

The Creation of Dance Music "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" As a Character Education Media

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Abstract: Character education is a crucial aspect in developing a young generation with integrity. One innovative approach to character education is through the performing arts, particularly dance music. This study aims to create a dance music piece called "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" as a medium for character education in early childhood. Through an artistic approach and qualitative-descriptive methods, the creation process is carried out in four stages: exploration, improvisation, and evaluation. This study explores how elements of music and dance can be synergized to instill character values in children. The results show that dance music designed with educational aspects in mind can improve students' understanding and internalization of character values. This work has proven to be a fun, contextual, and effective learning medium in instilling character values through an aesthetic approach.

Keywords: Dance Music, Seven Habits of Indonesian Children, Children's Character Education

PRELIMINARY

Education is a process in which a person's intelligence develops, influenced by the environment. Education aims to enhance intelligence, skills, and become a better person. Instilling character education in individuals from an early age is essential to determine their future. Formal education in schools plays a crucial role in shaping a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also morally upright and imbued with integrity (Ramadhani et al., 2025). A review of the implementation of character education in schools highlights the roles of teachers, parents, and the community, as well as obstacles such as teacher understanding and limited resources (Asri & Deviv, 2023). The success of character education is determined not only by the quality of classroom instruction but also by a holistic approach involving all elements of the school, including teachers, students, parents, and the community.

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping students' independent and responsible personalities. This is reinforced by the opinion that character education is a

primary focus in the development of the whole Indonesian human being (Arizky & Nurizka, 2024). Lingga, for example, argues that character education is particularly important in efforts to shape a generation with noble character and integrity. Developing training modules and workshops for teachers on character education can be an effective solution. By providing adequate training, teachers will be more prepared and confident in implementing character education programs in the classroom (Lingga et al., 2024).

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping children's personalities from an early age. Amidst increasingly complex challenges, character education is a crucial foundation for developing a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses sound morals and ethics. Various approaches have been taken to instill character values, one of which is through performing arts such as music and dance. Art plays a crucial role in shaping children's personalities because it can convey moral messages aesthetically and pleasantly (Lingga et al., 2024). Through artwork, positive values can be instilled in a fun, communicative way, and can be imprinted on children's memories. Children, as the nation's future generation, need effective media to instill character values from an early age.

Music and dance can be effective media for character education because they can engage children's affective and psychomotor dimensions. Dance music, as an integrative art form, combines elements of sound, movement, and visuals, making it a powerful communication tool for conveying values. Firnamita and Noordiana suggest that learning traditional dance and songs can enhance students' character traits, such as self-confidence, active participation, and respect for peers (Firnamita & Noordiana, 2021). Similarly, Melissa emphasizes the importance of creative dance, a children's game based on local wisdom, in building children's character (Melissa et al., 2022). Music plays a significant role in shaping and developing positive character traits in early childhood. Through musical activities such as playing instruments and singing, children can develop self-discipline, cooperation, empathy, creativity, and self-confidence (Asmi et al., 2024).

Dance music was chosen because of its power to convey emotional and cognitive messages through integrated movement and sound. To strengthen the development of discipline, various educational initiatives have been implemented to create a generation that excels not only in cognitive abilities but also in resilience in addressing issues of values and norms. Researchers have proposed implementing character education in the

form of a dance music artwork. One argument is that one effective method is to integrate the principles of "7 Habits of Excellent Indonesian Children," a framework specifically developed to foster constructive traits in the younger generation (Atsilah et al., 2025).

This research aims to create a dance music piece with the theme of the seven habits of Indonesian children as a medium for character education. It is hoped that this work can be used by teachers, arts coaches, and other educational communities. In accordance with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's (Kemendikdasmen) call to introduce the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children, Minister of Education and Culture Abdul Mu'ti emphasized the importance of instilling the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children into their daily lives, including waking up early, praying, exercising, eating healthily and nutritiously, enjoying learning, being social, and taking quick breaks. The 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children Movement program is designed as a strategic step to develop individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess strong character, which will become the foundation for the nation's future success (Agustina & Edi, 2025). The main aspect of this project emphasizes not only aesthetics but also beneficial educational goals.

METHOD

Qualitative research employs descriptive methods, which explain the subject matter in words (Ashari & Indrayuda, 2024). This study employed a qualitative-descriptive method with an artistic approach. This method was chosen because the primary focus of the research was the process of creating dance music as a medium for character education based on the values of "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children."

Citing Alma Hawkins's creative process in Sari, the stages involved are: Exploration, Improvisation, and Composition (Sari & Pradoko, 2022), the process of creating the "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" dance also employed the stages used by the researcher as composer:

1. Eksplorasi

Exploring ideas and inspiration from the values in "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children", including looking for musical references, children's dance movements, as well as mapping the emotions and characteristics of each habit.

2. Improvisation

The structure of a musical composition with an emphasis on continuity of theme and transitions between segments.

3. Evaluation

Training involving art teachers, students, and art practitioners as an assessment panel. Evaluation is conducted through discussion, feedback, and video documentation.

4. Production

Recording of a complete dance music composition. This stage includes composing the music score, documenting the choreography, and compiling a portfolio of works.

Data was analyzed descriptively and qualitatively through the following stages:

1. Data reduction: filtering important data from interviews, observations, and documentation during the dance music creation process.
2. Data categorization: grouping experimental results based on each habitual value. Artistic Pattern Identification: analyzing each category to find musical patterns or dance movements that emerge consistently and represent certain values.
3. Artistic reflection: interpreting the creative process based on experience and external input. The goal is to ensure the educational value of the work through subjective and objective reflection.

RESULTS

Dance Music Creation Process

The process of creating the dance music "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" was carried out through three main stages, namely exploration, improvisation, and composition, as adapted from the stages of creating works of art according to Alma Hawkins, namely:

1. Exploration Stage, is a process of searching or exploring that aims to find something. Exploration referred to in this case is the initial step in creating a work of art (Kepakisan et al., 2024). The initial step taken by the researcher was to study in depth the concept of the 7 habits of great Indonesian children. Each of these values was explored to be transformed into a musical theme. The researcher observed the behavior of early childhood and reviewed sources of character education. The second step was the search for sounds to determine the instruments used to depict the 7

habits. The instruments selected included Javanese gamelan tones or pelog scales including: Kendang, Demung, saron, Peking, Bonang Barong, Bonang Penerus, Kenong, Kempul, and Gong. The selection of instruments was based on the sound source produced by using dynamic rhythmic patterns that arouse the enthusiasm and joy of children in moving and remain grounded in local wisdom. The third step was the composition of the melody and song lyrics. At this stage, the researcher made song notation using pelog-toned gamelan. The song melody was created taking into account the pitch and low pitch of the child's voice. The beat value and rhythmic pattern were also considered. At this stage, the researcher also adjusted the melody and the lyrics. This was done to ensure the melody harmonized with the lyrics. The final stage of this exploration was adding timbre to enrich the musical composition. The rich and varied timbre reflects the creativity of the work.

2. The improvisation stage provides greater opportunities for imagination, selection, and creation than exploration. Improvisation offers greater freedom and greater personal involvement because the process involves motivational drives that lead to deeper responses and actions, ultimately resulting in a unique response. This was done with accompanying musicians, experimenting with all instruments and vocals (Utami, 2023). Improvisation was carried out to find rhythmic patterns, melodic motifs, and timbres that align with the character's values.
3. Composition Stage: All developed elements are assembled into a unified dance music, each representing a character value in the "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children." Each section is structured based on the principle of matching the values to the musical character, such as tempo, dynamics, and sonic texture.
3. Production Stage: Recording the complete dance music composition. This stage includes the preparation of the musical score, documentation of the choreography, and the compilation of a portfolio of works.

The structure of this dance music is designed to reflect children's character, reflecting positive habits and values. Each section of the music has a simple yet repetitive structure to help children recognize the patterns and meanings behind each character value conveyed. This is reflected in the lyrics of each section below:

The beginning of the song :

. 6 .5 3 . 65 31 2 .2 35 6 3 7 65 6
Marilah kawan kawan seluruh anak Indonesia

. 6 .5 3 . 65 31 2 . . 23 1 2 7 65 6
A yo La ku kan Tujuh Ke bia sa an

. 3 56 7 . .6 56 3 . 53 56 76 56 3 6 5 3 2
Bangun pagi beribadah berolahraga, makan sehat dan bergizi

. 3 56 7 . .6 56 3 . 3 56 7 6 3 5 6
Gemar belajar bermasyarakat tidur cepat badan sehat

Second part of the song (different medley)

. 3 3 3 2 1 4 3 . 1 2 33 .4 3 21 7
Tujuh Kebiasaan anak Indonesia hebat

. 12 12 34 3 . 12 31 765 6
Ayo kita terapkan ayo kita lakukan

Reff :

. . 56 7 . . 6 3 . . 2 1 2 3 4 3
Bangun pagi be ri ba dah

. . 56 7 . .653 . . 2 1 2 7 65 6
Olah ra ga makan ber gi zi

. . 56 7 . . 65 3 . . 2 1 2 3 4 3
Ge mar belajar ber ma sya ra kat

. . 56 7 . .653 . . 2 1 2 7 65 6
Tidur cepat ba dan ja di se hat



Figure 1. Dance music production process

Sustainability in dance music is the creation of dance movements that adapt to the melody and lyrics of the song. The choreographer for the dance work "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" is Budi Alvan, chairman and owner of the Sidoarjo Dance Creation Studio. This work was trained on kindergarten teachers who are members of the East Java IGKTI, which was carried out alternately in regencies and cities throughout East Java. The teachers showed a high interest in following and were able to identify the values contained in each part of the dance music.



Figure 2. IGTKI Batu City Dance Training



Figure 3. IGTKI Batu City Dance Training

After the teacher training, the implementation of this dance work to students was continued and was considered very effective as a learning medium for children, especially in character learning. The dance learning that had been created was implemented in art learning activities in early childhood education. Observations showed that students were more enthusiastic and easily understood character values through the Seven Habits of Indonesian Children dance work. They showed improvements in discipline, cooperation,

and responsibility. One example of the results of observations conducted in order to commemorate National Children's Day, the Seven Habits of Indonesian Children Dance was competed throughout East Java with selection stages starting from the smallest regional scope, namely the District, then continuing to the Regency or City stage. The final stage or peak of this activity was the Provincial level competition held in Batu on June 28, 2025.



Figure 4. City-level National Sports Week Competition (Kediri)



Figure 5. City-level National Sports Week Competition (Kediri)

DISCUSSION

This research aims to create dance music as a medium for character education, raising the theme "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children." The results demonstrate that character values can be effectively conveyed through art, particularly through the combination of music and dance, developed thematically, contextually, and

educationally. This discussion examines the results of the creation based on theory, artistic approaches, and relevance to previous research findings.

1. Dance Music as an Alternative Media for Character Education

Education is a crucial foundation for human life. Without education, it will be difficult for humans to develop themselves and achieve their goals (Suarsningsih et al., 2024). This opinion emphasizes the importance of character education in developing students who are disciplined, honest, responsible, tolerant, independent, and creative, in order to produce a generation imbued with the spirit of Pancasila (Karo-Karo et al., 2023). One of the challenges of character education for children is how to convey it in a format that is engaging, enjoyable, and appropriate to their stage of psychological development. In this context, dance music offers a promising alternative.

As Setiawan points out, both music and dance have the capacity to convey moral messages through aesthetic and emotional experiences. Music influences emotions and mood, while dance provides a space for bodily expression and feelings (Setiawan, 2023). Therefore, integrating the two can enhance the effectiveness of character education, particularly for elementary school-aged children, who learn best through imaginative and sensory-motor approaches (Santrock, 2019).

The work "Seven Habits of Indonesian Children" represents values such as honesty, responsibility, manners, and cooperation through varied musical compositions and communicative dance movement narratives. Each value is embodied in a musical character with appropriate tempo, dynamics, and timbre. For example, the value of "Discipline" is interpreted through a steady and regular rhythm, while "Confidence" is depicted through a rising and dynamic melody.

2. The Process of Creation: Integration of Artistic and Educational Values

The creation of this dance music uses an exploratory-thematic approach. The stages include (1) analyzing character values in the customs of Indonesian children, (2) designing musical and choreographic concepts, (3) exploring musical motifs and dance styles, and (4) evaluating the final form of the work through limited trials. This approach places character values at the center of the artistic idea, so that every element of sound and movement has profound meaning.

According to Nuryanti, the creation of character education-based artwork must consider the harmony between educational values and aesthetic appeal so that the work is not merely a medium for conveying moral messages but retains artistic power (Nuryanti, 2022). This is reflected in this work, where the musical motifs created are not verbally narrative, but convey meaning through sound symbolism—such as the use of small intervals to depict humility, or major harmonies to express optimism. This process demonstrates that dance music is not merely an illustration of values, but a medium capable of "bringing" these values to life through experiences that touch children's emotions and imagination.

3. Involvement of Children as Active Subjects

The results of the work's implementation show that children are able to understand and identify the character values conveyed through dance music. They are not merely passive spectators but actively engaged in the artistic experience—both as performers and as participants in the learning process.

This participatory model aligns with the experiential learning approach (Kolb, 2014), where learning occurs optimally through direct experience. Research by Lestari & Widodo (2021) shows that children more easily absorb moral values when they actively experience them in artistic activities, rather than simply through lectures or verbal repetition. In this context, dance music acts as a bridge between children's imaginative worlds and the real-life values being instilled.

Test results with children aged 4-6 years old showed an increased understanding of values such as cooperation and responsibility after they participated in dance rehearsals and performances. Furthermore, the children demonstrated enthusiasm and a sense of ownership for the work, as they felt they were "part of" these values, rather than simply passively receiving them.

4. Cultural Context as a Strengtheners of Local Values

The dance music created also incorporates elements of traditional Indonesian music, including the pentatonic scale, gamelan rhythmic structure, and melodic patterns that refer to regional music. This approach aims to link character values to local cultural roots, thereby making the message more grounded and easily accepted by Indonesian children.

According to UNESCO, character education based on local culture can strengthen national identity and mitigate the impact of global cultural homogenization. The integration of character values with Indonesian cultural elements in this dance music demonstrates that character education need not be doctrinaire but can grow organically from the richness of local traditions (Education, 2022).

Furthermore, this work also serves as part of an effort to revitalize the nation's noble values through the arts. A case study of the Kinanthi Dance Studio (Sragen) by Jannah et al. demonstrated that traditional dance can effectively instill values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and self-confidence in the younger generation (Jannah et al., 2025). In the context of inclusive and transformative education, art plays a role not only as a medium of expression but also as a means to internalize ethical and social values in children's daily lives.

The process of creating this dance music successfully conveys character values through a systematic, emotional, and collaborative artistic strategy. The results and input align with previous research integrating art and character in education. These findings recommend developing the implementation and format of dance music-based learning media to make it more effective and easier for schools to adopt.

CONCLUSION

The creation of this dance music was successfully created through a structured artistic process that integrates seven habits of Indonesian children. This work is not only an aesthetic expression, but also a meaningful educational medium and has proven to be an effective medium in character education. The collaboration between traditional and modern musical elements provides a unique and attractive color for children. Through a fun and aesthetic approach, students more easily understand and internalize positive values. It is hoped that this approach can be widely adopted in the education system to shape a generation of character. This study recommends further development in the form of a teaching guidebook and training for art teachers so that this work can be implemented more widely in schools.

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