



The Existence of the Nanas Madu Dance at the Tilamsari Art Studio in Pemalang Regency

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Abstract

Traditional dance faces sustainability challenges amid globalization and the dominance of digital culture, including the Nanas Madu Dance, which represents the local culture of Pemalang Regency. This study aims to analyze the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance at Sanggar Seni Tilamsari and the preservation strategies applied. The research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a sociological approach to art and SWOT analysis. The findings show that Sanggar Tilamsari plays an active role in sustaining the dance through training, performances, and the use of digital media. However, challenges such as limited dancer regeneration, lack of promotional resources, and the influence of popular culture remain obstacles. Observations reveal that dance sustainability depends not only on aesthetic value but also on community participation and technological adaptation. This study recommends the need for policy support, digital literacy for art practitioners, and collaboration with educational institutions to strengthen local cultural preservation. These findings affirm that traditional arts remain relevant when they can evolve contextually. The Nanas Madu Dance is not merely a relic of the past, but a cultural opportunity for the future that must continue to be revitalized.

Keywords: Nanas Madu Dance, Existence, Art Studio, Preservation Strategy, Local Culture.

Introduction

Traditional dance art is one form of cultural expression that reflects the identity of a region and serves as a medium for social communication and the preservation of local values. As part of national culture, dance art plays an important role in maintaining cultural identity in an increasingly globalized world (Aprianti dkk., 2022). However, in the current digital era, the existence of traditional arts faces serious challenges due to shifts in cultural consumption patterns, with society increasingly turning to digital media (Waluyo & Rosmawati, 2021). This shift has transformed the landscape of performing arts appreciation, as younger generations are more attracted to digital content that is easily accessible through social media platforms.

In Pemalang Regency, the Nanas Madu Dance was created by Tri Hina Windi Asih, Chairperson of the Tilamsari Art Studio, in Bulakan Village, Belik District. This dance is inspired by the life of honey pineapple farmers in the village, depicting the process of planting and

harvesting pineapples through simple yet meaningful movements. The Nanas Madu Dance has become a regular part of local cultural performances. Its uniqueness lies in representing local economic activities as artistic expression, reflecting the local wisdom of the Pemalang community that values agricultural products as a source of livelihood

Previous research on the preservation of traditional arts has identified various adaptive strategies implemented by art studios to cope with changing times. Ramadhani (2017) emphasized the strategic role of art studios as centers for learning activities within community groups that develop traditional arts, as well as a form of non-formal education supporting the preservation and development of regional arts. Sementara itu, Sumiati & Jatnika (2022) examined efforts to revitalize traditional dance through adaptive strategies such as hybrid training, utilization of social media, and broader community involvement in artistic activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic that struck the world in 2020 severely worsened the condition of

traditional performing arts. Social restrictions and bans on gatherings halted almost all face-to-face cultural activities, including dance training and performances (Syefriani & Kurniati, 2022). The Tilamsari Art Studio experienced a decline in activity and income due to this situation. However, they endeavored to survive by conducting online training and creating digital content to promote the Nanas Madu Dance. This situation highlights the urgency of digital transformation in preserving traditional arts.

The concept of existence in the arts context means not only physical presence but also being recognized, utilized, and actively passed down within the community (Immaculata dkk., 2019). The sustainability of dance art existence requires regeneration of practitioners, documentation, legal protection such as Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), and active involvement of communities and government (Deliana & Sugito, 2019). In this regard, the theory of cultural sustainability is relevant as it frames cultural continuity not merely as preserving old values and practices but ensuring that culture can live, grow, and adapt to changing times (Soini & Birkeland, 2014).

The participatory cultural practices approach developed by Jenkins et al. (2018) offers a new perspective in preserving traditional arts, where communities are not passive spectators but active contributors in creating, disseminating, and modifying cultural expressions. This theory aligns with the concept of digital heritage interpretation. Islam et al. (2018) which emphasizes the importance of digital technology as a medium for reinterpreting cultural values, and creative placemaking that integrates art, community, and public space to create socially and culturally productive environments (Markusen & Gadwa, 2012).

Although various studies have explored preservation strategies for traditional arts, there remains a lack of in-depth understanding of the dynamics of traditional dance existence at the local level, especially in the post-pandemic and digital era context. Previous research tends to focus on technical preservation aspects or general analyses of challenges facing traditional arts but has not comprehensively explored internal and external factors influencing the existence of local dance arts within community studios as key preservation actors.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by deeply analyzing the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance at the Tilamsari Art Studio and

identifying effective preservation strategies to face changing times and cultural shifts. The study also aims to provide strategic recommendations for developing more adaptive and sustainable traditional arts preservation policies.

Based on this background, the research intends to analyze and explain the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance in the Tilamsari Art Studio, Pematang Regency, and identify preservation strategies employed to address societal cultural shifts using a sociology of arts approach and SWOT analysis to offer a comprehensive understanding of traditional arts preservation dynamics in the digital era.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to deeply reveal the meanings and social phenomena from the perspective of the subjects studied. The approach used is the sociology of art, which enables the researcher to examine the interconnections between art and the social conditions of the surrounding community (Lestari, 2023). The research focus is not only on the form or structure of the dance but also on the social interactions among artists, the community, the art studio institution, and the audience as part of the cultural system.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: participatory observation of dance training and performances at the Tilamsari Art Studio; in-depth interviews with key informants, namely Tri Hina Windyasih as the studio founder, along with dance instructors, active dancers, and former members; and documentation through archives of photos, performance videos, and studio activity notes.

The data obtained were analyzed using the interactive model by Miles and Huberman, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Okwita & Sari, 2019). To support the analysis of the sustainability strategies of the Nanas Madu Dance, the researcher also applied SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to identify internal and external factors influencing the dance's existence. This analysis is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and development potential of the dance as an intangible cultural heritage of the Pematang community

Findings

The Existence of the Nanas Madu Dance as a Representation of Local Culture

The Nanas Madu Dance represents the local culture of Pemalang Regency and is inspired by the region's flagship commodity, the honey pineapple. Created by Tri Hina Windyasih in 2016, this dance emerged from the social experiences of honey pineapple farmers, who form the backbone of the local economy. The dance functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a narrative medium depicting the daily lives of these farmers.



Figure 1. Nanas Madu Dance

Visually, the Nanas Madu Dance is performed by female dancers using distinctive props such as woven baskets (tampah) and costumes in yellow-green hues symbolizing the sweet, fresh, and productive honey pineapple. These costume elements and props strengthen the dance's visual character while conveying symbolic messages about prosperity and regional potential. The choreography features simple yet rhythmic movements that are easy to follow and popular among the wider community, especially students.

Table 1. Artistic and symbolic elements in the Nanas Madu dance

Element	Description	Symbolic mean
Costume	Yellow-green color, resembling the color of honey pineapple	Prosperity, freshness, and identity of Pemalang area
Properties	Bakul/tampah carried by the dancer	Harvest results, hard work of farmers
Movement	Simple, rhythmic, depicting the	Daily life of farmers, cooperation,

Number of dancers	farming process 5-7 women (flexible according to the stage)	and mutual cooperation Collectivity of village women in farming activities
Accompanying music	Traditional music with a soft and lively rhythm	Balance between hard work and happiness

The existence of the Nanas Madu Dance is inseparable from the strategic role of the Tilamsari Art Studio, where this dance was first created and developed. The studio serves not only as a rehearsal space but also as a cultural education platform and a medium for character building among the younger generation through traditional arts. In practice, the studio involves students from various educational levels to participate regularly in dance training, take part in regional performances, and contribute to the documentation of local arts (Nabila, 2022). In this context, the Nanas Madu Dance functions not only as a cultural icon but also as a form of non-formal education that strengthens the bond between local culture, the community, and future generations.

SWOT Analysis of the Existence of the Nanas Madu Dance

To understand the strategic position of the Nanas Madu Dance, a SWOT analysis was conducted covering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the art studio in maintaining the dance's existence.

1) Strengths

- The Nanas Madu Dance possesses distinctive cultural value and serves as a local icon.
- The studio has competent and experienced instructors.
- Strong commitment and enthusiasm for preservation from the management.
- Support from the community, including parents and the surrounding environment.

2) Weaknesses

- Lack of dancer regeneration during periods of activity restrictions.

- Limited facilities and funding for intensive training.
 - Weak mastery of digital media for promotion.
 - Insufficient management of publicity and branding.
- 3) Opportunities
- Growing awareness and concern for local culture.
 - Government programs aimed at cultural sector recovery.
 - Support from the community and arts organizations.
 - Potential collaborations with schools and educational institutions.
- 4) Threats
- Growing awareness and concern for local culture.
 - Government programs aimed at cultural sector recovery.
 - Support from the community and arts organizations.
 - Potential collaborations with schools and educational institutions.

Discussion

Social Dynamics and Challenges to Existence

Over time, the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance has faced various challenges, both from within and outside the art studio environment. One of the most critical moments was when the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world, causing widespread social restrictions. Artistic activities, which are generally communal and conducted in person, were forced to stop. Training at the studio could no longer be held face-to-face, performances were canceled, and interactions between artists and the community became very limited. The pandemic not only affected physical activities but also reduced public interest in traditional performing arts, which shifted into more private spaces (Nurrajab et al., 2021).

Beyond the pandemic, broader social changes occurred alongside technological advancements and the emergence of digital culture (Arianto, 2021). The younger generation, as prospective heirs of local culture, now tends to be more attracted to fast-paced entertainment forms such as TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and trend-based visual content. This shift has caused traditional dances like the Nanas Madu Dance to become increasingly marginalized from

mainstream appreciation spaces. This challenge is not merely a matter of taste or interest but also relates to access, exposure, and the mode of presenting artworks, which have not sufficiently adapted to the context of the digital generation (Yulfianti dkk., 2024).

In response to these changes, the Tilamsari Art Studio has made efforts to adapt by utilizing social media platforms as a means of distributing and promoting their work. Clips of dance performances, training documentation, and narratives about the dance's history have begun to be shared through Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Social media is used not only to showcase final performances but also as a space to build public engagement, introduce the profiles of dancers, and bring traditional dance closer to the daily lives of the community. This initiative reflects a transformation in the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance from formal stages to more open digital spaces that reach a broader audience.

However, this digital adaptation has not yet been fully optimized. The studio still faces various challenges, including limited technological equipment, a lack of digital literacy training for members, and the absence of dedicated personnel capable of managing content professionally. These challenges indicate that innovation alone is insufficient without adequate institutional capacity. Therefore, preservation strategies for traditional dance in the digital era also require structural support, such as digital training for artists, collaboration with creative communities, and local government policies that favor the development of technology-based traditional arts.

Strategic Analysis of the Existence of the Nanas Madu Dance

The SWOT analysis results indicate that the main strength of the Nanas Madu Dance lies in its strong local identity and the cultural values embedded in every movement. The dance movements, inspired by the activities of honey pineapple farmers such as planting, nurturing, and harvesting, provide a distinctive thematic uniqueness that is easily recognizable. Additionally, the presence of the Tilamsari Art Studio as a center for training and performances offers a stable foundation for the dance's sustainability. The commitment of the local community, especially art enthusiasts and former dancers, further strengthens its existence amid increasingly complex social changes.

On the other hand, the weaknesses faced by the studio relate to suboptimal regeneration. The limited number of young dancers consistently participating in training makes the continuity of the dance quite vulnerable in the long term. The modest training facilities and limited funds for costumes and documentation pose obstacles in both the training process and the creative development of the dance. In this digital era, another challenge is the low digital literacy among the studio's management, which hinders the promotion and wider distribution of cultural content.

Nevertheless, there are various strategic opportunities that can be leveraged to strengthen the existence of the Nanas Madu Dance. Both local and central governments have begun developing several cultural preservation programs, including support for art studios, funding assistance for the arts, and digital archiving of artworks. Cultural festivals and inter-regional dance competitions also provide important platforms to introduce the Nanas Madu Dance to a broader public. Additionally, social media and digital platforms serve as potential channels to bring the dance closer to younger generations, whether through performance videos, cultural education, or cross-community artistic collaborations.

In terms of threats, the dominance of popular culture and instant entertainment such as TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and other viral content has shifted the art appreciation patterns of the younger generation. This shift poses a risk that traditional arts like the Nanas Madu Dance may lose their stage if not presented in formats that are engaging and relevant to contemporary times. The lack of attention from local governments,

especially regarding regular funding and intellectual property protection, also presents a serious challenge. Therefore, preservation strategies cannot rely solely on the internal strengths of the art studio but must be combined with structural collaboration among artists, educational institutions, media, and supportive government regulations for regional arts. Existence is not merely about survival but about the ability to live, grow, and remain relevant within an ever-changing cultural landscape.

Conclusion

The existence of the Nanas Madu Dance at the Tilamsari Art Studio demonstrates that traditional arts still have a place in community life, despite facing contemporary challenges such as limited regeneration, the dominance of popular culture, and technological constraints. Preservation efforts carried out through community training, performances, and digital adaptation show that local communities have the capacity to maintain cultural values when supported by appropriate and collaborative strategies.

This study illustrates that cultural preservation is not sufficient by relying solely on aesthetic values but also demands innovation, participation, and sustainable policy support. The limitation of this research lies in its focus on a single community, indicating the need for broader studies to explore variations in preservation strategies elsewhere. It is hoped that this research will encourage greater attention to strengthening the role of art studios as centers for regeneration and the revitalization of local culture in the digital era.

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