movement training not only functions as an artistic activity but also serves as an effort to preserve cultural identity and strengthen children's understanding of their regional heritage in a foreign environment.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, it is suggested that culture-based learning activities, especially through dance movement training, should be implemented more frequently in learning environments for Indonesian immigrant children. Lele Dance movement training can be used as an alternative learning medium to introduce local cultural wisdom in a more enjoyable, active, and meaningful way for children. Teachers and learning facilitators are also encouraged to integrate cultural values into daily learning activities so that children not only learn academic skills but also develop awareness and appreciation of their cultural identity.

In addition, parents and educational institutions are expected to provide continuous support in preserving local culture among children living abroad. Through consistent cultural introduction activities, children can maintain a connection with their regional heritage despite living in a different cultural environment.

For future researchers, it is recommended to develop this study by involving larger research subjects, using different learning media, or applying experimental designs with control groups to obtain more comprehensive results. Further studies may also explore the influence of culture-based learning on other aspects of child development, such as social, emotional, language, or character development.

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