



Strategy for strengthening the cultural identity of Zapin Meskom dance amid globalizations

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ABSTRACT

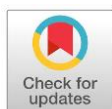
Purpose: to analyze the strategy of strengthening the cultural identity of the Zapin Meskom dance in maintaining its authenticity amidst the currents of globalization and modernization in Meskom village, Bengkalis district, Riau province.

Method: this study used a qualitative case study approach. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies with purposively selected informants. The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis and triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings.

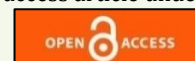
Findings: the preservation of the Zapin Meskom dance as a cultural identity is achieved through educational and regeneration strategies, cultural rituals, and adaptation through digital media. The success of this strategy depends on collaboration among indigenous communities, artists, educational institutions, and the government to maintain the dance's authenticity amid globalization.

Implications: strengthening community-based local cultural preservation strategies that place education, cultural rituals, and digital adaptation as key elements in maintaining the authenticity of cultural identity amid globalization.

Originality: lies in the analysis of the preservation strategy of Zapin Meskom dance as a process of strengthening dynamic cultural identity through education, rituals, and digital adaptation, as well as in its study in the context of cultural tourism villages amid the current tide of globalization.



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Introduction

Globalization has facilitated access to information and communication across nations, indirectly creating a borderless space that has triggered massive, rapid cultural

exchange. However, behind this ease of access to information, a serious challenge arises: the dominance of popular culture, which can marginalize local or regional cultures. Regional cultural identities, rooted in local values, norms, and wisdom, are now at a crucial point in their survival amidst the pull of modernization (Mohyeddin, 2024). In this situation, traditional arts are not merely artifacts of the past, but vital instruments for transmitting historical values and a society's collective identity (Rusfandi, 2024). Traditional arts, encompassing dance, music, theater, visual arts, and literature, are manifestations of cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. Traditional arts serve not only as entertainment but also as a medium for transmitting cultural values, history, and a society's identity. Through traditional arts, people can remember and appreciate their ancestral heritage, as well as strengthen their sense of togetherness and collective identity (Sari, 2024).

Understanding cultural identity requires a dynamic perspective. Hall (1990) emphasized that identity is not static. He distinguished between being (a stable historical legacy) and becoming (a process of identification that continually changes according to historical contexts and power). A stable historical legacy means that cultural identity is a shared culture shared by a group of people with a shared history and ancestry, reflecting shared historical experiences and cultural codes and tending to be stable and unchanging. Meanwhile, a constantly changing process of identification means that cultural identity is not completely fixed but can change depending on how the subjects of history, culture, and power are positioned and transformed. This view emphasizes that culture is a never-ending production (Christian, 2017). Therefore, maintaining cultural identity in the modern era does not mean closing oneself off from change, but rather means positioning one's traditions to remain relevant without losing their original identity.

One of the most authentic representations of Malay identity in Riau province is the Zapin Meskom dance. Centered in Meskom village, Bengkalis district, this dance is a harmonious blend of Arab (Yemeni) culture brought by Hadramat merchants in the early 16th century, with local Malay aesthetics introduced to Johor Lingga in 1824, and it has since grown and developed in the kingdoms of Johor, Riau, and Lingga. Then the Zapin dance spread to surrounding Malay areas, including Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Brunei Darussalam. Before Zapin developed in Bengkalis, in Siak Sri Indrapura, it was often performed in palace settings. Zapin first entered Bengkalis in the 1940s, brought by Abdullah Noer, an artist from Deli Medan, and then developed by Muhammad Yazid from Meskom (Sarita et al., 2015). Zapin Meskom has transformed into a symbol of religiosity, morality, and social harmony. Zapin Meskom functions not only as a performing art but also as part of rituals and socio-religious activities, and even as a means of internalizing moral values for the younger generation. The distinctive footwork and gambus music are not merely entertainment, but also a medium for preaching and internalizing the values of discipline and respect for ancestors (Jailani et al., 2023).

The Zapin Meskom dance instills religious, moral, and social values in children in Meskom village. The Zapin Meskom dance is often performed in religious contexts, especially at events related to Islam. The movements in this dance often depict honor to God and devotion to Him. Graceful and elegant movements characterize the Zapin Meskom dance. Dancers express beauty and grace through their movements, symbolizing cultural greatness and high aesthetic values. The values contained in the Zapin Meskom dance are: religiousness, harmony and brotherhood, greatness and grace,

discipline and precision, respect for ancestors, the beauty of nature and the environment, and the spirit of heroism (Jailani et al., 2023).

However, the current reality shows that Zapin Meskom faces dual challenges. On the one hand, it is recognized as intangible cultural heritage that has supported Meskom village's achievements in the Indonesian Tourism Village Award. On the other hand, the interests of the younger generation, who are increasingly distracted by global culture and the lack of optimal attention from stakeholders, threaten the sustainability of this art's regeneration. The imbalance between its great potential as a cultural tourism icon and the threat of value degradation is the urgency of conducting this research. Research on the Zapin dance has been conducted by Hidajat et al. (2021); Erawati et al. (2023); Hamza (2023); Hendra (2023); Widyarto & Yulinis (2023); Hidajat et al. (2024); Evadila et al. (2025); Rahul & Riswani (2025); Suryani et al. (2025a); Suryani et al. (2025b), but these studies did not discuss the Zapin Meskom dance. Meanwhile, research by Robi'ah (2021); Erika et al. (2025) discussed the Zapin Meskom dance but examined it from an Islamic education perspective, which differs from this study. Based on this description, a research gap is evident and requires further investigation.

This study aims to analyze the strategy for strengthening the cultural identity of the Zapin Meskom dance to maintain its authenticity amid the currents of globalization and modernization in Meskom village, Bengkalis district, Riau province. This study is expected to enrich the scientific treasury in the fields of cultural studies, art anthropology, and Malay performing arts, especially regarding the concept of cultural identity, which is dynamic in the currents of globalization. This study is expected to serve as a theoretical reference for future research on community-based local cultural preservation. This study is also expected to serve as a reference for local governments, tourism village managers, cultural institutions, and art communities in designing strategies to preserve intangible culture. The identified strategies for strengthening cultural identity through education and regeneration, strengthening ritual and social functions, and utilizing digital media can serve as a model for preserving other traditional arts in the Malay region and other regions of Indonesia.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the complexity of humans as multidimensional beings. Qualitative methods were chosen for their exploratory and in-depth nature, allowing researchers to examine the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of individuals or groups to understand the biological, social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of humans. With this approach, the research is expected to provide a holistic understanding of humans and their interactions with the environment and with one another. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were used to obtain information directly from sources who have experience or insight related to the research topic. Participatory observation was conducted to document human interactions in their social, cultural, and spiritual contexts. Meanwhile, document analysis was used to review literature, writings, and records relevant to the research topic, including scientific works, books, and historical records.

The informant selection technique used a purposive sampling method, selecting informants based on their relevance to the phenomenon under study. The selection criteria for informants included individuals with direct experience in a specific context, such as community or spiritual leaders, or those with unique cultural backgrounds. This ensured that the data obtained was relevant and rich in contextual information. The

collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. In this process, the data were organized, coded, and categorized into key themes relevant to the research objectives. This approach enabled the identification of patterns, relationships, and meanings underlying the phenomena being studied. Data validity was maintained through triangulation, which involves comparing data from various sources and data collection methods. With this approach, the research is expected to comprehensively describe how biological, social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions interact in human life.

Results and discussion

Conflicts of cultural identity in society amidst globalization

Research results show that the Meskom village community is experiencing a complex cultural identity conflict due to the rapid flow of globalization and modernization. Globalization not only brings technological and information advancements but also the penetration of new values, norms, and lifestyles that are gradually shifting the mindsets and behaviors of local communities (Mohyeddin, 2024). This impact is most evident among the younger generation, who interact more intensely with global culture through digital media, education, and social interactions.

Identity conflicts arise when society faces two competing interests. On the one hand, there is a demand to adapt to global culture to keep up with the times. Global culture is often perceived as a symbol of progress, modernity, and efficiency, making it more relevant to the needs of today's life (Ali, 2022). On the other hand, society also has a collective awareness of the importance of maintaining local cultural identity as part of its identity and ancestral heritage, rich in historical, philosophical, and moral values. This dilemma leaves local traditions vulnerable. Traditions are often perceived as outdated, static, and less adaptable to social change (Rowe, 2025). This view has led some people, particularly the younger generation, to move away from traditional cultural practices. However, research shows that traditions are not completely abandoned but rather undergo negotiation and reinterpretation to remain relevant in the modern social context.

In this context, traditional arts play a strategic role in preserving cultural identity. The Zapin Meskom dance is understood not only as a form of entertainment but also as a symbol of Malay cultural identity, representing religious values, togetherness, politeness, and local wisdom. The existence of the Zapin Meskom dance is proof that traditional arts can adapt to changing times without losing their cultural essence. Furthermore, traditional arts function as a space for creative expression, enabling dialogue between tradition and modernity (Saputra et al., 2024). Through cross-generational transmission, whether through performances, non-formal education, or cultural activities, local values can still be instilled in the younger generation more contextually and engagingly. Thus, traditional arts serve as a bulwark of local identity amidst global cultural homogenization.

This finding aligns with the opinions of Rusfandi (2024); Saputra et al. (2024); Sari (2024), who assert that local arts and culture have the capacity to serve as instruments of cultural resistance against global cultural domination. Traditional arts are not passive but dynamic and adaptive, enabling them to serve as strategic tools for maintaining the sustainability of local communities' cultural identity. Therefore, the cultural identity conflict experienced by the Meskom Village community cannot be understood solely as a rejection of modernity, but rather as a process of balancing the preservation of traditional values with the demands of social change. In this process, the

Zapin Meskom dance plays a crucial role as a cultural medium that bridges the past and the present, while simultaneously strengthening Malay cultural identity amidst the currents of globalization.

Local cultural diversity and challenges to national identity

Local cultural diversity is a fundamental strength of the Indonesian nation and serves as a primary foundation for the formation of national identity (Rahman et al., 2025). Indonesia is not built from a single culture, but rather from a mosaic of regional cultures that live and thrive within society. Each local culture contains historical, social, and philosophical values that represent the community's perspective on life, nature, and social relationships (Flood et al., 2021). In this context, local culture serves as a source of values that collectively shape the nation's character.

However, research shows that this cultural diversity also presents serious challenges, particularly in maintaining unity and a clear national identity amidst the currents of globalization. Globalization brings with it a dominant, massive, and easily accessible foreign culture through digital media, the entertainment industry, and modern lifestyles. This global culture is often more appealing to the younger generation because it is perceived as modern, practical, and relevant to current developments. As a result, local cultures, including traditional arts such as the Zapin Meskom dance, tend to be marginalized and lose space for expression in public and societal spaces.

As local cultures are increasingly practiced, performed, and passed down, their values also degrade. This condition has implications for the weakening of national identity, as national identity is truly built on the sustainability and recognition of these local cultures. The loss of space for local culture means not only the loss of tradition but also of collective memory, value systems, and local wisdom that have supported social life for centuries (Syakhsiyyah et al., 2025).

Indonesia's national identity is essentially the result of the accumulation and integration of diverse local cultures (Dewi et al., 2021). Each region makes a unique contribution to shaping Indonesia's image as a pluralistic, inclusive, and characterful nation (Radeisyah et al., 2024). Therefore, national identity cannot be separated from local culture. If local culture weakens, national identity may become obscured, rootless, and easily influenced by external values that may not align with the nation's character.

In this context, efforts to preserve and develop regional cultural heritage are crucial. Preserving local culture cannot be reduced to maintaining traditions; rather, it is a cultural strategy to strengthen an authentic national character. Cultural preservation also serves as a means of building collective awareness among communities of the importance of identity, togetherness, and a sense of belonging to their own cultural heritage (Sari, 2024). In this way, local culture can remain alive, relevant, and functional in modern society.

The Zapin Meskom dance is a concrete example of local culture that plays a strategic role in shaping national identity. As part of the Malay cultural heritage, the Zapin Meskom dance not only showcases the beauty of movement and rhythm but also represents the social, religious, and philosophical values of the Malay people. The values of togetherness, harmony, politeness, and balance between humans, nature, and God are reflected in the movement structure, floor patterns, and performance context.

Thus, the Zapin Meskom dance can be understood as a representation of local cultural identity that directly contributes to the formation of Indonesia's national identity. The existence and sustainability of this dance demonstrate that national identity is not a uniform entity, but rather is built from a diversity of complementary

cultures. Therefore, preserving the Zapin Meskom dance means preserving Indonesia's cultural diversity while strengthening the nation's identity amidst the challenges of globalization and modernization.

Preservation of local culture as a reinforcement of social structure

Preserving local culture cannot be understood solely as an effort to maintain the physical or aesthetic forms of traditions, such as dance movements, costumes, or musical accompaniment (Lobo, 2025). Instead, it plays a crucial role in reinforcing social structures and shaping community identity. Culture functions as a value system that regulates social relationships, shapes individual behavior, and instills a sense of togetherness and social solidarity (Keltner et al., 2022). In this context, the Zapin Meskom dance exists not only as a performing art expression but also as a medium for transmitting cultural values that live within the community.

The values embodied in the Zapin Meskom dance, such as social ethics, social norms, togetherness, and religiosity, are reflected in various aspects of the performance. The orderly, harmonious movement patterns represent the values of discipline and balance in social life. The interactions between dancers reflect social ethics that uphold mutual respect and togetherness. Meanwhile, the musical accompaniment and performance context, which are often associated with traditional and religious activities, demonstrate the strong religious dimension of Malay culture (Sulong et al., 2025). These values are not only performed but also indirectly instilled in society, especially the younger generation, through a continuous process of cultural inheritance.

Research results show that society no longer views culture, including the Zapin Meskom dance, as a static relic of the past, separate from modern life. Instead, culture is understood as a dynamic entity capable of adapting to social change without losing its fundamental values (Shafa et al., 2025). This understanding is reflected in various adaptation efforts, such as adjusting performance durations, packaging dances to be more communicative to younger audiences, and using digital media for documentation and promotion. These adaptations demonstrate that cultural sustainability is not always synonymous with rigidly maintaining old forms, but rather with preserving the essence and values they embody.

In today's social context, the Zapin Meskom dance serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of cultural education and strengthening local identity. Through the performance and learning process, people gain an understanding of the noble values of Malay culture relevant to modern life, such as the importance of togetherness, tolerance, and balance between worldly and spiritual life. This educational function is especially crucial amidst the currents of globalization, which tend to shift local values and replace them with an individualistic culture.

The sustainability of the Zapin Meskom dance depends heavily on the community's ability to reinterpret the function of traditional art in accordance with current social needs. When traditional art becomes a space for dialogue between the past and the present, it remains alive and meaningful. Thus, the preservation of the Zapin Meskom dance not only contributes to the continuity of a tradition but also helps strengthen local identity and the character of the community as part of Indonesia's national identity.

Zapin Meskom dance as a potential cultural-based tourism village

The research results show that Meskom village has strong cultural potential for development as a culture-based tourism village. This potential stems not only from the

existence of the traditional Zapin Meskom dance as a cultural icon, but also from various other cultural elements that live and thrive in the community's daily lives. Community social activities, traditional practices, distinctive culinary delights, and livelihoods rooted in local values are integral to Meskom village's cultural landscape, which has its own unique tourist appeal.

The Zapin Meskom dance has become a central point in the development of culture-based tourism villages because this art form possesses strong aesthetic, historical, and symbolic values. The Zapin Meskom dance serves not only as entertainment but also represents the Malay cultural identity inherent in the Meskom Village community. The movements, musical accompaniment, and context of the Zapin dance performance reflect the values of togetherness, religiosity, and social harmony characteristic of the local community. This makes the Zapin Meskom dance an authentic cultural attraction with the potential to attract both domestic and international tourists.

Meskom Village's achievement in entering the top 500 national tourist villages in 2022 and rising to the top 300 in 2023 is an indicator of recognition of the village's cultural potential. This improved ranking demonstrates Meskom Village's competitiveness in developing tourism, particularly in culturally based areas. However, this achievement has not been fully accompanied by optimal and sustainable management of its cultural potential. This indicates that administrative and competitive recognition must be accompanied by strengthened local development strategies.

Despite its significant potential, developing Meskom village as a culture-based tourism village still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is limited policy support, specifically regulating and encouraging the development of community-based cultural tourism. This suboptimal policy support has led to limited facilities, funding, and sustainable development programs for artists and the village community.

Furthermore, the lack of stakeholder synergy is a significant obstacle to the development of cultural tourism villages. This study found that collaboration between local communities, village governments, regional governments, artists, and the tourism sector has not been optimal. Each stakeholder tends to operate in a fragmented manner, resulting in the lack of integration of existing cultural potential into a coherent development concept. However, culture-based tourism villages require active involvement and close collaboration between various parties to ensure sustainable management of cultural potential and community well-being (Nugraha et al., 2024).

The low appreciation of traditional arts among some communities also poses a challenge. Globalization and modernization have influenced society's mindset, especially among younger generations, who tend to be more interested in popular culture than in traditional arts (Singh, 2022). This situation has led to reduced regeneration of Zapin Meskom dance performers and limited performance spaces in community life. Without efforts to raise awareness and pride in local culture, the potential of Zapin Meskom dance as a cultural tourism attraction is at risk of underdevelopment.

This study confirms that the success of developing culture-based tourism villages is largely determined by the quality of relationships and collaboration between the involved actors (Junita, 2024). Local communities act as owners and primary actors of culture, and village and regional governments serve as facilitators and policymakers. At the same time, arts and tourism practitioners play a role in packaging and promoting the culture. Strong synergy among these actors will enable the Zapin Meskom dance not only to survive as a tradition but also to develop into a cultural tourism product with economic value, without losing its authenticity and cultural value.

Thus, the Zapin Meskom dance holds a strategic position in the development of

Meskom village as a culture-based tourism village. Planned, participatory, and sustainable management will make this art form a driving force for the village's creative economy and a means of preserving local cultural identity. Ultimately, this effort will not only enhance Meskom village's tourist appeal but also help maintain cultural sustainability and strengthen a national identity rooted in local culture.

Dynamics of the development of the Zapin Meskom dance

Research findings indicate that the Zapin Bengkalis dance, including the Zapin Meskom dance, is an art form that grows and develops organically within society as a collective product. This art form is born, lives, and is inherited through the social interactions of its supporting community, so that ongoing sociocultural dynamics greatly influence its form and structure. Therefore, the changes in the Zapin Meskom dance cannot be understood as a form of degradation of tradition, but rather as a logical consequence of shifts in society's values, tastes, and needs over time.

In the context of Riau Malay society, changes in the form and structure of the Zapin Meskom dance are responses to social, economic, and cultural developments within the community. These changes are evident in the variety of movements, performance duration, costume design, and performance context. While in the past the Zapin Meskom dance was primarily performed in traditional spaces or for religious activities, today it is also performed in tourism contexts, cultural festivals, and ceremonial events. This shift in performance space requires adjustments to the form to be more communicative, attractive, and in line with the increasingly diverse tastes of the audience.

Despite various adjustments, research shows that the Zapin Meskom dance retains its core elements that define its identity. These elements include the distinctive rhythm of Zapin music, basic movement patterns rooted in Malay tradition, and symbolic values reflecting the ethics, togetherness, and religiosity of Malay society. The persistence of these core elements indicates that the changes are adaptive rather than radically transformative. In other words, innovations are made in the technical aspects and presentation without eliminating the dance's basic meaning and philosophy.

The resilience of Zapin Meskom dance as a traditional art lies in its selective response to sociocultural changes. Traditional arts are rigid and resistant to change, risking being abandoned by their supporting communities. Conversely, art that can adapt creatively will remain relevant and functional in social life (Ausat et al., 2023). In this regard, Zapin Meskom dance demonstrates cultural flexibility, in which artists and their supporting communities can reinterpret the function of dance to meet the needs of the times, whether as a means of entertainment, a medium for cultural expression, or a tourist attraction.

This view aligns with the idea that the meaning, style, and function of art are inseparable from the culture that gave it birth (Jamilah & Sahnir, 2024). Changes in social structures, lifestyles, and societal value orientations directly influence the evolving art forms (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). The Zapin Meskom dance, as an expression of Riau Malay culture, reflects these dynamics through transformations that remain rooted in traditional values. Thus, these changes do not diminish the dance's identity but instead strengthen its position as a living and contextual traditional art form.

Furthermore, the dynamic development of the Zapin Meskom dance also demonstrates a process of negotiation between tradition and modernity. Artists and cultural practitioners in Meskom village act as cultural agents, bridging old values with new demands. Through this process, the Zapin Meskom dance not only survives as

cultural heritage but also evolves into a symbol of local identity, capable of adapting to the context of tourism and globalization. This emphasizes that the sustainability of traditional art lies not in its frozen form, but rather in its ability to continue to be interpreted and used by its supporting community.

Thus, the dynamic development of the Zapin Meskom dance reflects the dialectical relationship between art, society, and culture. This dance is proof that traditional art can remain viable and meaningful amidst sociocultural change, as long as its core values and cultural identity are maintained. These findings reinforce the argument that preserving traditional art requires an adaptive and participatory approach, so that art becomes not only a symbol of the past but also an active part of contemporary society.

The influence of globalization on the Zapin Meskom dance

Globalization has had an ambivalent impact on the sustainability of the Zapin Meskom dance. Research findings indicate that globalization not only presents challenges for traditional arts but also opens up new opportunities for their preservation and development. In the context of the Zapin Meskom dance, globalization creates a space for interaction between local and global cultures, which can strengthen or weaken cultural identity, depending on how the community and stakeholders manage the process.

On the positive side, globalization has opened significant opportunities to disseminate and introduce the Zapin Meskom dance to a wider audience. Advances in information technology, social media, and digital platforms have enabled the Zapin dance to be documented, promoted, and studied without geographical limitations. People outside Bengkalis Regency, even at the national and international levels, can access Zapin Meskom dance performances through online videos, social media, and various other digital channels. This not only increases the visibility of the Zapin dance but also strengthens its position as a cultural heritage with universal value.

Furthermore, globalization has strengthened the understanding of the Zapin Meskom dance as a product of the acculturation of Arab and Malay cultures, possessing cross-cultural appeal. Its energetic rhythmic character, dynamic movement patterns, and distinctive musical accompaniment make the Zapin dance easily accepted by people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This aligns with the view that traditional arts with cross-cultural elements tend to be more adaptive and have the potential to develop in a global space (Purba et al., 2025). In the context of cultural tourism, this situation presents a strategic opportunity to make the Zapin Meskom dance a cultural attraction capable of competing on a broader level.

However, globalization also brings negative impacts that cannot be ignored. The dominant global cultural current has the potential to shift the original values of the Zapin Meskom dance if innovation is carried out without a strong cultural foundation. The commodification of art in the context of tourism and entertainment, for example, can encourage the simplification of meaning, the removal of symbolic elements, or changes in movement and accompaniment that are too tailored to market tastes. If this occurs too often, the Zapin Meskom dance risks losing its cultural identity and being seen only as a spectacle, rather than as an expression of the values and philosophy of Malay society.

Research findings also indicate that younger generations tend to be more open to innovation, but at the same time have a weaker attachment to the symbolic meaning of traditional dance. This situation presents a challenge in the process of cultural

inheritance. Without adequate cultural support and education, globalization can accelerate the process of deculturalization, the detachment of traditional arts from the social context and values that gave rise to them.

Therefore, a proper balance between innovation and conservation is needed in the development of the Zapin Meskom dance. Innovation is needed to keep this dance relevant, interesting, and adaptable to the times. In contrast, conservation is needed to maintain the core values, symbolic meanings, and Malay cultural identity inherent in the Zapin dance. This balance can be achieved by setting boundaries for change, such as maintaining the basic structure of movement, musical rhythm, and value context, while opening up space for new packaging in the visual aspects, duration, and performance media.

Thus, globalization should not be viewed solely as a threat to Zapin Meskom dance, but rather as an opportunity that requires wise management. When globalization is responded to critically and strategically, Zapin Meskom dance can develop as a traditional art that is not only sustainable but also competitive and meaningful in local, national, and global contexts. These findings emphasize that the sustainability of traditional arts in the global era depends heavily on a society's ability to manage change without losing the cultural roots that constitute its identity.



Figure 1 Zapin Meskom dance performance at the MTQ event

Source: primary data

Preservation strategy for Zapin Meskom dance

The preservation of the Zapin Meskom dance must be oriented towards preserving its core cultural values, not merely its external form. Values such as religiosity, social ethics, togetherness, and local Malay wisdom should serve as the foundation for all forms of dance development and innovation. The implementation strategy is to document the symbolic meanings of the movements, rhythms, and the context of Zapin Meskom dance performances. Developing guidelines for the values and philosophy of Zapin Meskom dance, serving as a reference for artists and the younger generation, and maintaining the core elements of the dance (basic movement patterns, Zapin rhythms, and performance structures) so that commercial interests do not distort them. This strategy is important to prevent the loss of cultural meaning due to globalization and the commodification of art.

Preservation of the Zapin Meskom dance must be directed at strengthening the regeneration of artists. Implementation strategies include integrating Zapin Meskom dance into formal education (local content in schools) and strengthening non-formal education through art studios, cultural communities, and village-based training. A

contextual learning approach teaches not only dance techniques but also their history and cultural values. Structured inheritance will reduce the risk of deculturalization among the younger generation.

The dynamic development of Zapin Meskom dance demonstrates the adaptability of traditional art. However, innovation must be selective and controlled. Implementation strategies include adjusting the duration, stage design, and performance visuals to suit tourism and festival contexts and utilizing digital technology (video, social media) without altering the basic structure of the dance. Limited collaboration with modern art while respecting Zapin Meskom's principles maintains a balance between modern relevance and traditional authenticity.

In the context of identity conflict, the Zapin Meskom dance serves as a bulwark for Malay cultural identity. The implementation strategy is to make the Zapin Meskom dance the official cultural icon of Meskom village. This includes presenting the Zapin Meskom dance at traditional and religious events, such as the Quran Recitation (MTQ) (Figure 1), and at village social activities. This strategy will build a cultural narrative that Zapin Meskom is a symbol of community identity, not merely entertainment. This strategy will strengthen the community's collective awareness and cultural pride.

Zapin Meskom's great potential lies in developing culture-based tourism villages. The implementation strategy is to make the Zapin Meskom dance the main attraction of the Meskom tourism village. Integrating Zapin Meskom performances into cultural tourism packages (culinary, traditional, and daily activities) is also being implemented, empowering artists as part of the village's creative economy. This approach aligns cultural preservation with improving community well-being.

Strengthening collaboration between actors, as successful preservation is crucially determined by synergy between them. The implementation strategy involves local communities as cultural owners and key actors. Village and regional governments act as facilitators of policy and funding. Artists act as guardians of cultural values and innovators. Academics act as facilitators of study and documentation. The media and tourism sector act as promotional tools. This collaboration prevents partial and unsustainable preservation.

Globalization and technology must be utilized as tools for preservation, not threats. Implementation strategies include digitizing Zapin Meskom's dance archives (videos, movement notation, and history). Promotion through social media and digital cultural platforms. Creating engaging educational content for the younger generation. Digitization expands Zapin Meskom's reach while preserving cultural documentation.

Preservation will not run optimally without policy support. The implementation strategy is to designate the Zapin Meskom dance as a regional intangible cultural heritage. Drafting village regulations on the protection and development of traditional arts. Budgetary support and sustainable programs for art studios. Policies provide legitimacy and sustainability for preservation. Preservation of the Zapin Meskom dance cannot be done in isolation or in part. However, it must be carried out through a cultural approach (maintaining values), a social approach (strengthening identity and community structure), an educational approach (regeneration), an economic approach (tourism villages), and a structural approach (policy and collaboration). With this integrated strategy, the Zapin Meskom dance will not only be preserved as cultural heritage but also serve as a supporter of Malay cultural identity, a strengthener of national character, and a sustainable cultural resource amid the currents of globalization.

Conclusions

This research shows that the Meskom village community faces cultural identity conflicts due to globalization, especially among the younger generation, who are more exposed to global culture. The Zapin Meskom dance plays a crucial role as a medium for preserving Malay cultural identity by transmitting religious values, fostering togetherness and politeness, and serving as a space for adaptation between tradition and modernity. The Zapin Meskom dance is dynamic and adaptive; despite changes in form, duration, and performance context, its core elements and symbolic values remain intact. This makes it relevant in strengthening local identity, cultural education, and the formation of a national identity rooted in local cultural diversity. Furthermore, the Zapin Meskom dance has strategic potential in the development of culture-based tourism villages. The sustainability of this traditional art depends on collaboration between actors, adaptive strategies that maintain core values, and ongoing policy support. With an integrated approach, the Zapin Meskom dance will not only be preserved as cultural heritage but also strengthens local identity and national character amid globalization.

The Zapin Meskom dance serves as a medium for preserving Malay cultural values and identity, maintaining a balance between modernity/globalization and tradition, while simultaneously supporting the formation of a national identity rooted in local cultural diversity. This dance serves as a means of formal and non-formal education for the younger generation, instilling values of togetherness, tolerance, and social ethics, and reducing the risk of deculturalization. As a culture-based tourist village attraction, the Zapin Meskom dance supports the local creative economy without sacrificing cultural authenticity through integration with traditions, culinary delights, and daily activities. Effective preservation requires collaboration between actors (community, government, artists, academics, the tourism sector), regulatory support, and the use of digital technology for cultural documentation and promotion. The Zapin Meskom dance adaptation and preservation model can serve as a reference for the management of other traditional arts with a sustainable cultural, social, educational, economic, and structural approach.

This study has several limitations, namely, its emphasis on a qualitative approach, which results in a lack of quantitative data to measure the level of participation or appreciation for the dance among the younger generation. Assessment of the economic impact and development of tourism villages is also limited. At the same time, the influence of globalization and cultural adaptation requires long-term observation to understand the changes they entail fully. Further research is recommended to combine quantitative or mixed methods approaches to obtain more measurable data. Future research can also evaluate the economic and social impact of the Zapin Meskom dance on tourism village development, conduct longitudinal studies to monitor changes in the culture and values of the younger generation, and test the effectiveness of preservation strategies, including the use of digital technology, formal education, and collaboration between actors, in maintaining the sustainability of Malay dance and cultural identity.

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