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**Correspondence Address:**

Prodi pendidikan Musik Fakultas  
Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri  
Semarang, Gunungpati, Semarang,  
Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. 50221  
Email:  
raharjoeko1965@mail.unnes.ac.id

## Gambang Semarang in the Context of Coastal Culture: Revitalizing Local Wisdom for Education and Tourism

Eko Raharjo<sup>1</sup>, Dian Herdiati<sup>2</sup>, Utami Arsih<sup>3</sup>, Restu Lanjari<sup>4</sup>, Fonny Dameaty Hutagalung<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Sendratasik Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang*

<sup>2</sup>*Music Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Jakarta*

<sup>3</sup>*Dance Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang*

<sup>5</sup>*Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya*

**Abstract :** This research discusses the revitalisation of Gambang Semarang as a traditional art preservation strategy through education and tourism approaches in coastal culture. Gambang Semarang, as a typical Semarang art that reflects cultural acculturation, has great potential to be developed in art education and cultural tourism promotion. This study examines the integration strategy of Gambang Semarang in the education curriculum and its development as a cultural tourism attraction. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, the research involved interviews, observations, and documentation studies in Semarang schools, arts communities, and tourist destinations. The results showed that experiential learning and arts community engagement enhanced students' appreciation of Gambang Semarang. Cultural festivals and arts-based tourism programs effectively expanded Gambang Semarang's exposure to the public and tourists. However, the challenges of regenerating young artists and limited promotion are major obstacles. The synergy between education and tourism can be an innovative solution to preserve Gambang Semarang and strengthen the cultural identity of the people of Semarang.

**Keywords:** Gambang Semarang, art education, cultural tourism, cultural preservation, revitalisation of traditional arts.



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## 1. Introduction

*Gambang Semarang* music is one of the performing art forms enriched with cultural and historical values, reflecting the identity of coastal communities in Semarang. In coastal culture, *Gambang* serves as an entertainment and a means to convey local wisdom and traditions passed down from generation to generation. Previous research shows that *Gambang Semarang* has a great potential to be integrated into education and tourism, which can support cultural preservation and local economic development. (Afriantoa & Santikob, 2021; Opsantini & Septiyan, 2023; Rachman, Teangtrong, Jirajarupat, et al., 2022; Raharjo et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to explore how *Gambang Semarang* can be revitalized through education and tourism and its impact on the local community.

According to Rachman et al., *Gambang Semarang*'s history can be traced back to the colonial period, when music developed as a unique form of cultural expression. (Rachman, Teangtrong, Jirajaruphat, et al., 2022). The musical patterns of the *Gambang* instruments reflect the cultural diversity in Semarang, including the influence of the various ethnicities living in the area. This suggests that *Gambang Semarang* is not just a music but also a representation of complex social and cultural interactions. However, further research is needed to understand how these elements can be integrated into educational curricula and sustainable tourism programs.

Many researchers have recognized the importance of cultural preservation through performing arts, such as *Gambang Semarang*, in education. Afrianto and Santiko emphasize that formal and non-formal education can effectively teach cultural values to the younger generation. (Afrianto & Santiko, 2021; Astuti et al., 2022; Raharjo, 2019, 2023; Sejati et al., 2023; Septiyan, 2019). By organizing festivals, workshops, and performances, communities can directly participate in cultural preservation, increasing awareness and appreciation of local cultural heritage. Therefore, this research explores educational models that can integrate *Gambang Semarang* into the curriculum.

Tourism also plays an important role in cultural preservation, especially in areas rich with history, such as Semarang. A study shows that the Old Town of Semarang has great potential as a cultural tourism destination, which can attract domestic and international tourists (Amin et al., 2020). Promoting *Gambang Semarang* performances as part of the tourism experience is expected to increase tourist visits and support the local economy. However, challenges in managing cultural tourism must be overcome to avoid sacrificing existing cultural values.

The challenges in preserving *Gambang Semarang* are not only from

modernization and globalization but also from the lack of community support and understanding of the importance of local culture. Hermawan et al. (2020) noted that many cultural heritage sites in Semarang are threatened by rapid urban development. Therefore, this research also discusses strategies to overcome these challenges and develop policies that support the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* in education and tourism.

To understand *Gambang Semarang* better, it is important to analyze various government and community initiatives. Research has shown that collaboration between multiple stakeholders -including the government, local communities, and the private sector - is crucial to create an ecosystem that supports cultural preservation (Amin, 2023). Therefore, this research explores a collaborative model that could be applied to support the revitalization of *Gambang Semarang*.

In addition, this research also identifies gaps in existing research on *Gambang Semarang* and its implications for education and tourism. Although several studies have discussed about *Gambang Semarang*, many aspects still need further exploration, such as the social and economic impacts of preserving this culture on the local community. Therefore, the research question posed in this study is: "How can *Gambang Semarang* be revitalized as part of a cultural and tourism-based education development strategy?". While several studies have addressed the preservation of traditional arts and their impact on education and tourism, there is limited focus on *Gambang Semarang* in the context of coastal culture. Existing research tends to be general and does not delve into how *Gambang* can be effectively integrated into education curricula and sustainable tourism programs. For example, Muchsin (2021) examines the art of *Kenthongan* in Banyumas. Nevertheless, it does not provide a sufficient insight into how traditional performing arts such as *Gambang* can contribute to developing education and tourism in Semarang. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by exploring *Gambang Semarang*'s potential as a tool for local wisdom revitalization.

*This research's state-of-the-art* includes a growing understanding of the importance of performing arts in cultural preservation and educational development. As expressed by Sari et al., previous research suggests that performing arts can serve as a medium to convey cultural values to the younger generation. (Sari et al., 2020). However, despite recognizing the importance of the arts in education, its practical implementation is often poorly realized. This research highlights existing best practices, identifies educational models that have successfully integrated performing arts into the curriculum, and explains how *Gambang Semarang* can be part of such models.

The novelty of this research lies in the holistic approach that combines aspects of education and tourism in the context of *Gambang Semarang* preservation. This research addresses the conservation of art and how it can be utilized to raise cultural awareness among the younger generation and attract tourists. By adopting a more integrated approach, this research aims to significantly contribute to developing policies that support cultural preservation and tourism in Semarang. Through a holistic and collaborative approach, *Gambang Semarang* can continue to live and thrive as an integral part of the cultural identity of Semarang's coastal communities.

Although various efforts have been made to maintain *Gambang Semarang*'s existence, previous research is still limited in discussing the synergy between education and tourism as a sustainable revitalization strategy. Existing studies mostly focus on historical and musicological aspects without exploring how *Gambang Semarang* can be effectively integrated into educational curricula and developed as an attractive cultural tourism attraction for the younger generation and tourists. In addition, only few studies have comprehensively examined the challenges of regenerating young artists and competing with modern tourist attractions to preserve the art of *Gambang Semarang*.

Based on these gaps, this research aims to explore the revitalization strategy of *Gambang Semarang* through education and tourism approaches to ensure its preservation in modernization. Specifically, this research analyses how education can effectively instil an appreciation of *Gambang Semarang* among the younger generation and how tourism can be utilized to expand the reach and appeal of the art. As such, this research can make a real contribution to developing culture-based education policies, strengthening the role of arts communities, and encouraging innovation in promoting and packaging *Gambang Semarang* performances to remain relevant and sustainable.

## 2. Literature Review

In a review of previous research on "*Gambang Semarang* in the Context of Coastal Culture: Revitalizing Local Wisdom for Education and Tourism", various studies show relevance among local wisdom, tourism development, and education. Aspects of local wisdom manifested in traditional music, such as *Gambang Semarang*, are potentials that can be developed for education and attracting tourists. For example, a research by Arfani and colleagues explains that community-based tourism development and local wisdom can improve the preservation of cultural ecosystems and empower local communities in designing authentic and sustainable tourism experiences (Arfani et al., 2022).

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Based on the assumption that local wisdom culture can be promoted through digital media, the research conducted by Rini shows that local wisdom-based tourism promotion should involve various digital platforms to increase the visibility and accessibility of information about cultural diversity to tourists. Reviews of *Gambang Semarang* that are effectively promoted can attract the attention of more tourists and researchers who want to understand more about the artistic values contained in the music. (Rini et al., n.d.). Thus, based on *Gambang Semarang*, a strong cultural education and tourism model can be built in Semarang.

Furthermore, Djunaid's research on the cultural tourism potential presented by the *Gawai Dayak Week* celebration in Pontianak City highlights the great contribution of local wisdom culture in attracting tourists and strengthening the region's cultural identity. *Gambang Semarang*, as an art form rich in history and tradition, can serve as a means to celebrate and preserve cultural identity in a broader context, not only in Semarang but also in other coastal areas with similar traditions (Djunaid et al., 2024). The literature analyzes *Gambang Semarang*'s existence in an educational context, which can increase the younger generation's understanding of their cultural values.

Digging deeper into community participation in tourism development, Syarifuddin explains the importance of community involvement in the preservation of local culture, which has the potential to be integrated into tourist attractions. This involvement is not simply a participatory aspect but also creates a sense of belonging and responsibility for the community towards the local wisdom that is being preserved and developed. By facilitating a *Gambang Semarang* training program, communities aware of this potential can teach the younger generation and increase their involvement in the creative industry (Syarifuddin, 2023).

Another research in tourist villages such as *Kampung Minang Nagari Sumpur* shows how local wisdom passed down inter-generations can become a tourist attraction. Masesa and Fatimah's research emphasised that preserving local buildings and culture provides a basis for the local economy and teaches the younger generation about their cultural heritage. From the perspective of *Gambang Semarang*, learning about the musical instruments in the art of *Gambang Semarang* can be a way to maintain the sustainability of local culture and education (Masesa & Fatimah, 2023).

The community-based tourism development strategy mentioned by Nurfaizah shows the importance of a descriptive approach in understanding an area's tourism potential, including learning from existing artistic traditions. This research suggests that communities should be active in all stages of tourism development, from planning to implementation, so that they are willing to preserve and promote their culture (Nurfaizah et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant to *Gambang Semarang*, where the

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local community actively popularises traditional music. In a further study, Kartimin et al. identifies the potential of tourism villages in Badung Regency in demonstrating how local music can be an attraction. This research shows how rich musical traditions and cultural performances can attract tourists and create a unique experience. Implementing a *Gambang Semarang* performance program in the coastal areas of Semarang and its surroundings could be similar, by combining arts and tourism while preserving local culture (Kartimin et al., 2022).

In their research on geotourism and educational potential, Rachmadian and friends emphasised the need to develop learning methods that link local culture and the environment. This means that *Gambang Semarang*, as a representation of Semarang culture, can be integrated into educational programs that aim to educate the community and visitors about the existence of cultural heritage (Rachmadian et al., 2023). This shows that *Gambang Semarang* is a set of musical instruments symbolizing local wisdom with great educational potential. In addition, a study by Widiati and Permatasari examined environmentally based sustainable tourism development strategies. They emphasized the importance of sustainability in managing tourism potential, including arts and culture, to ensure that it not only positively impacts the economy but also maintains the integrity of local culture. As such, the revitalization initiative of *Gambang Semarang* as part of a tourist destination should consider this aspect of sustainability to maximize the benefits for the community and visitors.

Focusing on the impact of cultural tourism, a research by Ferdian et al. suggests that the reorganization of tourist destinations should pay attention to existing cultural values. This can be utilized to develop *Gambang Semarang* as an educational and engaging tourist attraction. Adding interactive elements like workshops or live performances can enhance the tourist experience and local education (Ferdian et al., 2022). From the perspective of an in-depth study of culture and tourism, it is clear that *Gambang Semarang* and other performance elements have tremendous potential to be integrated into education and tourism development. This aligns with the expectation that every aspect of local culture can be optimized to provide broader economic and social benefits to surrounding communities while promoting Indonesia's rich culture.

### 3. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study research design to explore and analyse how *Gambang Semarang* can be revitalized as part of a culture-based education and tourism development strategy –(de Villiers & Gillmer, 2023; Garusi,



2023; Macintosh & Smith, 2002; Morozova, 2024; Raharjo et al., 2021; Rizki et al., 2024; Sheydayi, 2023). This method was chosen because it allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural context in the Semarang City area and to identify challenges and opportunities that exist in preserving the *Gambang Semarang*. The qualitative approach allowed the researchers to explore meanings, perceptions, and experiences of the stakeholders involved in the revitalization process and provide greater insight into the interaction between education and tourism in the context of cultural preservation. This research was conducted in several places in Semarang that are directly related to the art of *Gambang Semarang*, including schools, art communities, and tourism sites.

The case study allowed us to explore the dynamics within the schools, arts communities, and tourist destinations involved in the cultural preservation. Through this design, the researchers were able to extract richer data based on the direct experiences of the participants in the field, thus providing a more comprehensive picture of the challenges and potentials of *Gambang Semarang* revitalization.

The research procedure began with data collection through several methods, namely interviews, observations, and documentation studies (Daruni, 2022; Foulds, 2023; Jääskeläinen, 2023; Maldonado-Castellanos, 2023; Sempere-Comas & Gisbert-Cervera, 2023; Sun & Cheung, 2020; Sutopo & Lukisworo, 2023). Interviews were conducted with various stakeholders, including *Gambang Semarang* activists, educators, and tourism managers. School interviews were conducted at Karangturi Junior High School in Semarang using a purposive sampling technique (de Villiers & Gillmer, 2023; Sumarni, 2019). Interviews were conducted with 45 students representing grade 7 who are currently participating in the Cultural Arts learning process, and 30 grade 8 students who received *Gambang Semarang* material during cultural arts learning in grade VII. They were interviewed to explore their views on the importance of *Gambang Semarang* in education and tourism. Interviews were also conducted with cultural arts teachers, school principals, artists, the Head of the Education Office, and the Head of the Tourism Office to gain a broader perspective on the role of education and tourism in preserving *Gambang Semarang*. The interview questions were designed to explore their views on the importance of *Gambang Semarang* in the context of education and tourism, such as understanding and appreciation of *Gambang Semarang*, experience in following the teaching and learning process of cultural arts with *Gambang Semarang* material, interest and participation in the preservation of traditional arts, in this case, *Gambang Semarang* as a cultural heritage and one of the local wisdom of Semarang city. In addition, interviews were also conducted with three cultural arts teachers who teach music, dance, and visual arts. Interview questions included the role of education in preserving *Gambang Semarang*,

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challenges in learning *Gambang Semarang*, and strategies to improve learning and preservation of culture, especially *Gambang Semarang*. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with the principal of Karangturi National Junior High School in Semarang; interview questions regarding school policies in preserving *Gambang Semarang*, challenges and implementation of local culture-based art programs, and the school's role in developing *Gambang Semarang* as an edu-tourism attraction. Meanwhile, interviews with artists focused on *Gambang Semarang* preservation, regeneration challenges, and adaptation to modernization. The Head of the Education Office was interviewed about integrating *Gambang Semarang* into the curriculum and culture-based education policies. At the same time, the Head of the Tourism Office discussed promotional strategies, the role of festivals, and innovations in increasing cultural tourism appeal. Interviews with the community aimed to understand their appreciation and involvement in the preservation of *Gambang Semarang*. The data obtained were analyzed thematically to identify challenges and opportunities in maintaining the sustainability of *Gambang Semarang*.

Observations in this study were conducted in schools, the surrounding environment, classroom learning processes, and several tourist destinations in Semarang City to obtain in-depth data on education and tourism's role in preserving *Gambang Semarang*. In schools, observations focused on how *Gambang Semarang* is taught in the curriculum, the learning methods used, and student participation in cultural arts activities. The school environment was observed to see the support for cultural preservation, including the facilities and infrastructure available. Observations at tourist attractions, such as Lawang Sewu and Kota Lama Semarang, aimed to identify how *Gambang Semarang* is packaged in the tourism sector, tourists' interaction with the performing arts, and the effectiveness of promotional strategies implemented. The gathered data were analyzed to understand the relationship between education and tourism in the revitalization of *Gambang Semarang*.

Data from interviews and observations were recorded and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques (Christou, 2023; Parrott, 2024; Saunders, 2023; Xu, 2020). Each interview transcript was thoroughly reviewed to identify key emerging themes, which were then grouped into relevant categories. This process helped the researchers summarize the information obtained and identify patterns in the views and experiences of the stakeholders. In addition, the documentation study included an analysis of existing literature on *Gambang Semarang*, local wisdom, education and tourism to provide a broader context for the research findings.

Furthermore, this research also involved analyzing secondary data obtained from various sources, including journal articles, research reports, and policy documents

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related to cultural preservation and tourism development in Semarang City. This secondary data were used to strengthen the arguments and findings obtained from the primary data and provide a more comprehensive perspective on the issues faced in preserving Semarang Gambang Arts.

The results of the data analysis are presented in the form of a narrative describing the main findings of the research, as well as recommendations for developing policies that support the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* in the context of education and tourism. This research can significantly contribute to understanding the role of *Gambang Semarang* in Semarang's coastal culture and provide practical recommendations to increase awareness and appreciation of the art of *Gambang Semarang* among the younger generation and the wider community. Therefore, this research method can provide an in-depth understanding of *Gambang Semarang* and the challenges faced in its preservation. Through a comprehensive qualitative approach, this study is able to produce relevant and applicable findings to support the revitalization of the *Gambang Semarang* as part of a culture-based education and tourism development strategy.

**Ethical Considerations:** *Informed Consent:* Before conducting interviews, the researchers ensured that all participants understood the purpose of the study, how the data would be used, and their right to keep their identity confidential or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Each participant has been asked to sign a consent form explaining these details. **Data Privacy and Confidentiality:** All data obtained during interviews and observations are confidential. Participants' names and identities are treated as being anonymi to protect their privacy. Data are stored securely and used only for this study.

**Cultural Sensitivity:** As this research focuses on local art and wisdom, the researchers are committed to respecting and not exploiting the local culture of Semarang. The researchers are careful not to misrepresent or manipulate the culture to the detriment of the local community. **Impact of the Research on the Participants:** The researcher ensured that the research provided benefits to the community, such as raising awareness of the importance of cultural preservation and giving input to developing culture-based education policies. Researchers have also considered potential risks or disruptions that could be caused, especially regarding student participation and community involvement.

**Data Analysis:** The interview and observation data were documented and analyzed using thematic analysis. Each transcript was carefully examined to uncover recurring themes, which were then organized into relevant categories. Additionally, a document study was conducted by analyzing existing literature on *Gambang*

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*Semarang*, local wisdom, education, and tourism to enrich the contextual understanding of the research findings.

#### 4. Results

*Gambang Semarang* has a rich and significant history in the local cultural context of coastal communities in Semarang. Since the colonial era, *Gambang Semarang* has been an integral part of the social and cultural life of the community, functioning as a means of entertainment and a medium to convey local wisdom and values. According to Rachman et al., *Gambang Semarang* is not only a musical instrument but also reflects a strong cultural identity formed from the interaction of various ethnicity and cultures that exist in Semarang (Rachman, Teangtrong, Jirajaruphat, et al., 2022). Thus, *Gambang Semarang* is a symbol of performing arts and represents the history and traditions of coastal communities rich in cultural values.

The role of *Gambang Semarang* in the local community is very important, especially in the context of cultural preservation and education. Afrianto notes that the people of Semarang have sought to realize the city's cultural identity through the art of *Gambang Semarang* by involving various elements in formal and non-formal education. (D. T. Afrianto & Santanto, 2021; Kozhevnikova, 2022). *Gambang Semarang* performances are often held at cultural festivals and community events, attracting the public and tourists. This suggests that *Gambang Semarang* serves as a bridge between the older and younger generations and a means to strengthen a sense of community.

The elements of *Gambang Semarang* music that reflect local wisdom are diverse, ranging from the drumming patterns to the melodies produced. Rachman et al. explained that the drumming patterns in *Gambang Semarang* music have unique characteristics that distinguish it from other traditional musical instruments (Rachman, Teangtrong, Jirajaruphat, et al., 2022). For example, dynamic rhythms and melodies of *Gambang Semarang* are rich with local nuances creating a mesmerizing listening experience for its listeners. These elements also reflect the cultural values passed down from generation to generation, so *Gambang Semarang* is an art form and a means to convey local wisdom to the community. *Gambang Semarang* also has a close relationship with Semarang's coastal cultural identity. In this context, *Gambang Semarang* is considered as a performing art and a symbol of coastal community life rooted in its tradition and history (Raharjo et al., 2021). Preserving *Gambang Semarang* can help communities understand and appreciate their cultural heritage and strengthen local identity. By integrating *Gambang Semarang* into education and tourism, communities can better appreciate and preserve *Gambang Semarang* as part of their cultural identity.

The coastal cultural context of Semarang has unique and diverse characteristics that greatly influence performing arts, including *Gambang Semarang*. Coastal culture in Semarang is characterized by interactions among different ethnicities, such as Javanese, Chinese and Arabs, contributing to the richness of the local culture. The interaction between local culture and outside influences is also highly visible in the development of *Gambang Semarang*. History records that *Gambang Semarang* has been influenced by various genres of music, both local and foreign, which enrich the form and style of its performances. The cultural diversity in the city of Semarang also significantly impacts tourism. In this context, *Gambang Semarang* serves as entertainment and a tool to introduce and preserve local culture to tourists. Integrating *Gambang Semarang* into tourism programs is expected to increase the community's and tourists' awareness about preserving local culture and positively contribute to regional economic development. The results of this study confirm that the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* in the context of coastal culture is very important to maintaining local cultural identity. By prioritization *Gambang Semarang* as part of the education and tourism development strategy, a synergy between cultural preservation and economic development can be created.

### **Revitalization of Local Wisdom through Education**

Revitalizing local wisdom through education is one of the important strategies in cultural preservation, especially *Gambang Semarang*. Education acts as a bridge to transfer cultural values to the younger generation so that they can understand and appreciate the existing cultural heritage. Education oriented towards character development and local values can increase students' awareness of the importance of cultural preservation (I. Afrianto, 2024; Asmal, 2023; Rahmawati, 2020; Sutrisno, 2023; Widayati et al., 2023). In this context, *Gambang Semarang* can be integrated into the education curriculum to introduce students to a performing art enriched with meaning and values of local wisdom.

Educational models integrating performing arts in the curriculum are carried out through various approaches. One effective strategy is to hold intra- and extracurricular programs focusing on the art of *Gambang Semarang*. As in the following picture, students are learning *Gambang Semarang* in class.

**Figure 1. Karangturi Semarang National Junior High School students are learning the music and songs of *Gambang Semarang*.**



Based on the research results, the implementation of educational programs that have successfully preserved *Gambang Semarang* can be seen in the initiatives taken by Karangturi Junior High School Semarang. Andreas Inu Harimurti, a cultural arts teacher, emphasized that *Gambang Semarang* music learning at Karangturi Junior High School Semarang has been integrated into cultural arts subjects, especially traditional music. The curriculum refers to the Merdeka Curriculum, which allows schools to develop local wisdom-based materials. Learning is carried out in theory and practice by focusing on history, musical instruments, playing techniques, and the role of *Gambang Semarang* music in the coastal community of Semarang.

The method applied in this lesson uses an *experiential learning* approach that allows students to experience music practice directly. Teachers use demonstration, exploration, and collaboration methods to teach the techniques of playing instruments such as the xylophone, drum, gong, and bonang. In addition, a *project-based learning* approach is also used, where students are assigned to make simple arrangements and perform their learning outcomes in extracurricular activities. Cultural arts teachers teach the learning of *Gambang Semarang* music at Karangturi Junior High School. It involves professional trainers from the *Gambang Semarang* community, such as the *Gambang Semarang* Art Company (GSAC). The involvement of local artists, such as from GSAC, provides practical insights for students. These trainers

are essential in introducing authentic playing techniques and giving students hands-on experience playing *Gambang Semarang* music in a real performance format.

Students' interest in learning *Gambang Semarang* music is high, especially for those interested in traditional arts. Students actively participate in ensemble practice, learning to play various instruments in groups. In addition, students with higher music skills can follow further training and perform at various performing arts events at school and cultural festivals in Semarang City. Karangturi National Junior High School supports the full learning of *Gambang Semarang* music by providing adequate facilities and infrastructure. The school has a complete set of *Gambang Semarang* musical instruments and a particular practice room for traditional music activities. In addition, the school also regularly organizes cultural arts performances involving students as a form of appreciation for local arts.

Despite the good support, some challenges exist in implementing *Gambang Semarang* music learning. One of the main obstacles is the limited repertoire of songs that can be given to students due to the limited number of hours of cultural arts lessons compared to the number of other subjects. In addition, in today's digital era, students' interest in traditional music is still lower than in modern music. Therefore, creative teaching strategies are needed to keep *Gambang Semarang* music relevant and interesting for the younger generation. The school has developed several innovative methods to improve learning effectiveness, such as using technology in music learning. Recording video tutorials, using music learning applications, and collaborating with universities such as Semarang State University that has a Music Education Study program, are among steps taken to support students' understanding. In addition, an interdisciplinary approach is also applied by linking *Gambang Semarang* music with other subjects, such as history and the Indonesian language.

Learning *Gambang Semarang* music at Karangturi Junior High School positively impacts the preservation of local culture. Students do not only learn to play the music but also understand the cultural values in it. In addition, students' involvement in various school art performances, festivals, and artistic performances in Semarang City helped introduce *Gambang Semarang* music to the wider community, thus strengthening the existence of *Gambang Semarang* as the cultural identity of coastal Semarang. The implementation of *Gambang Semarang* music learning at Karangturi Junior High School Semarang shows that local culture-based education can effectively preserve traditional arts, especially *Gambang Semarang*. By having some innovative approaches, such as the involvement of the *Gambang Semarang* community, like the *Gambang Semarang* Art Company (GSAC) and getting tremendous support from the school, this learning model can be sustainable. In the future, there should be a special



training program for cultural arts teachers so that more teaching staff are to be competent in *Gambang Semarang* music. In addition, technology integration in learning process needs to be developed, so this music remains relevant in the digital era.

An interview with Supiyanto, S.Pd., one of the *Gambang Semarang* artists who still exists today, revealed that one of the main challenges in preserving this art is the lack of regeneration of young artists. Many young people are less interested in learning *Gambang Semarang* because it is less relevant. In addition, the lack of support from facilities and funding is also an obstacle to preservation efforts. Artists hope that integrating *Gambang Semarang* into the education curriculum is one of the solutions to attract the younger generation. Meanwhile, an interview with the Head of the Semarang City Education Office showed that *Gambang Semarang* is not formally integrated into the school curriculum. However, there are initiatives to include local arts in extracurricular programs. Constraints include limited human resources that are competent to teach *Gambang Semarang* and a lack of available teaching materials. The Education Agency recognizes the importance of preserving local culture and plans to work with the arts community to develop appropriate learning programs.

The results of this study show that revitalizing *Gambang Semarang* through education preserves the art itself and strengthens the cultural identity of Semarang's coastal communities. By integrating *Gambang Semarang* into the education curriculum, especially in cultural arts learning in schools, it is hoped that the younger generation can better appreciate and preserve their cultural heritage. This research provides recommendations for developing more structured and sustainable educational programs so that the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* can continue and positively impact society.

### **The Role of Tourism in *Gambang Semarang* Preservation**

The art of *Gambang Semarang* is a cultural heritage that was developed in the coastal area of Semarang City. As a part of the coastal cultural identity, *Gambang Semarang* has some aesthetic value in the form of music and reflects cultural acculturation between local traditions and Chinese influences. However, this art form faces various challenges amid modernization, especially in its regeneration and public appreciation. One effective strategy for preserving *Gambang Semarang* is to develop a tourism sector based on local culture (Susanto, 2022; Widen, 2024).

Culture-based tourism has a great potential to support preserving traditional arts, including *Gambang Semarang*. Through cultural tourism programs, the art of *Gambang Semarang* is introduced to domestic and foreign tourists, creating a wider appreciation



of the art (Lexhagen, 2023; Lundberg, 2024; Zhao, 2023; Zhou, 2023). In addition, the involvement of the tourism sector can provide space for local artists to maintain the sustainability of this art in the context of the creative economy. The Semarang City Government has begun integrating *Gambang Semarang* into several tourism programs, such as the *Semarang Night Carnival*, the Old City Festival, and art performances in the Old City tourist area. Besides, the *Gambang Semarang* community also plays a role in organizing regular performances in several tourist destinations, such as Lawang Sewu and Semarang Chinatown. Furthermore, the government of Semarang organizes the Semarang Gambang Festival every year. Based on the results of interviews with the head of the Semarang City tourism office, there has been a significant increase in the number of Semarang Gambang Festival participants from year to year. Research data show that from 2020, even though the festival was held online, participants reached 12 *Gambang Semarang* groups, in 2021 there were 14 participants, and in 2022 17 participants attended the Semarang Gambang Festival. In 2023 and 2024, this festival was attended by 20 and 23 *Gambang Semarang* groups. Kaharap noted that such festivals attract tourists and provide a platform for local artists, specifically *Gambang Semarang* artists, to showcase their work. This creates a space for interaction between artists and visitors and increases the community's appreciation for the art of *Gambang Semarang* (Kaharap, 2024).

*Gambang Semarang* performances are also being presented interactively to make them more attractive to tourists. Some *Gambang Semarang* art groups have adapted performances with fascinating visual elements, including distinctive costumes, modern lighting, and the integration of historical narratives in the performance. In addition, some tourism programs also provide workshop sessions for tourists to try playing the *Gambang Semarang* instrument, thus enhancing the participatory experience in cultural tourism. Therefore, the role of tourism in the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* is very significant, as it can serve as a tool to introduce and preserve the performing arts of *Gambang Semarang* to the wider community. Such tourism provides opportunities for tourists to enjoy *Gambang Semarang* performances and creates awareness about the importance of local cultural preservation. Cultural preservation through tourism can increase an area's historical and cultural value, attracting more visitors (Kurniati, 2023). Thus, *Gambang Semarang* can become a tourist attraction that supports cultural preservation and the local economy. These steps aim to make *Gambang Semarang* an authentic cultural tourist attraction. This is in line with the results of an interview conducted with the head of the Semarang city tourism office, who revealed that in terms of tourism, *Gambang Semarang* has a great potential as a cultural tourism attraction. However, the promotion is still limited. The Tourism Office plans to increase promotion through various media and organize

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cultural festivals regularly to attract tourists. In addition, collaboration with travel agents and other tourism industry players is important to expand the promotion reach.

The impact of tourism on the local economy and cultural preservation is also very significant. Sulisty (Sulistyo, 2023) This shows that culture-based tourism can contribute positively to local communities' economies by creating jobs and increasing income. In the context of *Gambang Semarang*, performances held in tourism events can attract visitors, increasing demand for local products and services. This supports the local economy and helps cultural preservation by raising community awareness about maintaining their cultural heritage. In addition, collaboration between various stakeholders in tourism development also plays an important role in the conservation of *Gambang Semarang*. Megawati et al. emphasized that community involvement in tourism management can increase the sense of belonging to local culture (Megawati et al., 2022). By involving the community in planning and implementing tourism events featuring *Gambang Semarang*, a sense of collective responsibility is intended to be created to preserve the art of *Gambang Semarang*. This can also encourage communities to be more active in maintaining and developing cultural traditions.

Despite those efforts to preserve *Gambang Semarang* through tourism, some challenges exist. One of them is the lack of regeneration of young artists who are interested in exploring *Gambang Semarang*. In addition, this art still gets less attention than that of other modern tourist attractions in Semarang City, such as culinary and historical tourism. Therefore, more innovative strategies are needed to increase the attractiveness of *Gambang Semarang* as a cultural tourism asset. Other challenges in preserving *Gambang Semarang* through tourism also need to be identified. Mardhiyani (2020) notes that unsustainable tourism management can threaten the sustainability of traditional arts, including the *Gambang Semarang*. Consequently, it is important to develop policies that support sustainable tourism, focusing on economic benefits and cultural preservation. With some right approach, tourism can effectively support the conservation of *Gambang Semarang* and other local cultures.

Utilizing digital technology is one solution to strengthening *Gambang Semarang*'s existence in the tourism sector. Promotion through social media, sharing educational content creation on digital platforms, and collaboration with cultural influencers can help increase *Gambang Semarang*'s exposure to a wider audience. In addition, using augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technology in historical tourism can also provide a more engaging experience for tourists in understanding the art of *Gambang Semarang*.

Triangulation of data from various sources shows a gap between the potential of *Gambang Semarang* as a cultural heritage and its implementation in education and tourism. While awareness of the importance of preservation exists, efforts are sporadic and poorly coordinated. Thus, a comprehensive and collaborative strategy among various stakeholders is needed to ensure the sustainability of *Gambang Semarang*. One important finding is the need to develop teaching materials and training for teachers to teach *Gambang Semarang* in schools. This is in line with the opinion of Creswell & Poth (2018) that in qualitative research, it is important to understand the context and perspectives of participants to produce valid findings. Moreover, the flexibility in qualitative research design is important to adapt to the dynamics of the field and the complexity of the phenomenon under study (Flick, 2018).

Other findings show that the promotion of *Gambang Semarang* in the tourism sector needs to be improved. This can be done through organizing cultural festivals, collaborating with travel agents, and utilizing digital media for promotion. In addition, there is a need to increase public appreciation of *Gambang Semarang* through education and socialization. Overall, this research confirms that the synergy between education and tourism is an effective strategy for maintaining the sustainability of *Gambang Semarang*. A close cooperation among the government, art community, educational institutions, and the public is needed to develop programs supporting this art's preservation. Thus, *Gambang Semarang* can live and thrive as an integral part of Semarang's culture.

## 5. Discussions

The revitalization of *Gambang Semarang* through education and the role of tourism in preserving the art of *Gambang Semarang* are interrelated and mutually supportive in the effort to protect local culture. Education serves to transfer knowledge and cultural values to the younger generation. At the same time, tourism provides a platform to introduce and promote the art of *Gambang Semarang* to the wider community. By integrating *Gambang Semarang* into the education curriculum, students learn about the art and the importance of preserving their culture. This is in line with the research of Smith et al. that shows how culture-based education can increase community awareness of local cultural heritage (Azharunnisa, 2024; Permatasari, 2024; Sedayu, 2022; Smith, 2023). This indicates that culture-based education can increase public awareness of local cultural heritage. This aligns with the research objective of exploring the integration of *Gambang Semarang* into the education curriculum as a strategy for preserving traditional arts. The research findings show that student participation in learning at *Gambang Semarang* increases when the teaching methods

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used are interactive, such as the *experiential learning* and *project-based learning* conducted at Karangturi Junior High School, Semarang. Implementing experiential learning allows students to understand the theory of *Gambang Semarang* music and be directly involved in practicing this traditional music ensemble. The following figure shows that experiential and project-based learning methods align with expectations.

Figure 2. Together, male and female students observed how to play the *bonang* instrument that was being played by one of the students, guided by their cultural arts teacher.



In addition, the collaboration with *Gambang Semarang* community allowed students to learn from experienced artists, thus increasing their understanding and appreciation of this art form. Accordingly, the results of this study reinforce the argument that experiential education approaches and direct engagement in arts practice are effective strategies in ensuring the sustainability of *Gambang Semarang* among the younger generation. The integration of *Gambang Semarang* in the curriculum also has the potential to serve as a model for the preservation of other traditional arts in schools, supporting a more inclusive and applicable vision of culture-based education.

One of the main challenges in preserving *Gambang Semarang* through education is the lack of proficient human resources to play and teach *Gambang Semarang*. Interviews with cultural arts teachers and the Head of Semarang City's Education Office show that only few schools have competent teachers in teaching *Gambang Semarang*. Hence, the implementation of learning this art is still limited. In addition, the lack of standardized teaching materials also poses another challenge, given that most teachers only have limited references in teaching this traditional music to

students. This condition is in line with (Zhang et al., 2023) who highlight that the successful integration of traditional arts in education heavily relies on the expertise of the teaching staff and the availability of sufficient learning resources. Without efforts to increase teachers' capacity, the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* through formal education will be difficult to be realized effectively.

As a solution, educational programs and workshops for teachers and the *Gambang Semarang* community can be an effective strategy to overcome these obstacles. Intensive training for cultural arts teachers on the basic techniques and interpretation of *Gambang Semarang* music needs to be conducted regularly so that they have sufficient skills to teach this art in schools. Furthermore, some collaboration with local art communities, such as the Gambang Semarang Art Company (GSAC) and senior artists, may enrich the learning experience of teachers and students. Studies by (Oliveira, C., & Souza, 2022) showed that the arts community's involvement in traditional music education can improve students' and educators' understanding while creating a stronger emotional attachment to cultural heritage. Therefore, implementing educational programs involving local artists enriches the curriculum and supports the regeneration and sustainability of *Gambang Semarang*.

In addition to improving the competence of educators, the development of technology-based learning modules can also be a solution to overcome the limited human resources proficiency in *Gambang Semarang*. Using digital media, such as video tutorials, e-learning platforms, and interactive learning applications, can be an alternative in introducing *Gambang Semarang* to students and teachers in various schools, especially those who do not have direct access to professional trainers. A study in *Computers & Education* highlighted that digital technology can enhance the effectiveness of arts learning by providing flexible access to teaching materials and more dynamic demonstrations of practice (Chen et al., 2023). Combining hands-on training approaches and technology utilization can optimize the integration of *Gambang Semarang* in education, making it an important part of an adaptive and sustainable cultural arts curriculum.

The practical implications of the findings of this study suggest that *Gambang Semarang* has a great potential as a cultural tourism attraction that can support its own preservation while enhancing Semarang City's tourism sector. Currently, *Gambang Semarang*'s presence in the tourism industry is limited, with only a few annual cultural events like the Semarang Gambang Festival. Observations at major tourist destinations, such as Kota Lama and Lawang Sewu, reveal that other more popular arts dominate the performing arts, while exposure to *Gambang Semarang* is constrained. A study by (Zhang et al., 2023) asserts that integrating local performing

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arts into the tourism experience can enhance destination appeal, attract tourists interested in authentic culture, and strengthen local identity. Therefore, the optimization of *Gambang Semarang* in the tourism sector needs to be considered as a strategic step in increasing the attractiveness of Semarang City as a culture-based tourist destination.

To support the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* through tourism, stakeholders including the Tourism Office, art communities, and tourist destination managers need to implement concrete strategies that are more sustainable. First, regular *Gambang Semarang* performance programs in major tourist destinations should be part of cultural attractions, such as conducting educational tour packages that engage tourists in short workshops on the history, instruments, and basic techniques of *Gambang Semarang*. Studies by (Oliveira, C., & Souza, 2022; Oliveira & Ferreira, 2022) stated that tourists' direct interaction with local culture through participatory experiences enhances the appeal of community-based tourism and encourages more sustainable cultural preservation. In addition, collaboration with the tourism industry, such as hotels and travel agents, can be an effective strategy in promoting *Gambang Semarang* as part of a broader tourism package, for example by featuring *Gambang Semarang* performances as entertainment in hotels or restaurants that target cultural tourists.

Furthermore, implementing digital technology is also important in strengthening *Gambang Semarang*'s presence in the tourism sector. Creating digital-based promotional content, such as documentary videos, virtual tours, or augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), can introduce *Gambang Semarang* to a wider audience and attract young tourists familiar with digital technology. According to Chen et al. (2023), the use of digital technology in cultural tourism promotion not only increases the accessibility of information but also strengthens the destination's attractiveness through a more interactive experience. Therefore, the synergy among the government, art community, and private sector in developing a digital platform that showcases *Gambang Semarang* as a cultural heritage of Semarang City can be a strategic action in ensuring the sustainability of this art in the digital era. By doing these strategies, *Gambang Semarang* will be preserved and may contribute to strengthening the cultural identity and tourism competitiveness of Semarang City either at the national or international levels.

However, the challenges of preserving *Gambang Semarang* through tourism must also be considered. Unsustainable tourism management can threaten the sustainability of traditional arts, especially *Gambang Semarang*'s art. Therefore, it is important to develop policies that support sustainable tourism, focusing on economic



benefits and cultural preservation. Sustainable tourism development can provide long-term benefits to local communities and cultures. Revitalizing *Gambang Semarang* through education and tourism can also create synergies between cultural preservation and economic growth. Involving the community in developing culture-based tourism is expected to increase awareness of the importance of local wisdom and cultural identity. Community involvement in tourism management can increase the sense of belonging to local culture, thus encouraging them to be more active in preserving the art of *Gambang Semarang*.

Finally, this research provides a comprehensive picture of how the revitalization of *Gambang Semarang* through education and the role of tourism can support each other in cultural preservation. With an integrated approach, it is expected that *Gambang Semarang* can continue to live and thrive as an integral part of the cultural identity of the people of Semarang City. Through joint efforts among the government, the community, and the private sector, *Gambang Semarang* can become a symbol of cultural wealth that should be preserved. Thus, the results of this study suggest that the revitalization of *Gambang Semarang* through education and tourism is important to maintain the art and strengthen the community's cultural identity. These findings can form the basis for developing more effective policies and programs supporting cultural preservation and tourism in Semarang. Through collaborative efforts, *Gambang Semarang* can continue to be a part of valuable cultural heritage for future generations.

## 6. Conclusions

This research reveals that *Gambang Semarang*, a traditional art form rich in cultural values, is important in preserving Semarang's coastal culture. *Gambang Semarang* functions not only as a form of entertainment but also as an educational tool and a medium of tourism promotion that has a great potential to be developed. The integration of *Gambang Semarang* in educational curricula has proven effective in increasing the younger generation's appreciation of this art, as implemented at Karangturi Junior High School in Semarang, which combines experiential learning with direct involvement of the local arts community.

However, the preservation of *Gambang Semarang* still poses many challenges, particularly in the regeneration of young artists, limitations in formal education integration, and the low exposure in the tourism sector. Revitalization through education can be optimized by improving training for cultural arts teachers and developing technology-based teaching modules to make it more accessible to students and teachers across schools. More innovative approaches, such as

incorporating technology and hands-on experience in learning, are expected to increase the appeal of *Gambang Semarang* among the younger generation. In the tourism sector, *Gambang Semarang* has great potential to be developed as a cultural attraction that can attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Cultural festivals, regular performances, and digital promotion through social media and collaboration with cultural influencers can increase *Gambang Semarang*'s exposure. However, the challenges of limited promotion and competition with modern attractions must be addressed through closer cooperation between the government, arts community and tourism industry.

The synergy between education and tourism is an effective strategy in ensuring the sustainability of *Gambang Semarang*. Therefore, this study recommends developing a more structured culture-based education program, capacity building for educators, and optimizing digital promotion strategies and cross-sector collaboration to strengthen the existence of *Gambang Semarang* as an integral part of Semarang's cultural identity. With these strategies, the *Gambang Semarang* can continue to grow and contribute to the preservation of local culture, improve the tourism sector, and strengthen the cultural identity of the people of Semarang at the national and international levels. Hopefully, this research can serve as the basis for more effective policies and programs to support the preservation and development of *Gambang Semarang* as a highly valued cultural heritage research.

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