



Zapin pecah dua belas dance: movement structure and educational values in the Riau Malay culture

Wahyu Trinanda Puteri*, Nurul Yasmine Gitawirya

Universitas Islam Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

*Correspondence author: wtrinandaputeri@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

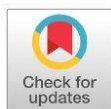
Purpose: to describe the history and development of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance, analyze the movement structure that forms the dance, and identify the educational values contained within it as part of the preservation of Riau Malay culture.

Method: this study used a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection was conducted through non-participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation at the Bina Tasik Studio in Pangkalan Kerinci District, Pelalawan Regency. Research informants included dance instructors, senior dancers, traditional leaders, and arts and culture teachers. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing using triangulation techniques to ensure data validity.

Findings: the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is a traditional Riau Malay dance resulting from the acculturation of Arab and local cultures. It has twelve basic movements arranged systematically. The dominance of fast, rhythmic footwork, smooth hand movements, symmetrical floor patterns, and the harmony of movement with musical accompaniment characterizes its movement structure. This dance also carries educational values, including discipline, cooperation, manners, aesthetics, and cultural preservation.

Implications: this research has implications for the development of dance arts learning and efforts to preserve the Zapin pecah dua belas dance as part of the Riau Malay cultural identity.

Originality: examines the movement structure and educational values of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance at once, and emphasizes its role in learning the arts and preserving Riau Malay culture.



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Introduction

Traditional dance is a form of cultural expression that embodies aesthetic, social, religious, and collective values of community identity (Hou, 2025). On the east coast of

Sumatra, particularly in Riau Malay culture, dance serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of educational values, a medium for intergenerational communication, and a social bond in various traditional ceremonies and communal celebrations. Through dance, Malay communities transmit the values of politeness, togetherness, and religiosity that form the foundation of their social life (Uri et al., 2025). The structure of traditional dance movements is usually systematically arranged in a specific range of movements to form a distinctive movement identity and represent local cultural values (Hou, 2025). One prominent form of traditional Malay dance is the Zapin pecah dua dua dance, which emerged from the acculturation of Arab culture (especially Hadhramaut) with local Malay traditions. This dance developed through trade routes and Islamic preaching since the Middle Ages and has been passed down through generations through art studios and traditional activities. The Zapin pecah dua belas dance not only displays the aesthetic value of movement but also conveys educational, moral, and social values that serve as a medium for character formation and cultural identity among the younger generation (Suryani & Evadila, 2025).

In Pelalawan regency, the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is still maintained through art studios such as Sanggar Bina Tasik, with an emphasis on smooth movement training, symmetrical floor patterns, and harmony between movement and traditional music such as gambus and marwas. This dance is often performed at traditional ceremonies, regional holiday commemorations, and cultural preservation programs, thereby becoming a symbol of the local identity of the Riau Malay community. The localization process also led to a variety of movements and distinctive musical characteristics, distinguishing Zapin pecah dua belas from other Zapin variants, such as Zapin Siak or Zapin api. Although the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is still traditionally maintained, a systematic understanding of the twelve basic movement types, their relationships to floor patterns, musical rhythms, and the educational values they contain, remains limited. This poses a risk of losing the dance's technical aspects and moral values, especially among the younger generation who are more familiar with modern culture. Limited documentation and scientific studies risk eroding this dance's choreographic identity and educational function.

The main problem in this research is the lack of documentation and in-depth analysis of the movement structure of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance, which makes it difficult to use it effectively as teaching material in dance education. The movement structure, consisting of twelve main variations, floor patterns, movement-music synchronization, and group formations, is still rarely analyzed systematically, so the pedagogical potential of the dance has not been fully explored. In addition, the educational values contained in the Zapin pecah dua belas, such as discipline, cooperation, manners, aesthetics, and cultural preservation, have not been explicitly integrated into the arts and culture learning program. This lack of study creates problems in the inheritance of cultural values and the formation of the character of the younger generation, so this research seeks to answer the question of how the movement structure and educational values in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance can be understood, documented, and utilized as a source of learning and efforts to preserve culture.

Research on traditional Malay dance, particularly Zapin, has focused heavily on its origins, social functions, performance aesthetics, and Arab-Malay cultural acculturation. Previous studies have highlighted musical patterns, group formations, and movement characteristics, as well as Zapin's function as a medium for preaching, entertainment, and social cohesion in traditional ceremonies (Hamza & Saearani, 2024; Hidajat, Suyono, Sayono, Hasyimy, Syahputri, Iskandar, Ismail, & Mohd Isa, 2021;

Maulida et al., 2024; Syauqii & Al-Farisi, 2025; Widyarto & Yulinis, 2023). Some studies have also discussed the role of traditional dance in arts learning and character building, but these remain historically descriptive or ethnographic, lacking in-depth analysis of the relationship between movement structure and educational values (Hadi & Yuwanti, 2022; Hidajat et al., 2023; Yunaidi et al., 2024). However, studies that systematically analyze the twelve types of Zapin dance movements, including their floor patterns, movement-music synchronization, and educational values, remain limited. Consequently, the pedagogical potential and cultural preservation potential have not been optimally explored. This study presents a description of the movement structure of Zapin pecah dua belas, integrating choreographic analysis with educational values, and emphasizing the potential of dance as a source of art learning and for the preservation of Riau Malay culture. This study is expected to have practical and theoretical implications, namely as a source of dance learning and character education, as a reference for studios or educators in training and passing down dance authentically, and as a support for efforts to preserve Riau Malay culture. Thus, this study not only deepens the choreographic and aesthetic understanding of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance but also contributes to maintaining and strengthening local cultural identity amid the dynamics of social change.

Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to describe and explain in depth the movement structure and educational values contained in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for studying traditional cultural and artistic phenomena in their natural context. The study was conducted at the Bina Tasik Studio, Pangkalan Kerinci sub-district, Pelalawan district, Riau province. Data collection techniques included non-participatory observation of the dance practice and performance process, semi-structured interviews to gather information about the history, movement structure, and educational values, and documentation in the form of photos, videos, and studio archives. Research informants included dance trainers, senior dancers, traditional leaders, and arts and culture teachers. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data validity was guaranteed through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time, as well as member checks with informants.

Results and discussion

The history and development of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance

The research results show that the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is a form of classical Zapin that developed in the Pelalawan region, particularly at the Bina Tasik Studio in Pangkalan Kerinci, as part of the Riau Malay tradition. This dance has been passed down through generations through art studio activities, regular dancer training, and traditional ceremonies such as weddings, circumcisions, and local holiday celebrations. The name "pecah dua belas" refers to the twelve basic movement types that form the dance's structure, distinguishing Zapin pecah dua belas from other Zapin variants (Hadi & Yuwanti, 2022). Each movement type has a regular pattern of steps, arm swings, facing direction, and floor pattern, thus forming a systematic choreography that both dancers and audiences easily recognize. Based on interviews with trainers, senior dancers, and traditional figures, the Zapin pecah dua belas Dance has been known since the time of the coastal Malay kingdoms. The spread of this dance was heavily

influenced by the interaction of Hadhramaut Arab culture through trade routes and Islamic preaching, which brought elements of music, movement, and religious values (Syauqii & Al-Farisi, 2025). Over time, the dance underwent localisation, with the movement forms, floor patterns, musical accompaniment, and aesthetic values adapting to the character of the Riau Malay community. For example, fast, structured footwork combined with smooth hand movements, emphasising the elegance and politeness typical of Malay, and accompanied by traditional musical instruments such as gambus, marwas, and, sometimes, the violin.

The Bina Tasik Studio plays a central role in maintaining the authenticity and continuity of the dance. The studio serves not only as a training ground but also as a centre for cultural heritage, where the younger generation is trained to master each movement accurately, understand floor patterns, and adapt movements to the rhythm of the music. This learning process also emphasizes discipline, cooperation, and good manners, so that the dance becomes not only an aesthetic performance but also a means of educating cultural values. The development of the Zapin dance, split into twelve, aligns with the theory of cultural acculturation (Koentjaraningrat, 2009), which holds that foreign elements, such as Arabic culture, undergo adaptation and become deeply embedded expressions of local culture. This transformation is evident in the combination of foot and hand movements, symmetrical floor patterns, distinctive musical rhythms, and the values of politeness and togetherness, which are highly valued in Malay society. This dance demonstrates how cultural heritage can remain alive, relevant, and dynamic despite adaptation and modernization in a changing social context. Thus, the Zapin pecah dua belas dance serves not only as a performing art, but also as a medium for cultural education, the transmission of traditions, and the strengthening of the local identity of the Riau Malay community. The uniqueness of the twelve movements, the harmony with traditional music, and the inherent moral values make this dance a cultural heritage worthy of preservation and in-depth study.

The movement structure of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance

The movement structure of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance demonstrates the order and harmony typical of traditional Malay choreography. In accordance with Soedarsono's (1999) concept, this dance emphasises the connection between movement patterns, musical rhythms, and social functions, so that each movement is not only aesthetic but also full of cultural meaning. The variety of movement fragments becomes a unique identity that distinguishes Zapin pecah dua belas from other variants, such as Zapin Siak or Zapin api. Each variety of movement is arranged in a systematic sequence, with consistent patterns of steps, hand swings, facing directions, and floor patterns, thus forming a harmonious choreographic sequence.

Based on observation and documentation, there are twelve main movements in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance, namely: (1) Sembah tiga (pecah satu), which is an opening movement that emphasizes respect and politeness, with the hands gently raised to the chest or forehead. (2) Langkah depan belakang, which are forward and backward foot movements with a fast rhythm, accompanied by gentle swings of the hands to the side or front, emphasizing balance and coordination (Figure 1). (3) Pecah tengah, which is a crossing foot movement in the middle of the stage or formation, forming a diagonal floor pattern, emphasizing group harmony. (4) Pecah belakang, which is a backward movement with a regular step pattern, accompanied by gentle hand movements backward, emphasizing flexibility and aesthetics. (5) Pecah samping, which is a

sideways foot movement with a horizontal floor pattern, performed in pairs to emphasize group cooperation.

(6) Ayun dua, which are two-hand swings accompanied by rhythmic foot steps, emphasizing synchronization with the Marwas rhythm. (7) Putar tengah, which is a rotating movement at the centre point of the formation, emphasizing flexibility, coordination, and the beauty of the symmetrical floor pattern. (8) Langkah melingkar, which are dancers moving in a circular pattern with small steps, emphasizing togetherness and group harmony. (9) Ayun samping, which is alternating hand swings to the side with light feet, emphasizing rhythmic precision and smoothness of movement. (10) Pecah depan, which is a forward movement with a harmonious step pattern, emphasizing movement expression and interaction with other dancers. (11) Putar belakang, which is a backward rotation movement in place with hand patterns following the rhythm of the music, emphasizing the precision of movement-music coordination. (12) Gerak penutup (sembah akhir), which is a closing movement that again emphasizes politeness, an upright body position, hands closed on the chest or forehead, as a symbol of respect and the end of the dance series.

This movement structure uses symmetrical, diagonal, and circular floor patterns, which enhance the aesthetics and cohesiveness of the group. Footwork is generally fast but controlled, while hand movements are soft and graceful, emphasizing Malay aesthetic values. Synchronization with traditional music, gambus, marwas, and sometimes violin, is very important, because Zapin emphasizes rhythmic accuracy, movement-music coordination, and harmony between dancers (Widyarto & Yulinis, 2023). With these twelve movement variations, the Zapin pecah dua belas dance not only emphasized visual and rhythmic beauty, but also contains social and moral values, such as discipline, cooperation, good manners, and the preservation of Riau Malay culture, so that this dance functions dually as an art performance and a medium for cultural education (Suryani & Evadila, 2025).



Figure 1 Zapin pecah dua belas dance movements

Source: primary data

The sembah tiga (pecah satu) movement is performed in an upright standing position, with hands gently raised to the chest or forehead, palms facing the body, both feet parallel, body weight balanced, and a calm facial expression and respectful attitude. This movement conveys sincere respect for the audience, traditional figures, or fellow

dancers. The upright body posture and gently raised hands indicate politeness and high social ethics, important values in Malay culture. A calm facial expression reflects inner balance and sincerity, as the foundation for performing dance and living life. The position of the hands on the chest or forehead can also be interpreted as a form of prayer or respect for God and ancestors, given that Zapin originated in a culture with religious values. This movement marks the beginning of respect in a series of arts, while maintaining the sacredness and dignity of the dance. Overall, sembah tiga (pecah satu) is an expression of Malay moral and cultural values in the form of politeness, respect, and sincerity, which are the main foundations of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance (Suryani & Evadila, 2025).

The langkah depan belakang has an upright body position with a slight forward lean when stepping, hands swinging smoothly back and forth alternately, feet stepping forward with one foot, then back with the other, in a rhythmic, gentle movement. This movement conveys the dynamics of life and the passage of time, depicting the progression and decline of human life and the importance of balance in facing challenges. Regular rhythmic movements symbolize harmony and cooperation in the Malay community. Soft, controlled steps reflect discipline and patience, which are important for carrying out customs and traditions. The synchronization of hand and foot movements underscores the importance of harmony among mind, body, and the surrounding environment in the Malay philosophy of life (Syahputra et al., 2025).

The pecah tengah movement has an upright body position, the body slightly turned to the side, hands open to the right and left with relaxed fingers, feet crossed in front, forming a diagonal pattern, and regular, synchronous movements. The movement conveys the meanings of balance and order; the crossed body position and steps reflect the harmony between the various elements of life and nature, depicting social order. Hands open to the side symbolize an open, friendly attitude and a readiness to engage in social relationships, important values in Malay culture. The diagonal step pattern signifies the ability to adapt to changes and challenges, as well as maintain flexibility in thinking and acting. Regular, synchronous movements reflect discipline and cohesion within the group, strengthening solidarity and community cohesion (Mutmainah et al., 2026).

The pecah belakang movement has the body facing forward, the hands moving smoothly backward following the backward step, and the feet stepping back in small, rhythmic steps, with a gentle, controlled movement. This movement conveys the meanings of introspection and caution; the controlled backward step reflects a wise attitude in reviewing decisions or actions, as an important reflection in social and personal life. The gentle, rhythmic movement shows self-control, emotional control, and precision in action, which are characteristic moral values in Malay culture. The coordination between the hands and feet during the backward step symbolizes harmony and awareness of the environment and social relationships. This smooth movement emphasizes the elegance and grace typical of Malay dance, which also teaches the value of beauty and manners in body expression (Aulia & Syefriani, 2025).

The pecah samping movement has a body position facing sideways, with hands swinging in pairs to the side, feet stepping in pairs to the side, following a horizontal pattern, and producing harmonious, compact movements. This movement conveys the meaning of cooperation and togetherness; synchronized paired movements reflect the importance of harmony and solidarity in social interactions in Malay society. Regular horizontal movements emphasize order, step precision, and harmony among dancers, qualities that are aesthetic and moral in Malay tradition. The direction of the movement

to the side signifies the ability to adapt to the social environment, support each other, and respect each other's roles in the community. Harmonious and compact movements emphasize the elegance, precision, and grace typical of Malay traditional movements, while strengthening the performance's visual and rhythmic impact (Arbi & Luthfiyah, 2025).

The ayun dua movements involve an upright body position; the hands swing twice forward and backwards simultaneously; the feet take small steps in time with the hands; and the movements are synchronous and rhythmic. This movement conveys the meaning of balance and the rhythm of life; the regular forward and backward movements reflect the importance of maintaining balance among physical, spiritual, and social activities in everyday life. The synchronization between hand and foot movements trains the ability to control the body, focus, and harmony within a group, which are educational values in Malay dance. The soft, rhythmic movements emphasize the aesthetics of Malay movement, which are graceful, polite, and harmonious, while showing the cultural character that values beauty. This movement is usually performed collectively, underscoring the importance of cooperation and harmony between dancers in shaping the performance (Hamza, 2023).

The putar tengah movement has the body rotating in place, with the centre on the front foot, hands wide open or following the direction of the turn, and feet stepping in a circular pattern. The movement is flexible and graceful. This movement conveys the meanings of continuity and the cycle of life; the circular rotation depicts the recurring journey of life, the order of nature, and the harmonious relationship between humans and their environment. Flexible movements demonstrate the ability to adapt to changes and challenges, both in dance and in social life. Hands that follow the turn's direction and graceful body movements emphasise the beauty, flexibility, and grace of Malay dance. This movement is usually performed with other dancers, thereby strengthening group harmony and performance harmony (Triyani et al., 2021).

The langkah melingkar movement involves the body following a circular pattern, with the hands swinging gently in the direction of the circle, the feet taking small steps and rotating slowly to form a circle, resulting in a compact, unified movement. The movement contains the meaning of unity and togetherness; the circular pattern reflects harmony within the group, mutual support, and close social relationships among community members. The compact movement emphasizes the importance of coordination, order, and collective awareness in dance, which are moral and social values in Malay culture. The circular step symbolizes the repetitive journey of life, adaptation to change, and the continuity of tradition from generation to generation. The soft, synchronous movements of the hands, feet, and body highlight the graceful character of Malay dance, emphasizing its visual beauty and rhythm (Hamza, 2023).

The ayun samping movement has an upright body position, with the hands swinging to the side alternately right and left, the feet following light steps in a rhythm that matches the hands, and smooth, precise movements. This movement conveys the meaning of balance and harmony; the swinging of the hands and steps in rhythm reflects the importance of maintaining balance among the physical, emotional, and social aspects of everyday life. The synchronization of hand and foot movements trains concentration, self-control, and discipline, which are moral and educational values in Malay tradition. Smooth, precise movements emphasize the elegance, softness, and grace typical of Malay dance while underscoring the value of beauty in the performance. This movement is performed simultaneously with other dancers, emphasizing harmony and positive social interaction (Nor, 2011).

The pecah depan movement has a forward-facing body position, hands pointing forward, elegant and directed, feet taking small, rhythmic steps forward, a firm yet graceful movement. This movement conveys the meanings of progress and courage; its rhythmic forward steps reflect the spirit of moving forward in life, facing challenges firmly while remaining in control. The directed and graceful movement trains self-control, focus, and movement precision, which are important values in Malay dance education. The combination of firm steps and soft hands emphasizes the typical Malay aesthetic of movement, which is graceful, harmonious, and polite. The forward direction of the movement symbolizes communication, openness, and a clear relationship with the social environment or group of dancers (Hidajat, Suyono, Sayono, Hasyimy, Syahputri, Iskandar, Ismail, & Isa, 2021).

The putar belakang movement has the body rotating backwards in place, the hands following the turn with smooth movements, and the feet stepping backwards in a regular, rhythmic, controlled pattern. This movement conveys the meanings of introspection and alertness; the backward movement symbolizes the ability to review previous steps or actions, reflecting a careful attitude and mature consideration in life. The regular rhythm and controlled movements train focus, patience, and consistency, important values in learning traditional Malay dance. Smooth turns with the hands following the direction of the turn emphasize the elegance of movement, grace, and synchronization between the body, hands, and feet, which are characteristic of Malay aesthetics. When performed with other dancers, the synchronous backward movement strengthens solidarity and harmony between dancers, reflecting harmony within the community (Wadiyo et al., 2025).

The penutup (sembah akhir) stands upright, hands on the chest or raised to the forehead as a sign of respect, feet parallel and stable, facial expressions calm and respectful. This movement conveys respect and gratitude; it marks the end of the performance with a respectful attitude toward the audience, traditional figures, or ancestors, as well as a form of expression of gratitude and appreciation. The upright body posture and gentle hand movements reflect the politeness and etiquette of the Malay people, underscoring the importance of ethics in social interactions and in performing arts. The calm facial expression shows self-control and equanimity, which are part of the movement philosophy in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance. This closing movement emphasizes the importance of preserving cultural heritage, of closing the dance series in a sacred manner, and of maintaining Malay cultural identity (Erni & Artis, 2025).

The educational value of Zapin pecah dua belas dance

Interviews with trainers and arts and culture teachers indicate that Zapin pecah dua belas contains various educational values, which emerge through both practice and performance. These values include discipline, cooperation, manners, aesthetics, and cultural preservation.

The value of discipline in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance emphasizes the importance of precision, order, and consistency in every aspect of the dance. This dance requires dancers to always pay attention to the rhythm of the music, coordinate hand and foot movements, and synchronize with the group, so that each movement is in time with traditional musical accompaniment such as marwas, gambus, or violin (Yunaidi et al., 2024). Discipline is evident not only in mastering the movements but also in punctuality during rehearsals and performances; dancers must arrive on time, follow the instructor's instructions, and maintain consistent practice to ensure harmonious

formations and floor patterns. Furthermore, discipline in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance also trains self-control and mental focus. Dancers learn to restrain the impulse to move carelessly and direct their full attention to the rhythm and pattern of the choreography. This builds patience and perseverance, as mastery of movement requires repeated practice until it becomes automatic and harmonious. The discipline not only shapes dance skills but also instils the values of responsibility and professionalism, which can be applied in everyday life and across sociocultural contexts (Huang et al., 2025). In other words, the discipline in Zapin pecah dua belas is the main foundation that ensures that the dance maintains its beauty, harmony, and inherent cultural values.

The value of cooperation in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is strongly evident, as it is performed in a group and demands integration among dancers. Harmonious movement can only be achieved if each dancer works together, adjusting tempo, movement direction, and body position according to the predetermined formation. Each type of movement, especially those using symmetrical, diagonal, or circular floor patterns, requires collective awareness to avoid any asynchronous occurrences that could disrupt the beauty of the dance. Through the training process, dancers learn to be sensitive to the presence of other dancers, listen to the rhythm of the music together, and adapt their individual movements for the benefit of the group. This cooperation also fosters an attitude of mutual respect, tolerance, and responsibility, because the success of the Zapin pecah dua belas performance is not determined by one individual, but by the unity of all dancers. Thus, the value of cooperation embodied in this dance not only serves the aesthetic interests of the performance but also shapes the social character of the dancers, enabling them to live harmoniously in society (Himberg et al., 2018; Long, 2024).

The values of manners in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance are reflected through upright posture, calm facial expressions, and smooth, controlled hand and foot movements. Each movement avoids excessive or aggressive behavior, thus reflecting the character of the Malay community, which upholds customs, ethics, and manners in daily life. Movements such as the initial and final prayers specifically emphasise the importance of respecting the audience, fellow dancers, and the noble values inherited from Malay tradition (Aulia & Syefriani, 2025; Suryani & Evadila, 2025). Through practice and performance, dancers are trained to control their emotions and behavior to remain in line with prevailing norms of politeness. Dancers learn to maintain facial expressions, control the strength of their movements, and adjust their posture to the dance's rhythm and atmosphere. This process develops a personality that is polite, patient, and respectful of others (Wulan et al., 2019). Thus, the Zapin pecah dua belas dance serves not only as a means of artistic expression but also as a medium for character education, instilling politeness as an important identity in Malay culture.

The aesthetic value of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is reflected through the mastery of rhythmic, orderly, and harmonious movements accompanied by traditional music. Dancers are trained to understand beauty not only as a visual form, but also as a unity between body movement, musical rhythm, and the use of space. Each movement is systematically arranged, demanding precise footwork tempo, gentle hand swings, and alignment of face direction and floor pattern to create a harmonious movement composition. Furthermore, aesthetic understanding is also developed through the dancer's ability to adapt the dynamics of movement to the fast yet gentle character of Zapin music. Dancers learn to regulate energy, tempo, and expression so that movements do not appear stiff or excessive, but remain graceful and lively. This process cultivates sensitivity, keen observation, and an appreciation for the beauty of traditional

art (Li, 2024). Thus, the aesthetic value of the Zapin pecah dua belas dance plays a vital role in shaping the dancer's artistic sensitivity while maintaining the distinctive beauty of Malay dance as a highly valued cultural identity.

The value of cultural preservation in the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is reflected in the training and performance processes that directly involve the younger generation in traditional art practices. Through this involvement, dancer not only learn dance movement techniques and rhythms but also understand the history, symbolic meanings, and Malay cultural values inherent in each movement variety. This process makes Zapin pecah dua belas an effective medium for cultural transmission from the older generation to the younger generation. In addition to being a means of inheriting tradition, learning, and performing Zapin pecah dua belas also plays a role in building students' identity and character, so they remain rooted in their own culture amidst the currents of modernisation. By knowing and experiencing traditional dance, the younger generation develops a sense of pride, ownership, and responsibility for preserving their regional cultural heritage (Liu & Kalimyllin, 2024). This encourages an appreciative attitude towards local culture while strengthening the understanding that tradition is not merely a relic of the past, but an important part of the Malay people's identity and cultural sustainability.

Conclusions

Based on the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the Zapin pecah dua belas dance is one of the cultural heritages of the Riau Malays, with strong historical, aesthetic, and educational values. This dance developed as a form of classical zapin in the Pelalawan region and has been passed down from generation to generation through art studios, traditional activities, and community social practices. The uniqueness of Zapin pecah dua belas lies in its choreographic structure, which consists of twelve basic movements systematically arranged in harmony with traditional musical accompaniment and that reflect the process of acculturation of Arab and Malay cultures that have been localized. The regular movement structure, diverse floor patterns, and synchronization between movement and music demonstrate that Zapin pecah dua belas is not just a performing art but also a representation of the social and cultural values of the Malay community. Each movement contains philosophical meanings related to respect, balance in life, cooperation, harmony, introspection, and togetherness. In addition, this dance embodies important educational values, such as discipline, cooperation, manners, aesthetics, and cultural preservation, which are developed through practice and performance. The Zapin pecah dua belas dance serves a dual purpose: as a medium for artistic expression, as a means of character education, and as a means of cultural transmission. Its existence not only enriches the treasury of traditional Indonesian dance but also strengthens the cultural identity of Riau Malays and builds the character of the younger generation, ensuring they remain rooted in local cultural values amid changing times.

Academically, this research enriches the study of traditional dance, particularly Zapin pecah dua belas, by analyzing its history, movement structure, symbolic meaning, and educational values. The findings of this research can serve as a scientific reference for researchers, students, and cultural arts observers in developing studies of Malay dance, cultural acculturation, and traditional choreography based on local values. In the field of education, the results of this research have implications for the development of cultural arts learning in schools and studios. The Zapin pecah dua belas dance can be used as an effective learning medium to instill in students the values of discipline,

cooperation, courtesy, aesthetics, and character rooted in local culture. Thus, this dance is not only taught as a movement skill but also as a means of character education and cultural identity strengthening. Meanwhile, from a cultural preservation perspective, this research emphasizes the important roles of art studios, trainers, and indigenous communities in maintaining the sustainability of Zapin pecah dua belas. The documentation of the movement structure, meaning, and values of the dance produced in this research can serve as a reference for efforts to preserve, revitalize, and promote Riau Malay culture, ensuring this cultural heritage remains alive, relevant, and known to present and future generations.

This study has limitations that need to be considered. First, the scope of the study is limited to the Zapin pecah dua belas dance that developed at the Bina Tasik Studio in Pangkalan Kerinci, so the research findings do not fully represent the variations in Zapin pecah dua belas practices in other areas of Riau or other Malay regions. Differences in social contexts, studios, and artists may result in variations in movement structures, floor patterns, and interpretations of movement meanings. Second, this study is qualitative in nature, using observation, interviews, and documentation methods, and thus relies heavily on the subjectivity of the researcher and informants in interpreting the meanings of the movements and their educational values. Interpretations of the symbolic meaning of the Zapin pecah dua belas movement can vary depending on the perspective of other artists, audiences, or theoretical approaches. Further research is recommended to expand the scope of the locations and objects of study by involving various Zapin pecah dua belas art studios and communities in Riau and other Malay regions. A comparative approach between regions can be used to identify similarities and differences in movement structures, floor patterns, musical accompaniment, and interpretations of symbolic meanings, thereby obtaining a more complete picture of the diversity and dynamics of Zapin pecah dua belas. Furthermore, further research could employ more diverse methodological approaches, such as quantitative or mixed-methods designs, to empirically measure the impact of Zapin's dance teaching on students' character development, social attitudes, and cultural appreciation. Experimental studies or classroom action studies could also be conducted to assess the effectiveness of this dance as a medium for arts learning and character education.

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