

Traditional Dance Learning to Enhance Self-Confidence in Early Childhood

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Abstract

The background of this study departs from the importance of the development of socio-emotional aspects of early childhood, especially self-confidence, which is an important foundation in the formation of character and adaptability of children. This study aims to determine the learning of dance can increase the confidence of children aged 5-6 years in KB PKK AL Mubarak Karanganyar. The research method used is Class Action Research (PTK) with a qualitative mixed approach. The subjects of the study were 11 children of Group B2 aged 5-6 years. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation, with indicators of self-confidence including the courage to try new things, the ability to interact, not giving up easily, and the courage to express themselves. The results showed that learning to dance can significantly increase children's self-confidence. This can be seen from the increase in observation scores in cycle I by 58.5% showed a level of confidence and up 9% from pre-cycle conditions and an increase in confidence of 22.5% from cycle I conditions in Cycle II. Learning the art of Dance provides space for children to express, improve motor coordination, and form a positive self-image. This study concludes that dance is effective as a learning medium in increasing early childhood self-confidence and has important implications for culture-based educational practices.

Keywords: Traditional Dance Learning, Self-Confidence Development, Early Childhood Education, Culture-Based Learning, Classroom Action Research.

1. Introduction

Self-confidence is an important aspect in the social-emotional development of early childhood that affects children's ability to adapt and face challenges. Children with good self-confidence tend to be braver in interacting with others and more active in various activities, including learning. Conversely, low self-confidence can hinder children's psychosocial development, as seen in children who are hesitant and afraid to try new things (Rahman et al., 2022). Early Childhood Education (PAUD) has a strategic role in building self-confidence, where the school environment and teacher influence are very important in supporting children's social-emotional development (Mahendra, 2023). PAUD focuses on developing various basic skills, including language, social, emotional, and motor abilities, all of which support the development of children's self-confidence (Hanifah & Euis Kurniati, 2024).

However, in practice, not all schools are able to create an environment that supports the development of children's self-confidence. Some children still show high dependency behavior towards parents or teachers, and are reluctant to appear in public (Satiadarma & Waruwu, 2025). Therefore, it is necessary to implement learning methods or media that can help increase children's self-confidence. Dance arts can be an effective medium to support the development of children's self-confidence. Dance arts learning offers opportunities for



children to express themselves through movement, which not only develops gross motor skills but also builds their confidence when performing in front of others (Aryaprasta & Riyadi, 2018). Dance as a form of cultural expression allows children to express emotions and stories, which also contributes to improving their non-verbal communication abilities.

This research aims to examine how dance arts learning can increase the self-confidence of children aged 5-6 years at KB PKK AL MUBAROK Karanganyar. Through an approach based on child development theory, it is hoped that the results of this research can contribute to the development of learning methods that can improve the social-emotional aspects of early childhood, particularly in terms of self-confidence.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Self-Confidence in Early Childhood

Self-confidence is the belief in one's own potential or abilities. Children's self-confidence can influence the development of character and mental aspects that will become an important foundation for children to face their future, so they can provide realistic responses when facing challenges. According to Hurlock, children aged 5-6 years are in the late preschool period which has characteristics of self-confidence as follows: 1) Brave to try new things, 2) Able to interact with others, 3) Not easily give up, 4) Brave to express themselves (Hurlock, 1997).

Children aged 5-6 years are at a very important developmental stage. According to Permendikbud 137 of 2014, the achievement levels for children aged 5-6 years are: 1) Physical-motor, 2) Social-emotional, 3) Arts, 4) Self-confidence. According to Piaget's developmental theory (2010), children aged 5-6 years are in the preoperational stage (2-7 years) (Mifroh, 2020). At this stage, children begin to use symbols to represent objects that are not physically present. Meanwhile, according to Erik Erikson (2008) in psychosocial development theory, children aged 5-6 years are in the "initiative vs guilt" stage (Maree, 2021). At this stage, children develop the ability to initiate activities, make plans, and overcome challenges. If successful, children will develop self-confidence and leadership abilities.

2.2. Dance Arts Learning

Herbert Read in O. O. Pratiwi et al. (2021) states that art is human effort in creating forms that are pleasing. Pleasing forms means forms that can be framed by feelings of satisfied beauty and can capture harmony or unity from the displayed form. Art can be interpreted as human expression that has various functions according to human interests and circumstances, one of which is as an expression of aesthetic sense. Arts education has one goal to develop knowledge, personality and skills as well as physical, mental and emotional development of children (Sustiawati et al., 2018). Sekarningsih in A. S. Pratiwi et al. (2020) states that dance art is a medium of emotional communication based on expressive movement with its raw substance being movement and rhythm.

In dance activities, it can stimulate self-confidence in early childhood, because in dance art activities children can express ideas, feelings, experiences, and thoughts into dance language (Hermayanti, 2015). Beauty in dance arts learning activities is not visible if someone does not have a sense of self-confidence within themselves. Therefore, it is hoped that in dance arts learning activities, children's self-confidence will be formed, because through dance arts learning, children's self-confidence will be continuously stimulated so that children will develop habits and self-confidence will be embedded within them. Dance arts learning for early childhood has special characteristics that differ from learning for adults. According to Hartono (2012), dance learning for early childhood must pay attention to several aspects: 1)

The principle of learning while playing, 2) Simple and easy-to-imitate movements, 3) Use of interesting music (Djibran & Pamungkas, 2023). Gardner (2003) in his theory of multiple intelligences mentions that dance can develop children's kinesthetic-bodily intelligence (Bahar, 2023).

2.3. Previous Research

Several previous studies relevant to this research. First, research conducted by Dinar Salasatun Ashar and Joko Pamungkas in 2023 on "Dance Arts Learning as an Effort to Increase Self-Confidence in Early Childhood." This research examines the application of dance arts as an effort to increase self-confidence in early childhood. The results show that through providing interesting and creative dances, using demonstration methods, providing cheerful music, giving motivation and praise, and opportunities to perform dancing in front of other children can increase self-confidence in early childhood (Ashar & Pamungkas, 2023).

Second, research conducted by Asido Theresia Sihito and Elya Siska Anggraini in 2024 on "Analysis of Children's Self-Confidence Through Creative Dance Arts Learning for Ages 5-6 Years at TK Petro Medan Perjuangan." This research examines the influence of creative dance arts activities on self-confidence in children aged 5-6 years. The research results show that there is a significant influence between creative dance arts activities on increasing self-confidence in early childhood (Sihite & Anggraini, 2024).

Third, research conducted by Sadjena Anjani in 2023 on "Implementation of Creative Dance Activities to Increase Self-Confidence in Group A Children at TK Putri Ramadhani Parepare City." This research discusses self-confidence in children aged 4-5 years who participate in dance extracurriculars through Karapan Sapi dance. The research results show that self-confidence in children aged 4-5 years who participate in dance extracurriculars through Karapan Sapi dance experienced improvement, which can be seen in indicators of children's self-confidence, namely self-confidence, bravery, and positive attitude (Anjani, 2023).

The above research shows that dance arts learning has a positive impact on increasing self-confidence in early childhood. The methods used in these studies include providing interesting dances, using demonstration methods, providing cheerful music, giving motivation and praise, and opportunities to perform dancing in front of other children. The results of these studies can serve as a reference in developing dance arts learning at KB PKK AL MUBAROK Karanganyar to increase self-confidence in children aged 5-6 years.

3. Research Method

This research uses Classroom Action Research (CAR) (Susilo et al., 2022), which focuses on improving the quality of classroom learning. This allows researchers to be directly involved in the learning process and can measure changes in children's self-confidence through action cycles, and also allows adjustment of methods if needed during the research. The stages of this CAR research go through several stages including: 1) Planning, 2) Action, 3) Observation, and 4) Reflection. Data collection techniques in this classroom action research are: Participatory observation, Semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents, Documentation of learning processes, and Anecdotal notes on children's development.

The research was conducted at KB PKK AL MUBAROK institution located in Karanganyar Village Rt. 06 Rw. 03 Karanganyar Village, Poncokusumo District, Malang Regency. This research location was chosen because the researcher works as a classroom teacher at the institution, making it easier for the researcher to conduct research and observation of problems existing at the institution. The research subjects are B2 group

students aged 5-6 years totaling 11 children and already in accordance with permission from the principal of KB PKK AL MUBAROK Karanganyar. Data sources in this research are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data directly collected by researchers from the first source. In this research, the primary data sources obtained by researchers come from students in class B2 at KB PKK AL MUBAROK institution and also from students' parents. Secondary data is data collected by researchers as supporting sources from primary data. In this research, secondary data sources obtained by researchers come from previous researchers' theories and also from several journals about self-confidence in early childhood. Data analysis in this research uses the analysis method proposed by Miles and Huberman (1992) which states that the data analysis process consists of three simultaneous activity flows: data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing or verification. Data validity is conducted through triangulation, namely method triangulation, source triangulation and time triangulation.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Pre-Cycle Data

Based on initial observation results conducted before implementing dance arts learning, the following data was obtained:

Table 1. Children's Self-Confidence Level Pre-Cycle

No	Self-Confidence Indicators	Good	Adequate	Poor
1	Brave to try new things	2 (18%)	2 (27%)	7 (63%)
2	Able to interact with others	3 (27%)	2 (27%)	6 (54%)
3	Not easily give up	3 (27%)	3 (27%)	5 (45%)
4	Brave to express themselves	1 (9%)	2 (27%)	8 (72%)

From pre-cycle data, it was found that the majority of children (58.5%) still showed poor levels of self-confidence, especially in terms of courage to appear in front of the class and express themselves. This is also supported by interview results with students' parents which prove that children's self-confidence at home is also very low. This condition became the basis for implementing dance learning as a strategy to increase children's self-confidence.

4.1.2. Cycle I Data

1) Dance Learning Implementation Cycle I

In cycle I, dance arts learning was implemented using salam kerong dance. This activity was conducted for 2 meetings with a duration of 30 minutes per meeting.



Figure 1. Cycle I Dance Learning Activities

- 2) Learning Activities:
 - a. Introduction to basic dance movements
 - b. Learning rhythm and accompanying music
 - c. Gradual movement practice
 - d. Teacher presentation and small group practice

Table 2. Children's Self-Confidence Level Cycle I

No	Self-Confidence Indicators	Good	Adequate	Poor
1	Brave to try new things	2 (18%)	3 (27%)	6 (54%)
2	Able to interact with others	3 (27%)	3 (27%)	5 (45%)
3	Not easily give up	4 (36%)	3 (27%)	4 (36%)
4	Brave to express themselves	3 (27%)	1 (9%)	7 (63%)

3) Cycle I Reflection

There was a 9% increase in children's self-confidence from the initial pre-cycle condition. However, several obstacles were still found including:

- a. Some children were still shy to move freely, because children still did not fully understand the dance movements they would perform
- b. Movement coordination was not optimal; children were still exploring what movements they would do and there were 2 children in cycle 2 who cried because they were still sleepy
- c. Time management, because it was still the first activity, children still needed additional time so that children could better understand the dance movements demonstrated by the teacher

4.1.3. Data Siklus II

1) Dance Learning Implementation Cycle II

In cycle II, traditional dance arts learning was implemented using salam kerong dance. This was because the children themselves requested to perform this dance again. This activity was conducted for 2 meetings with a duration of 30 minutes per meeting.



Figure 2. Cycle II Dance Learning Activities

- 2) Learning Activities
 - a. Reflection on remembering dance movements
 - b. Gradual dance learning
 - c. Dancing while watching teacher examples but not performed completely

3) Cycle II Observation Results

Table 3. Children's Self-Confidence Level Cycle II

No	Self-Confidence Indicators	Good	Adequate	Poor
1	Brave to try new things	5 (45%)	4 (36%)	2 (18%)
2	Able to interact with others	5 (45%)	3 (27%)	3 (27%)
3	Not easily give up	5 (45%)	4 (36%)	2 (18%)
4	Brave to express themselves	7 (63%)	2 (18%)	2 (18%)

4) Cycle II Reflection

There was a quite significant increase in confidence of 22.5% from cycle I condition. After further observation, this improvement was due to:

- Parents' enthusiasm for their children's dancing hobby so that their children were enrolled in dance lessons outside school
- Children often played salam kerong songs and replayed them at home to remember movements
- Children began to memorize movements they would perform
- There were movements that were changed because children felt difficulty performing movements in cycle I
- Children were very happy when performing in front of their friends

However, there were still obstacles including:

- Teachers must really pay attention to children's mood during dance learning activities, because in cycle 2 activities there were two children who cried when arriving at school
- Cooperation between teachers and parents must be well established, proven by parents who support traditional dance arts learning activities by enrolling their children in dance lesson places so that children are more flexible in performing dance movements

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Analysis of Dance Arts Learning Implementation in Children Aged 5-6 Years

Based on the research results conducted, the implementation of dance arts learning in children aged 5-6 years shows consistent patterns with early childhood development. The dance arts learning process applied in this research refers to a learning through play approach, where dance movements have been modified according to the motor abilities of children aged 5-6 years and are in line with indicators of self-confidence theory for children aged 5-6 years, namely brave to try new things, able to interact with others, not easily give up and brave to express themselves. In the context of traditional dance learning, children not only imitate movements, but also express their emotions and creativity through movement exploration (Aisyah & Rohmalina, 2024). This process allows children to develop body awareness and spatial intelligence which becomes an important foundation for building self-confidence.

4.2.2. Impact of Dance Arts Learning on Self-Confidence Aspects

1) Improvement in Motor Abilities and Body Image

Research results show that dance learning provides significant contribution to improving children's motor abilities. Movements in dance such as basic steps, arm swings, and coordination between body parts help children develop proprioceptive awareness. When children are able to master these movements, they experience improvement in their own physical abilities (physical self-concept) (Tursina et al., 2022). This improvement in physical abilities is related to increased children's self-confidence in terms of courage to express

themselves. Children who participate in dance arts learning show improvement in terms of courage to express and reduce fear to try new things.

2) Development of Expressive Abilities and Non-verbal Communication

Dance has strong storytelling characteristics, where each movement has its own meaning and story. In the learning process, children are encouraged to express emotions contained in each dance movement. This process facilitates the development of children's expressive abilities and non-verbal communication. The ability to express themselves through dance movements provides children with alternative channels for communication, especially for children who experience difficulties in verbal communication. When children feel able to convey their feelings and ideas through movement, this contributes to increased self-efficacy and overall self-confidence. This shows that the self-confidence indicator about being able to interact with others has greatly improved.

5. Conclusion

The discussion in this research shows that traditional dance arts learning provides positive and significant contribution to increasing self-confidence in children aged 5-6 years at KB PKK AL MUBAROK Karanganyar. Improvement in motor abilities and development of expressive abilities through traditional dance arts learning facilitates the formation of children's self-confidence. The effectiveness of traditional dance arts learning greatly depends on implementation quality, which includes teacher competence and social environment support. These findings have important theoretical implications for understanding children's self-confidence development, as well as practical implications for culture-based early childhood education development programs. Although this research has certain limitations, its contribution to the body of knowledge about the role of cultural arts in early childhood development is quite significant. Future research is expected to deepen understanding of mechanisms underlying the relationship between traditional dance arts learning and children's self-confidence, as well as explore factors that can optimize the effectiveness of culture-based arts interventions in early childhood education contexts.

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